THE UNTIMELY EDUCATOR: AN INTERPRETATION
OF NIETZSCHE'S POLITICAL EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

At the core of Nietzsche's philosophy of education is a political teaching for the future of human life on earth. Phrased in life-affirming terms of health, Nietzsche's aim is to "redeem" the earth and "enhance" humankind through a new teaching on nature, thereby raising culture to a level of "naturalness" hitherto unknown. Such a counternihilistic interpretation of Nietzsche's philosophy of education has not been acknowledged by the Anglo-American philosophy of education. The oversight is due in part to the fact that Nietzsche never intended for his political and educational ideas to have universal, much less broad egalitarian, appeal. His appeal, as both a self-conscious educator and political philosopher, is to certain imaginative individuals, who are themselves partially detached from the present but sufficiently attached to it to be able to set to work to create a radically different society from that which exists in the modern era—one of transformed (not reformed) human values for the future of life on earth. His proposition hinges on whether or not a future global culture can be founded upon a new ontology and nature-affirming, pantheistic, moreover, ecological philosophy of life. Nietzsche's hermeneutic of education and politics can generate discussion in ways both positive and edifying insofar as he challenges us to not only consider radical alternatives, but also reexamine the foundations of our own principles and beliefs. Entertaining Nietzsche on his own philosophical terms challenges us to rethink and test our assumptions, expectations, and commitments in ways that could very well produce new, action-guiding, and life-enhancing understanding. The educational possibility of becoming healthy and whole is essential to understanding the positive implications and relevance of Nietzsche's pursuit of a new definition of justice and, furthermore, his appeal to the highest types to join him in that quest.
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Key to the Abbreviations of Nietzsche’s Works

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All references to Books or Volumes, within a book or essay, are cited with roman numerals (e.g., I, II, III); the references to sections contained within a Book, Volume, or essay, are noted as § 1, 2, 3, etc.
Introduction

At the core of Nietzsche's philosophy of education is a political teaching for the future of human life on earth. Phrased in "life-affirming" terms of "health," Nietzsche's aim is to "redeem" the earth and "enhance" humankind, thereby raising culture to a level of "naturalness" hitherto unknown.\(^1\) Such a counternihilistic interpretation of Nietzsche's philosophy of education has not been acknowledged by the Anglo-American philosophy of education.\(^2\) The oversight is due in part to the fact that, unlike most modern philosophers, Nietzsche never intended for his political and educational ideas to have universal, much less broad egalitarian, appeal. His appeal, as both a self-conscious "educator" and political philosopher, is to the highest, most-gifted, and courageous human beings to create a radically different society from that which exists in the modern era, one of transformed (not reformed) human values for the future of life on earth.

Nietzsche's goal for new global culture is an account of the way of all beings (not just humans), in that his philosophy concerns species- and ecologically-relevant issues which transcend any one particular ethnocentric tradition or ideological viewpoint. Nietzsche takes the medical and aesthetic perspective of life. A distinct political pedagogy arises from this perspective, which counsels how human life might be best lived on earth: a Where To and For What. According to a philosophy that gains an ontological interpretation of nature, of truth, and the relationship of the truth of nature to a new definition of the good, Nietzsche legislates new social and political values according to which all human beings should live. John Richardson observes that Nietzsche's pedagogical intention is that "as a matter of psychological fact a condition of authority over other persons is our 'highest end', all our other goals being chosen and pursued only as means to this.\(^3\) Richardson adds that "even if Nietzsche doesn't offer his values to everyone, he thinks they still take the measure of everyone.\(^4\) The global implications of the future political caste of rulers—"legislators of value"—Nietzsche aims to cultivate should be understood, argues Laurence Lampert, "in the full Platonic pedigree as philosophical rulers who legislate for a whole age[.]\(^5\) Nietzsche's elites will, if his ideas on rearing and

\(^1\) Cf. TSZ III.13; III.12 § 17, 30; TI "Expeditions" § 48. See also Plato, *The Republic* 408a - 415c.
\(^2\) There are two notable exceptions, although they do not have their source in the academic philosophy of education. In *Nietzsche's Tragic Regime* (1998), Thomas Heilke identifies Nietzsche as a political educator. Heilke concentrates on the early writings from Nietzsche's pre-aphoristic Basle period. Laurence Lampert's *Nietzsche's Task* (2001), a close systematic study of *Beyond Good and Evil*, elucidates Nietzsche's mature pedagogical politics in terms of the cultivation of a "new nobility."
\(^3\) Nietzsche's System, 1996: 19.
\(^4\) Ibid. :218.
\(^5\) Nietzsche's Task: An Interpretation of *Beyond Good and Evil*, 2001:199.
education are achieved, give new purpose and identity to the entire world. Like Plato, Nietzsche
wants to restore "the philosopher"—newly conceived—to the crown of cultural struggle.  

The principal aim of my dissertation is to mark the significance of Nietzsche's
philosophy for political education. The relevance of his political education for contemporary
ecology is of immediate import in such regard. In order to clarify Nietzsche's political teaching,
I must also identify and discuss recent trends in the Anglo-American philosophy of education to
"reconstruct" Nietzsche in a manner that seems to accommodate progressive liberal ideals. I
will show that such "radically democratic" interpretations misrepresent and distort Nietzsche's
philosophy in favor of timely prejudices. To elucidate the "aristocratic radicalism" of
Nietzsche's pedagogical politics, and what this teaching means for the future of an ecologically-
responsible culture and the "enhancement" of the human species, I trace the development of
these ideas in his published works over the course of his philosophical career.

† † †

In contrast to modern political theorists, Nietzsche does not desire the appeal of the crowd; nor
does he require their consent. The first Nietzschean political premise is one of basic, ineluctable
inequality. According to his vision of politics and culture, a wide gulf separates the ruling caste
from the ruled; not the consent of the governed but their submission is all that is required.
Contrary to the democratic demand of egalitarianism, Nietzsche asserts that it is the business of
the rulers to rule and of the ruled to obey. Nowhere does Nietzsche affirm the rights of the
common man, the worker, or the masses. Echoing the political teachings of Plato and Xenophon,
Nietzsche provides no consolation to the ruled. His is an archaic authoritarian political principle
of the highest, not the most common, order.

Nietzsche's argument starts from the fact that humans are by nature different, and this
proves to mean that they are "by nature" of unequal rank. People are unequal with particular
regard to their innate power; more specifically with respect to their ability or capacity to acquire

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6 Although Nietzsche's disagreements with Plato, argues John Richardson, "do not appear as radical
overturnings of the deep structure of that tradition-founding thought, but as internal, and incomplete,
revisions of content... . Like Plato, [Nietzsche] claims a systematic truth about essence, an essence
or being that is temporally specified and differentially realized, generating values that ground an
ethics, in which the metaphysical project is rated our highest activity" (1996: 76). For a discussion of
Nietzsche's "reversed Platonism," see Stanley Rosen, The Ancients and the Moderns: Rethinking
Modernity, 1989: 210 - 215, 217. See also Lampert, Nietzsche and Modern Times: A Study of Bacon,

7 Cf. The Republic §. 473d, 499c. See also Lampert, 2001: 285 - 286.

8 A term coined by Georges Brandes in An Essay on Aristocratic Radicalism (1887). Cf. HH § 224; EH
"Good Books" § 2. See also EH "Clever" § 8.

knowledge, virtue, health, and transfigure such acquisitions into the superlative extremities of creative human excellence. The inequality, which is due to nature, chance and luck, is increased and deepened by cultural habituation and the form of education in which different tiers of people are segregated. For Nietzsche, the patent superiority of aristocratic cultures, particularly their intrinsic, archaic cruelty, to democratic or egalitarian societies is intelligible only as a reflection of the superiority of human excellence to human mediocrity or pathology.

Nietzsche observes that the great historical aristocracies of antiquity (esp. Greece) located the justification for their existence in the “necessities” of nature, typically formulated in terms of “cleanliness” that denote distance between different ranks. Three continuous features of aristocratic organization are apparent in Nietzsche’s writings on hierarchy: separation or “pathos of distance” between pure and impure, noble and base, healthy and degenerate; a division of labor and slavery; and a rank order of groups and individuals as relatively superior or inferior to each other. Nietzsche is an advocate of caste and hierarchy for the reason that such a social and political arrangement produces and sustains the “highest types” of human beings. Here underscored is the pedagogical axiom that the enhancement of human being and society depends upon the augmentation of a certain kind of human being, whose cultivation and preservation dictate an extreme inequality that accords with nature’s indifference to “humane” or democratic standards of “fairness” or “justice.” The “beauty” and “genius” of the best is “no accident,” it is according to the “selective principle” of both natural design and “the final result of the accumulatory labour of generations,” on Nietzsche’s reading of the cultures of antiquity.

While Nietzsche, like Plato, does not categorically endorse a socially stratified society based purely on descent, but one in the first place wherein everyone’s natural gifts determine to which class he or she belongs, it becomes increasingly difficult to avoid making an individual’s membership in the higher or lower castes hereditary. Nietzsche ultimately shows favor for the strongest lines of descent; he thinks that one acquires or inherits certain physiological and psychological traits through successive generations of breeding. It needs to be stressed, however, that his understanding of acquired characteristics—be they intellectual, physical or

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10 Cf. BGE § 21, 271; GM III § 10.
14 Cf. BGE § 213, 262.
15 Cf. JS § 214. See also Op cit. § 47.
spiritual—is, as David Cooper argues, "totally at odds with the genetic doctrines proclaimed by
the Nazis and by others intent on dividing people into fixed classes on the basis of ancestry
alone.”16 For Nietzsche, one’s ancestry, race, and ethnicity play a significant role in one’s
constitution; but by no means are these factors the only or absolutely determining ones.
Nietzsche is a radical elitist; but he is neither a crude racist nor a proponent of something like
racial purity as might be espoused by those he would consider plebeian, resentment-driven, self-
described “Aryans” or “white supremacists.”17 Indeed, his thinking on breeding, blood, and
heritable traits does not admit of simplistic definitions or distinctions—he offers little in the way
of consolation to the racist reactionaries across the late-modem spectrum. Although Nietzsche
posits a fundamental, even reductionist, distinction between the “strong” and the “weak” in the
“general economy of life,”18 his power ontology denotes ranges of rank on a scale of subtle
shades and degrees which, first and last, pertain to standards of “health” and “cleanliness.”19
In other words Nietzsche’s psychological polytheism is opposed to any kind of monotheism;
he affirms the mystery of human greatness in all its multiplicities.

The greatest advantage of polytheism— ... the wonderful art and
gift of creating gods— ... a plurality of norms ... and overhumans
of all kinds, as well as near-humans and underhumans, dwarfs, fairies,
centaurs, satyrs, demons, and devils ... . In polytheism the free-spiriting
and many-spiriting of human being attained its first preliminary form ... .
Monotheism, on the other hand, this rigid consequence of the doctrine
of one normal human type ... is perhaps the greatest danger that has yet
confronted humanity. It threatened us with the premature stagnation of
... the species ... .

Needless to say, Nietzsche contravenes what many today consider an elementary
principle of justice.21 This apparent dilemma isn’t really a problem of much significance for
Nietzsche however. Culture is an experiment, not a social contract, and experiments by their very
nature entail losses, mistakes, failures—they inevitably cost many lives (especially those too
weak to endure) while saving the precious few—the most spiritual and creative—that really
count to Nietzsche and his life-enhancing hopes for the “children of the future.” In any event,
the destruction and “overcoming” of Judeo-Christian morality and democratic-egalitarian

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16 1991:111.
17 Cf. HH § 263.
18 BGE § 21, 23, 271.
19 The Greek word for “health” is hygeia—the etymological root of “hygiene.” Cf. Ibid. § 2, 74, 271.
See also WP § 763 (1887): “... each according to his kind, should be placed that he can achieve the
highest that lies in hispower.” See also HL § 10: “Science requires superintendence and supervision;
a hygiene of life ... .
20 JS § 143. Cf. WP § 1038 (1888). See also § 997 (1884)
21 Cf. Op cit. § 188; WP § 758 (1883).
sentimentality would eliminate any vestige of the dangerous fallacies that inform contemporary definitions of justice. The infliction of suffering and privation will, Nietzsche thinks, when modern custom and convention are put aside, conduce to a more spectacular, stronger range of human biodiversity. Genius and the “great human beings,” he believes, are the blossom of strict discipline, breeding, and cultural hierarchy.

Nietzsche is interested principally in these few: the “genius” and the “great human beings”—the “best and most fruitful people.” The genius is here understood by Nietzsche as the “most high-spirited, most lively, and most world-affirming human being,” an intellectually superior person with an immediate and almost superhuman insight into the deepest meaning of things. Likewise, the “great human being” is a specimen of the “highest spirituality.” The “genuine philosopher,” the greatest kind of genius according to Nietzsche, is the peak of nature. The activity of the “genuine philosopher” indeed “complements” nature. Nature needs this type of human being, thinks Nietzsche, for the activity of high spirituality consists in thinking through and understanding things—nature—in light of the highest possibilities. The activity of philosophy so construed is therefore edifying; a superior morality and politics flows from such probity. The most “noble” human beings, who have been favored by chance and nature, are, therefore, of principle and enduring interest to Nietzsche because the “complementary human” can, writes Lampert, “fulfill the commission granted him to maintain in the world the order of rank.”

The exclusive concern in politics and education must be, according to Nietzsche, to protect and prepare “complementary humans”—the progeny of genius and “great human beings” alike—by means of a “noble education,” so that they might become “rulers of the

\[\text{22 Cf. Ibid. § 257; AC § 57. Nietzsche sees “discipline of suffering [as responsible for] creat[ing] all enhancements of humanity” (BGE § 225). See also BGE § 269, 274, 293.}
\[\text{23 JS § 19. Cf. § 4; FEI § 1 - 4; HL § 8 -10; SE § 3 - 8; WB § 5. See also TSZ III.10 § 2; WP § 869 (1885).}
\[\text{24 BGE § 56.}
\[\text{25 Cf. HH § 162. See also BGE § 295.}
\[\text{26 Cf. TI “Expeditions” § 44. See also BGE § 262, 274; AC § 4.}
\[\text{27 BGE § 206.}
\[\text{28 Ibid. § 207.}
\[\text{29 Lampert clarifies the problem: “What is man? . . . The question implies a broader question, What is nature, the whole of which man is part? . . . [W]hich raises the question of a new view of nature as a whole” (2001: 54).}
\[\text{30 Cf. BGE § 212; 257 - 296.}
\[\text{31 “Nature is chance” (TI “Expeditions § 7). See also SE § 6; TSZ III.4, 12 § 12; BGE § 274; AC § 4.}
\[\text{32 1996: 105.}
\[\text{33 TI “Germans” § 7.} \]
world.  

For it is the "perfection of human nature" in a select few which is important for Nietzsche, not the panoply of the mediocre many. Perhaps .05 percent of the human population are eligible for his project of ennoblement. This political education is not only undemocratic; it is radically antidemocratic in tone, substance, and intent.

This is the actual secret of education: namely, that innumerable people strive for education, work for education, apparently for themselves, but essentially only to create a very few people.  

Leo Strauss observes that the "supremacy" of Nietzsche's pedagogical vision of the "complementary human" is "shown by the fact that [this type] solves the highest, most difficult problem." That problem," Laurence Lampert elucidates, "is the problem of nature faced by modern humanity, a problem that has arisen out of the history of humanity." Nietzsche avers that the "complementary human" alone is capable of spiritualizing a new, "renaturalized" sense of justice, in ways that "remain loyal to the earth and body," by thinking through and understanding what it means to be a human, an element of nature. The problem of nature can be solved, moreover, through a political education that abolishes the old morality and creates a new condition of cultural possibilities. Nietzsche wants to use education in the service of his philosophy of life and culture; he wants to pass education and politics into the care of this new philosophy, as a means of nurture and as an instrument, Lampert remarks, for the spiritual cultivation of a "new sort of human being loyal to nature and the natural." Hence the concern for the crucial role healthy human genius plays in relation to the health of culture and the world.

Education and philosophy are presented here as political prophylactics or remedies to the decadence and nihilism Nietzsche associates with late-modernity. First and last, Nietzsche's political education is both a diagnosis of the crisis of the late-modern era and a search for a cure. The successful possibility of his philosophical politics depends, therefore, upon educationally transforming or rehabilitating an elite few, who have the future of humankind on...
their conscience, into a new “species” of human being fit for life at the crown of “high culture.” Only the “highest types,” Nietzsche thinks, are psychologically and physically capable of creating an “earth-redeeming” culture that could usher in a next phase of human evolution. Thus does Nietzsche, “the advocate of life,” think of himself as a “physician of culture”—*Der Philosoph als Arzt der Kultur.*

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43 BGE § 61.
44 Cf. Ibid. § 3; 61 - 62; 203 - 212; JS § 13.
45 Cf. TSZ III.4; BGE § 274; AC § 4; WP § 673 (1883 - 1888), 684 (1888), 957 (1885), 979 (1885). See also WP § 890 (1887), 897 (1888).
46 TSZ III.13 § 1.
47 The literal translation is the “Philosopher as Physician of Culture.” See also TSZ III.12 § 17.
CHAPTER ONE

The Physician of Culture

I am still waiting for a philosophical physician in the exceptional sense of that word—one who has to pursue the problem of the total health of a people, time, race or of humanity—to muster courage to push my suspicion to its limits and to risk the proposition: what was at stake in all philosophizing hitherto was not at all "truth" but something else—let us say, health, future, growth, power, life. 48

If Nietzsche, as a "physician of culture," should be considered the political educator par excellence of the modern era, then Niccolò Machiavelli may be Nietzsche’s closest forbear. Both Machiavelli and Nietzsche are philosophers of political change and renewal; guided as they are by a cyclical or seasonal interpretation of the rise and fall of civilizations and regimes. The naturalistic pattern that all societies follow accords, in Machiavelli’s view, with his reading or redefinition of virtue (or virtù). Virtù has two limits, on this perspective: (1) Fortuna, which he understands as either Chance or as a goddess (a female force of nature) symbolizing the causal powers of the cosmos; 49 and (2) The political actor’s own temperament, strength, character, instinctual proclivities, bodily humors, reason, and will power working with or reacting to circumstances, fate, history, or the quality of the times. 50 Thus, cosmological necessity and the anthropology and a cyclical (growth, rise & fall) theory of history derived from it underscore Machiavelli’s political philosophy. 51 History is perceived as the combined result of human activity and cosmic force or fate. Chance or fortune can, for both Machiavelli and Nietzsche, be mastered only if one is able to attain to a level of instinctive naturalness which allows one to become apart of the natural forces surrounding him or her.

Furthermore, Machiavelli, like Nietzsche, conceived of culture as something to be planned and cultivated by human beings, in terms of, as Jacob Burckhardt remarks, “a work of art.” 52 Machiavelli informs Nietzsche’s understanding of the medicinal and artful relationship

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48 JS P § 2. Cf. BGE § 212.
49 As will be discussed below, nature, according to Nietzsche, “is chance” also. See TSZ III.4, 12 § 12; BGE § 274; TI “Expeditions” § 7; AC § 4, 25. Cf. WP § 673 (1883 - 1888), 684 (1888), 979 (1885).
50 See The Prince § 18. See also The Discourses II § 1 and The Prince § 25: “Fortuna is a woman, and it is necessary, if you wish to master her, to conquer her by force, and it can be seen that she lets herself be overcome by the bold rather than by those who proceed coldly.” Cf. TSZ I.18, II.10, 12.
51 See the historian Oswald Spengler (The Decline of the West, Vol. 2: Perspectives of World History, 1928) for an example of this idea (of the rise and fall of civilizations) applied to a theory of social and cultural change in the modern era.
of education to cultural health and vitality. The necessities of time, chance, and circumstance generate opportunities for creative action as long as the actor is able to employ all the capacities which nature has endowed the human animal. Human beings, if healthy and in a natural condition of instinctive potency (which Machiavelli calls virtù), are not helpless in the face of external problems. On this perspective, the primary task of the "physician of culture," who is also a self-conscious educator, must be to constitute, embody, and convey discipline—principally psychological and physical—in the learner. Such discipline serves to strengthen the "spirit," cultivates virtue, and represents, to Nietzsche, the "redemption" and "elevation" of culture, as well as the "total health of a people, time, race or of humanity."

I have a subtler sense for signs of ascent and decline than any human being has ever had, I am the teacher par excellence in this matter—I know both, I am both.

To clarify this principal proposition, requires a view of Nietzsche as a modern-day Asklepiatic figure. Asklepios, the ancient physician god (son of Apollo), personifies the archetype of the most politic medical art to heal—which, according to Plato, is the province of the "supreme educator" who "ministers" only to "fundamentally" healthy souls. The ancient medical analogy of political philosophy indicates a pedagogical art that can cure the sickness of the soul or polis. Nietzsche’s political education can be interpreted, on this perspective, as a form of self-therapy that extends to the health of (the body of) culture itself. Understanding himself as a philosopher-physician (a "wounded-healer"), Nietzsche incorporates an image of the Greek god Asklepios, the archetype of the healer/physician, into his philosophy of education.

Following in the rich mythological and philosophical heritage of Greek antiquity, Nietzsche formulates an educational politics in medical-aesthetic terms of life-justification. This

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53 Cf. EH "Clever" § 1.
54 Cf. PTG § 4; SE § 3. See also TI "Germans" § 5; EH "The Untimely Essays" § 3.
55 JS P § 2.
56 EH "Wise" § 1. The contrast between "ascent" and "decline"—or "active" and "reactive"—is so basic to Nietzsche that he marks it with many other pairs of terms: "health" and "sickness"; "clean" and unclean; "overfullness" and "poverty"; "master[y]" and "slave[y]", etc. Cf. GM II § 11; KSA 12.7 [48] (1886 - 1887).
57 The initial insight owe to a discussion with Brad Park in 2001.
58 God of plagues, healing, archery, and prophecy—god of the Orphic religion who presides over the "Blessed Isles" of Greek mythology.
59 The Republic, §. 407d - .410. Socrates says: "[P]olitic Asclepius may be supposed to have exhibited the power of his art only to persons who, being of generally healthy constitution and habits of life, had a definite ailment." Cf. TSZ III.13; BGE § 227. See also Carl Kerényi, Askelpios: Archetypal Image of the Physician’s Existence, 1959: 6; Livy X 47 and Periocha; Ovid, Metamorphoses XV 622 - 744 (in Kerényi, 7).
enterprise means to gain or restore the superlative health of the body (or polis) through a
creative act of will. Askelpiatic symbols of healing, health and the healer pervade Zarathustra,
in particular, and are replete throughout Nietzsche’s writings more generally, which,
considered together as a whole, place emphasis not only on the prototypical relationship of myth
and philosophy to human existence, but point also to a paradigm of healing which posits a
negotiation between the agency of the patient—the reader, or student alternatively—and the
wisdom of the healer-teacher.

Physician, heal yourself: thus you will heal your patient too.
Let his best healing-aid be to see with his own eyes him who
makes himself well.

This proclamation, written in 1883, is clarified by an autobiographical avowal a few
years later, in 1888:

Setting aside the fact that I am a décadent, I am also its antithesis.
My proof of this is, among other things, that in combatting my sick
conditions I always instinctively chose the right means: while the
décadent as such always chooses the means harmful to him... I
took myself in hand, I myself made myself healthy again: the pre­
condition for this—every physiologist will admit it—is that one is
fundamentally healthy... I made out of my will to health, to life,
my philosophy.

Redemption and sickness are aspects of the same process in Nietzsche’s philosophy.
He conceives of health in complex terms of the formation of unity: “to compose and bring into
unity what is fragment and dreadful accident.” The “great health” that Nietzsche speaks of in
his later writings in terms of a goal for the vision of the “complementary human” is something
won as the consequence of continuous struggle and overcoming. “[H]ealth and sickness are
not essentially different,” he writes in 1888, “there are only differences in degree between these

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60 An obvious connection is evident, for example, in regards to one of Zarathustra’s (two) animals, the
snake, which is closely identified with Asklepios; his staff is portrayed invariably as having a snake
coiled round it—this type of staff is associated with the archetype of physicians and surgeons alike.
The snake’s attributes and symbolism point to the origin of the Asklepiatic family line (Kerényi, 1959:
54-56). For Nietzsche, the snake symbolizes the virtue of cleverness (his “wisest animal”) and the
earth (Lampert, 1986:29). See TSZ P § 10. Cf. EH “BGE” § 2. See also Curt Paul Janz, Friedrich
61 Cf. The Philosopher as Cultural Physician (1873); SE § 1, 3, 5, 7; WB § 7; JS § 4, 13, 120, 382; TI
“Expeditions” § 36; AC § 57.
62 Cf. BGE § 259. Consider also the mythological example of Chiron, the centaur, teacher to Asklepios
and Achilles, among others. I will expand on Chiron’s example later in this chapter.
63 TSZ I.22 § 2.
64 EH “Wise” § 2.
65 TSZ II.20. Cf. PTG § 3; BGE § 225, 274; JS § 349.
66 JS § 382. Cf. WP § 1013 (1885 - 1886).
two kinds of existence[.].” Nietzsche is speaking here of a condition that is “dangerously healthy.” Nietzsche therefore “divines cures for injuries” and “employs ill chances to his own advantage,” knowing that “what does not kill him makes him stronger.” Accounting for the fact that the Platonic soul-culture-polis analogue abounds in Nietzsche’s writings further illuminates the significance of the self-referential polemics and richly illustrated psycho-political processes of sickness, wounding, convalescence and healing. These distinctive elements represent tactical maneuvers that serve an overall philosophical strategy, which can be traced to the earliest writings, to “promote life.”

Nietzsche’s question What is existence worth? raises the issue of existence-justification. The political implications of this patent existential problem come to bear in a “most vigorous and exuberant vitality” which informs an active spirit of “self-overcoming,” which also, in turn, has political implications for Nietzsche’s vision of both the future renaissance of “high culture” and the redemption of nature. In 1874 Nietzsche writes of:

The “longing for a stronger nature, for a healthier and simpler” way of life denotes, in a self-referential way, an aspiration to authenticity—of “the genius in himself.” Moreover, Nietzsche’s concern for how life can receive its “highest value and deepest significance” leads him to conclude that it is “[c]ertainly only by living [one’s] life for the good of the rarest and most valuable exemplars, and not for the good of the majority . . .” that the “glorious and creative human” and the “realm of transfigured physis is disclosed.”

67 WP § 47 (1888).
68 Op cit.
69 EH “Wise” § 2.
70 SE § 3.
71 The problem of “existence-justification” was an early and recurring question for Nietzsche. He traces this question, “what is existence worth as such?,” back to Empedocles, who, thinks Nietzsche, was “among the mightiest promoters of life” (SE § 3). Cf. HL § 9.
72 Cf. WB § 6.
73 Ibid.
74 Cf. EH “Untimely Essays” § 3.
75 Ibid.
76 Ibid. § 6, 3.
“the most valuable exemplars” and culture, earth and body become, on the mature perspective of the late writings, an affirmation of these early aspirations to wholeness, completeness, or authenticity.

For Nietzsche, psychology and physiology are interdependent natural processes that extend, indeed project, to the world of politics, culture, and community.77 In other words, in Nietzsche's mature philosophy, all intentional (though not necessarily conscious) events are, at the level of the life-ground aspects of the will or the directed activity of the body. The will to power ontology, the organizing principle of Nietzsche's mature philosophy, denotes a monistic doctrine that fuses the physical, psychological, and cultural as aspects of one being—the body, the structural feature of will to power. In its most exceptional or potent human form the "genius" or "great human beings" represent the highest achievement of the greater, collective project of culture. The "highest types" are incarnations of high culture; they personify culture.78 Their growth, development, and flourishing reflect the successful coordination of a structural economy of a certain quanta of energy and life force. The concentrated intensity of will to power vested in these highly spiritual, creative, culture-bearing "highest types" gives primacy, in Nietzsche's philosophy of education, to the tasks of the educator and a select few elites in his charge. Nietzsche commends human "nobility" here as an ideal representation of the culmination of the highest educational and cultural activities.79 According to the isomorphic relationship of "great humans" to culture, the "physician of culture" works to raise the whole pattern of effort—in mind and body—of the "higher types" to a "higher level" of culture in virtue of the will to power vested in them and with respect to the health-giving "text" of nature.80

It is only the relation between a people and the education of the person which interests me.... Thanks to happy discoveries, we can educate the great individual in a wholly different way.... My hope lies here: training of significant human beings.81

Nietzsche can be read as saying that if high culture exists chiefly in order to cultivate opportunities for the “training of significant human beings”—the creative genius above

77 Cf. TI "Expeditions" § 38.
78 SE § 5; TI "Expeditions" § 49.
79 Eric Blondel observes that "such a definition of culture as bodily economy, a type of life, first of all makes it possible to discover a synchronic unity behind various human manifestations: art, philosophy, politics, morality, religion... whose genealogical solidarity can be grasped... [but also makes it possible] to ascertain a history behind culture, that is to say to fix a diachronic unity, where previously we had been content to record a succession of events which had no guiding principle" (Nietzsche: The Body and Culture, 1991: 68, trans. by Seán Hand).
80 Cf. BGE § 230.
81 Homer and Classical Philology (1874/5), § 5.11. Cf. EH "BGE" § 1, 2.
all—then such a society will seek to give fullest recognition and scope (in education and politics) to the activity of those few who demonstrate themselves to be most spiritual, virtuous, and full of life. Again, education and philosophy present themselves on such account in Nietzsche’s writings as both political prophylactics or remedies to sickness and malaise.  

“Great health” is thus the creative embodiment of a transformative will to health. In this significant respect, Nietzsche is again reminiscent of Machiavelli, who asserts that difficulties of matter, while dependent on elements of both virtue and chance, can be overcome by an outstanding teacher who, using extraordinary means, might transform something corrupt into something better, or altogether different. The obstacle to the establishment of the best culture, which is fundamentally the body as matter (biological material), can, according to Nietzsche, be “overcome” because the matter in question (the body) can be transformed, or enhanced, by an act of will (interpreted in both the psychological and political sense)—even if such enhancement takes generations to effect. Following Machiavelli and, for that matter, Asklepios, Nietzsche places emphasis on human interaction with his surrounding environment, this is the crucial point at which human potentialities for political action are revealed.

Consider also the play of images and metaphors in the story of Zarathustra, which, in a series of parables, songs, poems, and dances, conveys a sense that conscience—inextricable from the body—speaks with many voices. Myriad questions are raised in Zarathustra pertaining to the formation of character, personality and ego. The thought-/body-experiments implicit to the formation and explication of who and what Zarathustra is constitute the essence of a Nietzschean political education and extend to the soul-culture-polis analogue. That is, the interplay of soul as polis, polis as a reflection of the soul’s condition and ordering, is powerfully rendered to great effect as Zarathustra grows toward an elevated wisdom or
enlightenment.\footnote{88} What might be lost in translation, as it were, in the esoteric parables and proclamations of Zarathustra for some readers is recapitulated in different words and form (aphorism), but the same spirit, in Nietzsche’s subsequent book Beyond Good and Evil.\footnote{89}

† † †

Bearing such things in mind as the principal pedagogical intent behind Nietzsche’s two greatest books, including the similarities and differences between Nietzsche and other self-conscious political educators, one might consider Alasdair MacIntyre’s argument that we are today confronted with a choice between either Nietzsche or Aristotle for providing the philosophical basis for education and our conception of how to practice ethics; an alternative he frames respectively in terms of a selection between will and reason.\footnote{90} For his part, Nietzsche formulates the problem with respect to the “more valuable type,” which he understands, for better and worse, in the “richest and most complex forms . . . of genius.”\footnote{91}

This more valuable type has existed often enough already: but as a lucky accident, as an exception, never as willed. He has rather been the most feared, he has hitherto been virtually the thing to be feared —and out of fear the reverse type has been willed, bred, achieved: the domestic animal, the herd animal, the sick animal—the Christian.\footnote{92}

MacIntyre’s question turns on a choice between nihilism and a world that is teleologically ordered. Aristotle’s teaching is presented on the level of a claim to reason, in which case it invites proof or refutation. Whereas Nietzsche’s teaching, especially his later, mature teachings, as encapsulated in Zarathustra for example, are more akin, at an esoteric level, to a claim of revelation,\footnote{93} in which instance reason can neither sufficiently prove nor refute the claims he makes.\footnote{94} Nietzsche’s political education also presents an exoteric or public teaching to

\footnote{88} Cf. Republic § 557b. See also TSZ III.13 § 2, IV.11.
\footnote{89} Cf. EH “BGE” § 2.
\footnote{90} After Virtue (1981), pp. 109 - 120. The question remains whether even a good physician and philosopher can heal without the consensual agency of the sick.
\footnote{91} WP § 684 (1888).
\footnote{92} AC § 3. Cf. WP § 55 (1887); TI “Expeditions” § 48.
\footnote{93} Cf. EH “TSZ” § 3: “The concept of revelation, in the sense that something suddenly, with unspeakable certainty and subtlety, becomes visible, audible, something that shakes and overturns one to the depths, simply describes the fact.”
\footnote{94} Rosen identifies two levels or sides to Nietzsche’s philosophy: an exoteric and an esoteric. The esoteric Nietzsche writes not to the masses, but to “free thinkers” or “free spirits” confronting nihilism and its implications in the face of a new naturalistic teaching on life. Nietzsche’s esoteric side manifests in his philosophy of education, for example, in that it seeks to bind free spirits to the discovery of a life-affirming proposal that humankind is capable of cultivating greatness, in the form of extraordinary exemplars of the species. The esoteric Nietzsche is more subtle, complex, and distinctively self-referential. The esoteric dimension, if intended for anyone other than himself, seems to be addressed to future geniuses and kindred spirits. Cf. BGE § 39, 43.
be tested and confirmed by experience. He makes the claim that his entire philosophical project is to “face our great task of preparing the earth for the production of the greatest” human beings, “a task for reason on behalf of reason!” Lampert remarks in such respect that Nietzsche is “establishing the interests of philosophy where those interests are reasonably seen as the ‘highest interests of mankind.’”

In part as an answer to MacIntyre, then, Nietzsche’s political education should be seen as driven by intense interest in, if not an obsession with the exceptional psycho-physiological phenomenon of the “more valuable type”—the “lucky accident”—of the figure of noble genius or “great human being.” More specifically, Nietzsche’s pedagogical politics focusses on that which is greatest—most full of life—within the “great individual.” He is concerned educationally and politically to “will” this “more valuable type” into existence within a new telic structure of his power ontology. Nietzsche starts from an ontological premise (physis and, later, “will to power”), a where from and wherefore, as it were, and proceeds toward a magisterial definition—or the preparation for such legislation—of value, meaning and purpose. Nietzsche’s ontology of nature and power is gradational and infused with values. His political education seeks, therefore, to establish the foundation for the creation of new law-tables according to which human beings ought to live by. These new law-tables will, he thinks, horizon new, high cultures.

The basis of Nietzsche’s teaching is founded on the ontology of will to power. Despite his skepticism regarding what he calls “superfluous teleological principles,” Nietzsche understands the world (human beings and elements of nature—animate and inanimate—alike) in terms of end-directed “necessities.” And in order to understand them completely and in “life-enhancing” ways, one must be able to grasp how and in what manner the elements of

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95 With respect to the genealogy of knowledge and morality, Nietzsche’s books The Joyous Science and The Genealogy of Morals serve as schools for inquiry and experiment. He makes an exoteric appeal to “free spirits” and “philosophers of the future” (not the nondescript mass), conceding that such experiments cannot be replicated by just any experimenter.

96 HH, WS § 188 -189. See also Michael Zimmerman, 2003: 27.

97 CT. BM $ 212: “What belongs to the concept ‘great’ is being-noble, wanting-to-be-for-oneseelf, being-able-to-be-other, standing-alone, and having-to-live-in-one’s-won resources.” This list of hyphenated words suggests, thinks Lampert, that “no single words have had to be invented for the strange, private self-concept of the philosopher” (2002: 203) or genius? See also GM I § 10.

98 Cf. FEI P; SE § 2; JS P § 3; BGE § 229; AC § 50. See also Hellke, 1998: 51.

99 Richardson notes that Nietzsche’s power ontology “means to fuse the physiological and the intentional, as aspects of single being . . . as a structural feature of will to power” (1996: 38).

100 Cf. BGE § 211; TSZ II.12.


102 BGE § 13 - 14.
nature, human and otherwise, are directed and aimed. Although it appears at first to be a revelatory insight into the way of all things, the idea of will to power supplies the concepts and structure for all of Nietzsche's more concrete axiological efforts to describe—in precisely medical and biological terms—how and to what ends human beings ought to live; for such ends are, he thinks, essential to them. In an evolving and related vocabulary, Nietzsche argues from the basis of a coherent, precise, and comprehensive view of life and nature. It is from that philosophical system that he derives the political and ethical ends or values which MacIntyre would have us consider.

The first consideration for Nietzsche that remains consistent throughout the corpus of his work is that truth and/or knowledge must be judged in evaluative terms of their service to life. Much of his educational ideas, if not all, rides on whether he is correct in this most fundamental proposition. The theoretical life prized by Plato and Aristotle is valuable or justified, in Nietzsche's scheme of things, only insofar as it points toward and is subsumed by the superabundance of the most exceptional of human animals, whose intense will to power finds creative expression in a high culture that "complements" or "perfects" nature. These are interdependent, even codeterminous earth-bound and embodied goals that, in Nietzsche's words, "redeem" or "perfect" nature's chaotic tendencies. On this perspective, the "proof" or reason for Nietzsche's experiment in political education is in the body. The particular predisposition, type, and condition (the life and creative achievements) of a particular human being is the matter up for testing and evaluation. It is therefore crucial to understand that Nietzsche advocates a return to "natural order"—but not in a Platonic or, for that matter, Rousseauean sense.

With respect then to the choice MacIntyre posits between Aristotle and Nietzsche, it appears that for Nietzsche, as for Aristotle, intimacy with nature provides the basis for authoritative political and moral speech. That is, their respective interpretations of nature (and

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104 Cf. WP § 552 (1887), 666 (1886 - 1887), 675 (1887 - 1888).
105 Cf. HL Foreword, § 1. See also The Philosopher: Reflections on the Struggle Between Art and Knowledge (1870) § 164; cf. § 37, 44, 53, 84, 124 -125, 137; and The Philosopher as Cultural Physician (1873) § 171.
106 Cf. PTG § 1; HL § 9; SE § 6. See also AC § 1.
107 Cf. JS § 109. See also TSZ P 3.
109 MacIntyre does not, however, acknowledge this key component of Nietzsche's paradigm at the naturalistic, much less ecological, level, which is distinctly Newtonian and Spinozist in character. Cf. Rosen 1989:198; Blondel, 1990: 45; Laurence Lampert, Nietzsche and Modern Times, 1993:287 -388. See also WP § 55 (1887), 1062 (1885); JS § 333, 349; BGE § 25, 211.
of health or human flourishing—*eudaimonia*) provide an interpretive or perspectival basis for meaning and order, which thereby precludes the possibility of an arbitrary or otherwise modern “liberal” relativization of value. In both Aristotle and Nietzsche therefore—despite the significant differences—there is a profound difference of rank (ontological, natural, political, and aesthetic) between life-enhancing and life-diminishing interpretations. That does not mean, however, that there isn’t the possibility for plurality and a polyvocal hermeneutic spectrum of value for each. It does mean, at the end of the day, that some products of the will or intellect are, according to the naturalism both Aristotle and Nietzsche, more valuable than others. ¹¹⁰ Both philosophers are patently aristocratic in their thinking on such matters regarding the development of humanity, politics, and the natural rank order of life.

As Aristotle and Nietzsche go to great pains to remind their readers, children—indeed most adults—are not fully human until they have developed and fulfilled certain preconditions of “humanity,” which both philosophers define in distinctively aristocratic terms characteristic of health, vitality, and the exercise of power. That is, both philosophers maintain that without a functioning and effective *polis* or cultural horizons that reflect the highest standards or possibilities of human excellence, a person cannot become human, much less a “great” one. It is only in virtue of the disciplined reinforcement of the ancillary educational, religious, political, and social institutions of the larger community and natural environment that informs its efforts that the potential human becomes fully human, or more.

The question, then, for both Aristotle and Nietzsche can be phrased in a similar fashion: Can epistemological, moral, and political claims to human excellence and a related hierarchy of standard axiological criteria for evaluation be assimilated with essentially medical-biological claims to health and natural fitness? Nature is for both Aristotle and Nietzsche a functional system of forces of growth directed toward certain ends or necessities. ¹¹¹ For Nietzsche, unlike Aristotle however, nature is raw power; or, stated more specifically, it is will to power. ¹¹² This first principle is his *logos*, as it were. Aristotle’s *logos* presents a biological criteria in terms of

¹¹⁰ Hence a fundamental ontological univocality as regards issues of the good, beautiful, true. Cf. Richardson tracks the “systematic implications of [Nietzsche’s] ‘power ontology’” (1996: 13) and argues that Nietzsche claims a “systematic truth about the essence of being that is temporally specified, but above all differently realized, generating values that ultimately ground an ethics, in which the metaphysical project itself gets ranked highest” (15).

¹¹¹ Cf. JS § 1, 109, 115, 155, 225; BGE § 21, 188, 213. See also Lampert: “Nietzsche expresses the accord of human nature and nature very concisely: ‘Ultimately there is a rank order of the soul’s states with which the rank order of the problems accords. This natural accord of mind and nature generates philosophy’s exclusivity . . . ’” (2001: 206).

¹¹² Cf. BGE § 9, 22, 61. See also TSZ II.10, 12.
four rational causes, form and matter, actuality and potentiality, and especially the *teleological* character of natural processes.\footnote{Cf. F. E. Peters, *Greek Philosophical Terms: A Historical Lexicon* (1967), p. 111.} Aristotle contends, like Nietzsche, that all natural things are subject to change (*kinesis*), everything living thing can be understood in terms of the actualization of potential (*dynamis*), and reductively explained in terms of more basic things—substances, properties, and potentialities. Their thinking seems, moreover, to complement each other, especially in view of the fact that the soul (*psyche*) is defined by Aristotle as the “form of the body” with the morphological and physiological potentiality for life (and death).

Given a shared naturalism, psychology is, for both philosophers, a subfield of the natural and physical sciences.\footnote{Cf. Op cit. § 12, 36.} Again, Nietzsche does not renounce teleology altogether; he just warns against “superfluous teleological principles.”\footnote{Ibid. § 12. Cf. JS § 109} On Nietzsche’s understanding, nature is “chaos.”\footnote{Or “chance.” Cf. Ti “Expeditions § 7. The definition Graham Parkes gives is helpful here: “[C]haos’ refers to what is left when projections that customarily give the world order and form are withdrawn” (2003: 18).} This insight into the “nature” of health, vitality, and creativity as intrinsically fecund aspects of a mutable “chaos to all eternity” speaks to Nietzsche’s comprehensive, or consummate, nihilism,\footnote{Cf. Nishitani Keiji, 1990: 29 - 30.} which may be interpreted (for the purposes of political education and cultural renaissance) in counter- or anti- nihilistic terms precisely because it, centering as it does around the organizing principle of will to power, not only affirms but wills the actualization of “higher life.”\footnote{Cf. BGE § 13. See also Nimrod Aloni, “The Three Pedagogical Dimensions of Nietzsche’s Philosophy,” in *Educational Theory*, Fall 1989, Vol. 39, No. 4, pp. 301.} Overcoming nihilism, observes Nishitani Keiji, entails the attainment of “the standpoint where [one] has put nihilism ‘behind him, beneath and outside him’—the standpoint of the ‘consummate nihilist.’”\footnote{Op cit. p. 77}

Nietzsche’s perspective on will to power (as mutable “chaos to all eternity”) affords a way, as MacIntrye rightly observes, through the paralyzing or otherwise debilitating modern malaise and nihilism of the late-modern era. The most exceptional human subject (who wills the affirmation of higher life) becomes the locus of experiment and cultivation—whose fate, observes Nishtani Keiji, “consists in the realization that the self is the manifestation of the fate of the human race.”\footnote{Ibid. p. 79.} And the natural order of rank that Nietzsche discerns and endorses is the *perspectival expression of power* as chaos, the multiplicity of which accords comprehensive

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\item \footnote{Cf. Op cit. § 12, 36.} Cf. Op cit. § 12, 36.
\item \footnote{Ibid. § 12. Cf. JS § 109} Ibid. § 12. Cf. JS § 109
\item \footnote{Or “chance.” Cf. Ti “Expeditions § 7. The definition Graham Parkes gives is helpful here: “[C]haos’ refers to what is left when projections that customarily give the world order and form are withdrawn” (2003: 18).} Or “chance.” Cf. Ti “Expeditions § 7. The definition Graham Parkes gives is helpful here: “[C]haos’ refers to what is left when projections that customarily give the world order and form are withdrawn” (2003: 18).
\item \footnote{Op cit. p. 77} Op cit. p. 77
\item \footnote{Ibid. p. 79.} Ibid. p. 79.
\end{enumerate}
perspectivism as regards the connection between rank and nature in human animals. The human typology, understood and presented ultimately according to pathological differences in capacity for health or mastery, are Nietzsche's equivalents (at the level of embodiment) to Plato's transcendental hierarchy of Ideas, or Aristotle's classification of animals.¹²¹ For Nietzsche, there are inescapable "life-enhancing" axiological and political implications that flow from the psychophysical account of "higher life," which stand at the juncture of physics, psychology, and biology.

Moreover, Nietzsche's supposition regarding the highest specimens of the species denotes a concern for the optimization of "health" in the figure of the "genius" or "the great soul." The concern with the most extraordinary and highest of human possibilities, that obsession with the psycho-physiology of the exception to the exception, as it were, entails specific questions pertaining to issues of diet and climate. Those are the life-enhancing considerations pertaining to conditions that may provide nourishment to the living body that "seeks above all to discharge its strength" in creative, world-interpreting activities.¹²² Whereas Nietzsche seems to eventually renounce the notion of "genius" as conceived under the "ecstatic" influence of Schopenhauer and Wagner—during the pre-aphoristic period of his Basel philological writings—for their being too "metaphysical," idealistic, and Romantic in conception,¹²³ he sustains throughout the corpus of his work a supreme devotion to the enigma of the "higher human" or "great human being."¹²⁴ Stanley Rosen writes that "[c]haos and constructivity thus also legitimate an 'artistic metaphysics' or reversed Platonism in which the genuine philosopher is free to impose new values by the force of his will: so soll es sein."¹²⁵ Indeed, upon closer inspection, one finds that Nietzsche never really abandons the "great souled" "genius" at all.¹²⁶

Therefore, to revisit this important point, Rosen argues that when Nietzsche claims to have "abandoned" the metaphysics and Romanticism of his earlier writings "he means that the role of art has been deepened, not abandoned." This "deeper" affirmation of "artistic metaphysics," what Rosen refers to as a "reversed Platonism," reveals a philosophy that has

¹²¹ In that no single, univocal differentia could give the whole essence of a species and that the differentiae that do give the essence of a species will fall into more than one division, which can be ranked in hierarchy.
¹²² EH "Good Books" § 1, 3. See also BGE § 13. Cf. JS § 383.
¹²³ JS § 99.
¹²⁴ Cf. Ibid. § 102; BGE § 61 - 62. See also AC § 4; EH "Untimely Essays" § 3; WP § 997 (1884), 1038 (1888).
¹²⁵ 1989: 225
¹²⁶ Cf. BGE § 206, 274, 295; JS § 99, 102, 370; TI "Expeditions" § 47 - 48; AC § 1, 4.
both feet firmly planted on the ground of life and nature. The “artistic metaphysics of genius”
(and of culture) are, therefore, not simply maintained, but enhanced, as the corpus of
Nietzsche’s work develops and centers around the idea of will to power.127 The transition to a
vocabulary of “embodiment,” corporeal knowledge, strength, and instinct is the distinctive mark
of this grounded somatic ontology of power, which not only “serves life,” but more
importantly “enhances” the “higher life” which Nietzsche insists is nature’s, history’s, and
culture’s supreme task.128 Yet, for nature, history, and culture to have this effect requires or
presupposes, Nietzsche argues, a “noble faith” in greatness in itself. Thus he propounds a
“life enhancing” belief in the continuity of all that is natural and great—including all that was
exemplary in the past—united with a deep “desire” that the “great human” recur eternally.129
That “recurrence” demands a “discipline of suffering,” careful discretion, courage, and great
sacrifice. Nevertheless, Nietzsche’s earthly affirmation of life’s contingency, temporality, and
particularity is no more apparent than in the loyal devotion Nietzsche shows to the fecund
possibilities of a special kind of human being for the future of the species.

Thus does Nietzsche remain “faithful to what is true and authentic” in a lifelong
obsession with the pedagogical and inherently political possibilities of the most exceptional
human beings, whose existence anticipates a culture comprised of such super “healthy”
people.130 The early philology of genius transitions into a genealogical “power ontology” that
indicates both the basic and furthest possibilities for human life in terms of a rank-ordered
typology, which, in turn, grounds a new ethics (Nietzsche’s advice on how to treat different
types of persons) and a new politics (his design for high culture). Although they mature and in
some notable ways change over the course of his career, the pedagogical continuities in
Nietzsche’s writings are in these crucial respects relatively constant. From the beginning to end,
he maintains a consistent and overarching, concern with the rehabilitation, convalescence,
cultivation, and breeding of the rarest and best types of the human animal: be they “free
spirits,” “complementary humans,” “geniuses,” or those whom are, more generally speaking
on Nietzsche’s view of the matter, more “natural”131 and “noble.”132 That concern is typically
attended by an urgent, definitively political concern for the future of high culture.

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128 Cf. HL § 2; BGE 61 - 62.
129 Cf. JS § 102; TSZ III. 2 - 3.
130 Cf. WB § 4 [end]; JS § 99; BGE § 206; GM I § 10, II § 2.
131 Cf. BGE § 230. See also WP § 942 (1885), 950 (1884 - 1886).
Given an increasingly self-conscious and self-referential polemical orientation to the modern condition, Nietzsche’s intent to overcome his own deep-seated pessimism and early polemics gains creative intensity as he finds his way to a more positive, “affirmative” view of the future. Nietzsche’s mature politics are, therefore, entwined with self-experiments in depth psychology. Like Plato, he turns politics into psychology and vice versa; and this is something that becomes increasingly apparent in Nietzsche’s later writings, which attempt to show by means of genealogy how humans have become what they are, with the pedagogical intent that they (or at least some of them) may both understand and appreciate what a very few of them might yet become. In other words, by making politics a projection and crystallization of his own earlier philological commitments and later genealogical strategies for combatting nihilism in himself and his social context, Nietzsche’s political education is the nurturing and radiation of his personal and local self-generated project of self-education. It is precisely the complicated role Nietzsche plays in the decadence of his age—which manifests itself in his own physiological disease—that sanctions his unique pedagogical insight and authority.

The heuristic enterprise of Nietzsche’s political education is thus phrased in Asklepiatic terms of the newly created “responsibilities of a physician.” This exceptional breed of “genius of culture” recalls an archetype that seems to be none other than Chiron: “a centaur, half-beast, half man... [who] could only be called an evil demonic being; but his objectives, which here and there shine through, would be great and good.” This exalted and rarest type of teacher employs the fructifying forces of natural life such that knowing and loving, knowing and terror, knowing and experience—thinking and action—are intimately and intensely associated.

Like Chiron, Nietzsche confronts, takes measure, and diagnoses himself and so prepares to do likewise for others. Nietzsche’s writings, especially the post Zarathustra ones, give evidence of a

133 Cf. BGE § 6.
134 Ti “Expeditions” § 36. Cf. HH § 122, 243; TSZ P § 1 & 9, II. 1 (108); BGE § 212.; KSA 8.5.25. Cf.
Emerson, On Education, p. 121. See also Hölderlin, Hyperion I.II § 18 (72).
135 The wisest of the centaurs, he who educated or ministered to many gods and heroes, among them:
Apollo, Asklepios, Jason, Peleus, and Achilles. His knowledge covered music, poetry, the martial arts,
hunting, ethics and, perhaps most significantly, medicine. He lived and taught in and around Mount
Pelion. Notably, he chose mortality, freely giving his immortality to Prometheus—in some accounts, he
died because of a poisoned arrow belonging to his erstwhile companion, Heracles. Cf. Elizabeth
136 HH § 241.
137 Cf. TSZ II. 1; Ti “Expeditions” § 44. This type, Parkes writes, “[gets] into the flux of existence, life’s
flow, not merely by going along with it but by flowing or streaming with it: no passive or reactive laissez-
aller, but an active participation that furthers and amplifies life’s flow—just as Zarathustra’s soul ‘rushes
into valleys’ and he becomes ‘fully the roaring stream out of high cliffs’” (1996:183).
self-conscious pathological condition; his study of the arrow that wounded him, as it were, serves as warrant for a new and authoritative political teaching. Nietzsche’s own self-exploration, self-experiment, self-disclosure, and self-overcomings (successes and failures notwithstanding) fortify the pedagogical standpoint from which he aims to overcome the decadence that besets him and, he presumes, others “like” him. As Heracles’ arrow wounded Chiron, decadence injures and infects Nietzsche. He turns his “wound” into a laboratory.

I have suggested that Nietzsche casts himself in the role as both a physician of culture and convalescent. A self-conscious “wounded-healer,” he is an educator who provides tools and insights—tactics and strategies—that his genuine students (including future educators) need in order to derive what they require for success. Nietzsche’s pedagogy, in which one finds more exhortation than doctrine for transformation, directs those who can exchange or transfigure one temperament for another. Again, his thinking in such regard goes back to the early writings:

The best we can do is to confront our inherited and hereditary nature with our knowledge of it, and through a new, stern discipline combat our inborn heritage and implant in ourselves a new habit, a new instinct, a second nature, so that our first nature withers away. It is an attempt to give oneself, as it were a posteriori, a past in which one would like to originate in opposition to that in which one did originate:—always a dangerous attempt because it is so hard to know the limit to denial of the past and because second natures are usually weaker than the first.

Nietzsche’s centaurian wisdom is codeterminous with having lived—and survived such living—“dangerously” or “experimentally” as only exceptional persons are capable. The experienced display (hopefully the best students will also) “power of expansion.” Some people, “such as Goethe,” thinks Nietzsche, “employ the ebb and flood... for the purpose of knowledge” in ways that are edifying not just for the practitioner but for the close observer, as well. That is to say, in other words, a “true educator,” who requires both a firm philosophical

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138 Although, to be sure, this self-diagnosis is evident in the earlier writings, as well. Cf. HL § 10. See also Quentin Taylor, 1997: 152 - 153.
139 Cf. EH “Wise” § 1. See also a letter to Maliwida von Meysenbug, 10/18/1888.
140 Cf. EH “Wise” § 1, 2.
141 HL § 3. Cf. § 10: “Empty ‘being’ is granted me, but not full and green ‘life’: the feeling that tells me I exist warrants to me only that I am a thinking creature, not that I am a living one, not that I am an animal but at most a cogital. Only give me life, then I will create a culture for you out of it! ... Who is to give them this life? No god and no man: only their own youth: unchain this and you will have liberated life... . But it is this sick, this unchained life, and needs to be cured.”
142 See PTG § 1, 3; SE § 2 - 3; BGE § 42, 210 - 212. Cf. KSA 8.3.39, 62.
143 HH § 272.
144 Ibid.
145 Ibid. § 500.
stance and a warrior spirit, experiments courageously, pushing harder and farther in a manner that changes not only himself but others, indeed his or her example can be an inspirational or mimetic source of healing others. The educational exemplar thus “becomes a moral phenomenon” in virtue of his or her accomplishments, and the style in which they were achieved. Nietzsche reports: “I discovered life as it were anew... I made out of my will to health, to life, my philosophy.” Considering this reflection in light of what Emerson said—“to the poet, to the philosopher, to the saint, all things are friendly and sacred, all events profitable, all days holy, all men divine”—Nietzsche expresses the indelible impression of tragic wisdom.

Wisdom, love, and reverence; knowledge, bravery, and experience; grace, gratitude, and probity; and the calm austerity they seem to afford, are inseparable from each other on Nietzsche’s magisterial definition of the educator—a “warrior of knowledge.” The “great human being” he seeks to produce is, therefore, at once a “terminus” whose self-overcoming also embodies the promise of a new beginning. Existence here becomes a condition of possibility that, in virtue of the rare human being’s manner, style, power, and creative energy, points to the realization of forward-looking “genius” Nietzsche exalts in his early writings. This is the creative person who is able to translate experience, suffering, and thought into action; whose work is a test and affirmation of various powers brought to bear by a total strength rooted in life and character. Thought and life, Nietzsche concludes, must converge in a discipline of life-practice (a personal ethos) if greatness is to be achieved.

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146 Cf. HL § 5: “No one [today] ventures to fulfill the philosophical law in himself, no one lives philosophically with that simple loyalty that constrained a man of antiquity to bear himself a Stoic wherever he was, whatever he did...” See SE § 3: “I profit from a philosopher only insofar as he can be example...” See also TI “Germans” § 5.
147 Cf. PTG § 5. See also TSW 1.10, IV.3 § 2, IV.12; EH “Wise” § 7.
149 PTG § 4: “Anaximander displayed a truly tragic pride in his gestures and customs of daily living... he was a great model...”
150 EH “Wise” § 2.
151 History, p. 117. Cf. TSW II. 11: “Thus did my purity once speak to me in a fair hour: ‘Divine shall all beings be to me.’”; BGE § 49, 56. See also JS § 339: “The Greeks, to be sure, prayed: ‘Everything beautiful twice and even three times!’”
152 Cf. Fate and Eternity § 4.
153 TI “Expeditions” § 44; cf. TSW I.1. See also BGE § 39: “Perhaps hardness and cunning furnish more favorable conditions for the origin of the strong, independent spirit and philosopher than the gentle, fine, conciliatory good-naturedness and art of taking things lightly which people prize, and prize rightly, in a scholar.”
154 Cf. FEI § 2: “[T]his is precisely where culture begins—namely in understanding how to treat the quick as something vital, and it is here too that the mission of the cultured teacher begins... to do properly and not merely to know properly.” See also BGE § 49.
For believe me: the secret for harvesting from existence the greatest fruitfulness and greatest enjoyment is—to live dangerously!\textsuperscript{155}

A “true educator,” thinks Nietzsche, having experimented fruitfully with life and danger,\textsuperscript{156} united in mind and body, will and instinct, teaches by the example of his “outward life.” The exemplary philosophers of ancient Greece taught “through their bearing, what they wore, what they ate, and their morals, rather than by what they said, let alone by what they wrote.”\textsuperscript{157} Nietzsche’s “true educator” is, in other words, a “man of action”; not so much a “man of contemplation.”\textsuperscript{158}

Nietzsche’s anti-Platonic (or reversed-Platonic) purposes are here evident, in that he contradicts the disembodied detachment of traditional philosophers, and theologians, by opposing the contemplative theoretical man—“who hates all violence, sudden transition”—to the man of action who “voluntarily takes upon himself the suffering involved in being truthful . . .”\textsuperscript{159} In that he thinks truth “hard” and “dangerous,” damaging if not fatal for most people, Nietzsche requires of the seeker of truth “greatness of soul,” for the “service of truth is the hardest service.”\textsuperscript{160} The true philosopher educator—these terms being interchangeable and codeterminous for Nietzsche—is the “most spiritual” human, one who looks with pride and good conscience into the nature of things and acts accordingly.\textsuperscript{161} The esprit fort\textsuperscript{162} of character has, for Nietzsche, primacy over the intellect. On this perspective, the “true educator” teaches that which has been incorporated and assimilated by virtue of experience.\textsuperscript{163} Indeed, for Nietzsche, one must teach a doctrine in order to really live/fulfill it—else a teaching remains little more than a bloodless, denatured abstraction.\textsuperscript{164}

Ultimately, the individual derives the values of his acts from himself; because he has to interpret in a quite individual way

\textsuperscript{155} JS § 283, cf. § 154. See also BGE § 39: “Something might be true while being harmful and dangerous in the highest degree . . . in which case the strength of a spirit should be measured according to how much of the ‘truth’ one could still barely endure—”

\textsuperscript{156} Cf. BT § 18; BGE § 29, 41, 42 & 295.

\textsuperscript{157} SE § 3; cf. § 8. See also KGW, VII, 2, 25 (8) (in Blondel 1986:223).

\textsuperscript{158} Cf. SE § 4; D § 519; JS § 280, 301 & 350.

\textsuperscript{159} SE § 4; see also HL § 1.

\textsuperscript{160} AC § 50.

\textsuperscript{161} Cf. BGE § 204, 205. Nietzsche disdains resentful “specialists” who accuse him of dilettantism, knowing that they themselves are intellectual and moral frauds. See also BGE § 202 - 203.

\textsuperscript{162} Cf. HH § 230.

\textsuperscript{163} Cf. KGW, V, 2, 13 (18): “Character = Organism.”

\textsuperscript{164} See D § 362: “Woe to the thinker who is not the gardener but only the soil of the plants that grow in him!” This is perhaps the principal pedagogical lesson of Zarathustra’s transformations from a reclusive sage into a teacher who is at once both a self-actualized exemplar of truth and majesty, as well as an actively engaged “redeemer”. Cf. TSZ I.20; BGE § 225. See also HH § 200; BGE § 63; JS § 349.
even the words he has inherited. His interpretation of a formula at least is personal, even if he does not create a formula: as an interpreter he is still creative.165

"The only means of really knowing something," Nietzsche writes elsewhere, "is by trying to do it."166 Action and experience, however, presuppose a living world of nature in which to act and experiment. If the justification of an educator’s authority is premised upon how he spent his life before he acceded to the role of teacher,167 then, as Nietzsche implies, the necessity of his having tested himself in the wilds of the natural world is a matter of profound significance. In this respect, the future of the "great," much less "true," educator is in serious jeopardy, in large part because the future of the wild earth is imperiled.168 For just as there is no cure without risk, there is no cure if the source of the risk is destroyed. That rare, potent mixture of danger and love in the vigorous, dangerous life of the "true philosopher" Nietzsche champions can only be catalyzed by adventure in the open air—where "the body is inspired" and achieves a "dangerous health."

This seems to be one principal reason why he counsels to "sit as little as possible; credit no thought not born in the open air and while moving freely about—in which the muscles too do not hold a festival."170 "Genius," he confesses, "is conditioned" by a "rapid metabolism" which, supplied with the "great, even tremendous quantities of energy" of pristine natural surroundings, fulfills it potential in the wild places better than those that are not.171

Consequently, Nietzsche is aware that this kind of experience, as much or more so than the fugitive genius of the "great human being," is extremely and increasingly rare in the domesticated, misbegotten world of modernity. Indeed, it is certain that less than one percent of the population of Western Civilization (America and European societies in particular) has ever spent a day in truly wild country; and the number who have done so in solitude—in that extremity where they have been truly confronted with their natural being—is infinitesimal. And what of them are the kind of potential "geniuses of the heart"172 to whom Nietzsche

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165 WP § 767 (1883 - 1888).
166 Quoted in Taylor, 1997: 147.
167 Cf. TSZ P § 1. See also PTG § 4; SE § 3, 7; TI "Germans" § 5
169 EH "TSZ" § 2, 4.
170 Ibid. "Clever" § 1.
171 Ibid. § 2.
172 BGE § 295.
Experience, to reiterate, not "philosophical understanding" in the prosaic academic sense, is primary for Nietzsche. Moreover, Nietzsche's philosophy of education is an endorsement (and a defense) of certain kinds of experience, the kinds that only a few "true philosophers" have partaken. Nothing is more endangered than these kinds of experiences in a world that desecrates and destroys the natural environment and forgets thereby what true human nobility really means. In a very significant sense, Nietzsche's injunction to cultivate a new nobility entails a return to the wild—only then will the "basic text of homo natura" again be recognized.

I came to my truth by diverse paths and in diverse ways: it was not upon a single ladder that I climbed to the height where my eyes survey my distances.

Nietzsche's future educators are thus to be not only comfortable in the wild, they would also be, like Chiron and Asklepios, masters of the "art of medicine." Such wild "geniuses of the heart from whose touch everyone walks away richer"—like Hölderlin's Hyperion—"seek only what is noblest and most beautiful": the most natural. Moreover, as a consequence of a lifelong "discipline of suffering," these profound sufferers (who survive) enjoy a greater health. Consider further Elizabeth's Cooke apt chronicle of Homer's venerable centaur:

Years of experiment and practice made him a great and wise healer. But it is suffering—his own—which makes him the best. Because he can bear to suffer (though he cannot bear it, that is the trouble) he can judge exactly the extent of another's need and when it has been assuaged. He knows who to treat, when to treat, and when to stop. He knows that the smallest quantities are often the most effective. He has taught (but only Asclepius has ever understood this) that the weapon which wounded you may sometimes be used to heal

These insights and questions reveal how rare it is, especially among those academic "scholars" who study and teach Nietzsche, to find someone whose primary study is the cultivation of the self/soul in the wild. There is little reason to expect the teachings of Nietzsche (a man whose greatest thoughts reportedly came to him while walking in and around the mountains) regarding the "chaotic" powers of wild nature to be advocated by "philosopher-educators" with little experience of the wildness and wilderness so important to him.

Op cit. § 204.
Ibid. § 230.
TSZ III.11 § 2.
Cf. Horace, Odes, III, ii, 5 - 6: "Let him live beneath the open sky, And dangerously."
HH § 242. Cf. § 306.
BGE § 295.
Hölderlin, Hyperion II. I § 18 (73).
See BGE § 225, 270. Cf. JS § 382; WP § 1013 (1885 - 1886), 47 (1888).
Cooke’s exposition echoes Nietzsche’s predilection that his redemptive educational project is not intended for a nondescript mass about whom nothing is presumed. For he most assuredly does presuppose many things. Those for whom he writes are not only fundamentally healthy; they are also consummate sufferers. It can be expected, furthermore, that “true educators” will maintain their proper distance from the overly domesticated world and its incurable denizens. The “untamed wisdom” and “lust” for life of Nietzsche’s “philosophers of the future” would only be tainted by the foul, deadening air of today’s agora.

Educators are needed who have themselves been educated, superior, noble spirits, proved at every moment, proved by words and silence, representing culture which has grown sweet—not the learned louts whom secondary schools and universities today offer our youth as “higher wet nurses.”

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It would seem notable that all references to the “true educator” exclusively indicate men. Women are really nowhere apparent in Nietzsche’s vision of culture and the “revolution in education” as teachers or leaders. This can’t be because Nietzsche thinks women less “natural” or, for that matter, less wild than men; for surely he does not. In fact, he considers the very “nature” of woman to be “wild”—maybe too wild!

What inspires respect for woman, and often enough even fear, is her nature, which is more ‘natural’ than man’s, the genuine, cunning suppleness of a beast of prey, the tiger’s claw under the glove, the naïveté of her egoism, her uneducability and inner wildness, the incomprehensibility, scope, and movement of her desires and virtues— . . . this dangerous and beautiful cat “woman” . . .

Except, of course, for the part about “uneducability,” this is, for the most part, high praise from Nietzsche, especially in light of the many positive allusions he makes to the powerful nature and “force of will” of women. Still, the relegation of women to a “secondary status” in educational and cultural matters is clear enough and can be inferred from his critique

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183 Cf. SE § 4; HH § 157; BGE § 270, 295; JS § 370; Ti “Expeditions” § 47; EH “Wagner” § 4.
184 Cf. BGE § 257. See also KSA 10 [63] (1887): “Chief viewpoint: to open up distances, but not to create oppositions. [T]o dismantle the intermediate forms and reduce their influence: the chief means of preserving distances.”
186 SE § 7.
187 Cf. Ibid. § 8.
188 Cf. BGE § 131, 139, 207.
189 Cf. Ibid. § 239: “[t]he most powerful and influential women of the world (most recently Napoleon’s mother) owed their power and ascendancy over men to their force of will—and not to schoolmasters!”
190 Ibid. Cf. TSZ II.10.
of nihilism and modern decadence, together which foster the widespread “retrogression” of the type of woman. Women are, as a consequence of “modern ideas,” losing those distinctive qualities (e.g., that wild “force of will”) that otherwise dignify their gender. Nevertheless, Nietzsche believes unequivocally that women—as in ancient Hellas—have a subordinate though “necessary relationship” to the objectives of his project of cultural renaissance.

Throughout his writings, from the earliest notes and published works to the end, he contends that the proper (i.e., “natural”) cultural role of woman is to serve as a source and symbol of rest, play, inspiration (including danger), and, above all, refuge. Notably, women are accorded the significant place of healer and lover. Ideally, women shelter and nurture children and warriors alike. They prepare and console the hero for and after the agon, as it were. In light of Nietzsche’s warrior spirit, which in one way or another pervades most everything he wrote, the edifying importance of this sustaining, enabling, inspiring role of women cannot be overestimated. Furthermore, the reverence Nietzsche shows for Homer’s heroic mothers and wives (Penelope, Antigone, Elektra, Ariadne) in Greek mythology and the “women” that enchant Zarathustra (Life, Wisdom, Eternity) underscores a lifelong esteem for the “sacred and eternal feminine.” In this respect to his leading mytho-philosophical leitmotifs, and considering his own biographical development and experience—not least of which regards his conflicted feelings for his mother and sister—Nietzsche’s infatuation with both Cosima Wagner and Lou Salomé probably has a lot to do with his opinion of women.

As regards education, more particularly, he rather succinctly sums up his thinking thus:
"Man should be trained for war and woman for the recreation of the warrior: all else is folly." Almost as an afterthought, but affording a crucial insight into his view of the edifying function of women, he adds: "Let woman be a plaything, pure and fine like a precious stone, illumined by the virtues of a world that does not yet exist." Women can therefore be said, both in the earliest and mature writings, to be accorded a secondary, subordinate, though absolutely crucial, that is, enabling, role in Nietzsche's political and educational enterprise. He distills his philosophy of the sexes thus:

The happiness of man is: I will. The happiness of woman is: he wills. "Behold, now the world has become perfect!"—thus thinks every woman when she obeys with all her love.

Given that Nietzsche regards nature—the wild in particular—as intrinsically feminine yet otherwise fundamentally ambiguous and primordially abundant, it seems appropriate that he (again like the ancient Greeks) treats chaos, though grammatically neuter, as primordially and prototypically female. Nietzsche's project of "renaturalizing humanity" seems, upon reflection, to presuppose a newly "redeemed" conception of nature that restores its creative abundance as chaos to women as much as men. His renewal of unfathomable excess or chaos restores or recovers the "innocence of becoming" to the will to power of all humankind, especially the rarest and most gifted by nature.

Nietzsche should perhaps be seen then as distinguishing, in terms of rank order, between different types of women, just as he distinguishes between different types of men. Sarah Kofman elucidates the point that "[f]rom a genealogical point of view, an affirmative woman is closer to an affirmative man than a degenerate woman. And some women are more affirmative than some men." That will to power is vested in humans disproportionately, in men and women alike, is especially relevant in the context of this discussion of the role of women. This seems especially important for the question of motherhood also. It is the mothers, after all, who will carry in their bodies, bear, and parent the "over human." That natural power

198 TSZ I.18; see TSZ I, 20 & III, 12 § 23; see also BGE § 231-39; and EH "Clever" § 5.
199 See the unpublished fragment The Greek Woman (1871).
200 Op cit.
201 JS § 339.
203 BGE § 230.
204 As his feelings for and thoughts about Cosima Wagner and Lou Salomé attest clearly.
206 Cf. BGE § 248.
as creative chaos is increasingly wasted in a decadent culture consumed by nihilism, his reverence for women as mothers (and lovers) gives a stricter urgency to Nietzsche’s teaching that some — women in this case—must be cultivated for the “higher sacrament” of breeding (Züchtung) with men of a certain caliber precisely in order to procreate a next stage of higher humans to their ownmost, intrinsic possibilities. These are the distinctively future-oriented goals not of mere being but becoming, creation, growth, and sacrifice of a “world that has not yet come” that seem to be in keeping with the archetypal natural enigma of women.

Let woman be a plaything, pure and fine, like a precious stone, illumined by the virtues of a world that has not yet come. Let the light of a star shine in your love! Let your hope be: “May I give birth to the Übermensch!”

It shouldn’t come as a surprise then that Nietzsche’s highest term for the enhancement of the human species, Übermensch, is gender neutral. Though it remains unavoidably apparent, in view of his vision of the project of procreating the Übermensch, that he depends on the fecund union of women and men — who both must be “translated” into the “text of homo natura.” That translation is as much an “untying” or “untranslating” of the unnatural fictions of traditional strictures; it recovers the distinct and complementary roles of male and female; a recovery, moreover, that propounds — in an ecological fashion — their absolute interdependency. The idea of complementarity is important to bear in mind when trying to determine who should (and shouldn’t) be an educator. The most natural, wild and wise, thinks Nietzsche, regardless of gender, have much to teach — if, that is, one is ready for their teaching. Despite otherwise idiosyncratic predilections, the most vital consideration for Nietzsche therefore is how much power, intelligence, style, and experience a person has and is willing to share. All life, that is, particularly vital, higher life, regardless of gender, has intrinsic, and, moreover, edifying value for Nietzsche.

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Provided that both the indispensable conditions of a “redeemed” nature and the properly

207 See TSZ 1.20. Consider further: “Beyond yourself should you propagate. But first must you be cultivated yourself, four-square in body and soul. Not only onward should you propagate yourself, but upward! May the garden of marriage help you therein! A higher body shall you create, a first movement, a self-propelling wheel — a creator shall you create. Marriage: thus I call the will of two to create the one that is more than those who created it. Reverence for one another I call marriage as for the willers of such a will. Let this be the sense and truth of your marriage.” (My emphasis.)

208 TSZ 1.18.

209 Rüdiger Bittner writes that “[t]ranslating back ... does not aim to preserve as much as possible of the text we have before us ... but instead to recover what the text has failed to preserve. It is an ‘untranslating’, by analogy, say, to ‘untying’” (2003: xv).
attuned educators are present, the seeming scarcity of the most spiritual complex human
typology might not be the difficulty it is today—a vicissitude which otherwise precludes the
pedagogical possibility of realizing, in practice, a truly Nietzschean political education.

He who became aware of how genius is produced, and desired to proceed
in the manner in which nature does in this matter, would have to be
exactly as evil and ruthless as nature is. 210

It remains a matter of timing and circumspection: a matter of nourishing circumstances
that will vary according to different persons and natural environments. 211 It is a matter then of
understanding, as a matter of natural and cultural—one might add pharmacological
—necessity, 212 what is (and isn’t) conducive to the recognition, propagation and celebration of
the most exceptional talent, energy. A “certain moral sublimity,” Zarathustra’s “untamed
wisdom,” seems then to be reflected in the authentic contextual, i.e., ecological, identity of the
most natural human beings, whose flourishing should be understood in comprehensive
contextual terms of what brings life into being and sustains it. 213 These are the distinctively wild qualities, in other words, that deserve more serious, circumspect attention in face of the decline of the vital earth and living human genius—whose possibility can be interpreted accurately in
terms of a defense or endorsement of healthy human diversity. 214

The decline of the “higher types,” the “great human beings” and “genius” particularly, has its root cause, Nietzsche is saying, in the decline of our understanding and experience of nature. We are reminded that instincts, sensibilities, and tastes from the past, which now seem so distant and alien, can recur in such a manner that enables the most capacious and courageous to risk affirming the widest and wildest of nature’s diversity. Nietzsche’s study of the text of homo natura, as it were, leads to the conclusion that the “great soul” of the “genius” is a condition of possibility in whose time another time recurs eternally if only we recognize the fecund source of such possibility. A truly philosophical education, as Nietzsche understands the enterprise, therefore entails a reengagement with the natural basis of human being: the body. Re-acquaintance or -engagement with nature is as much a discovery of the wild within the body as it is an adventure in the wild lands. Awareness of what is written into

210 HH § 233. Cf. BGE § 188.
211 This, again, is one of the “greatest advantages of polytheism” (JS § 143).
212 Cf. BGE § 36, 37, 56; WP 1050 (1888).
213 See TSZ II.8.
214 Nietzsche ranks cultures by the richness or diversity of their parts. Along with their diversity, the rank ordered relationship of their component parts indicates, to Nietzsche, the integrity of their “habits and value-concepts,” or the “total health” of a people or time—a quality he refers to in terms of a “unity of style.” Cf. D § 272. See also PTG § 1; HL § 9 - 10.
the embodied, mortal, animal soul by the millennial, formative experience of the species speaks of an "atavism of the highest rank." The "untamed wisdom" or pristine genuineness of Nietzsche's philosophy and pedagogical politics is therefore "less a discovery than a re-recognizing, a re-remembering, a return and homecoming to a distant, age-old collective household of the soul." That is why he prefers

"to understand the rare human beings of an age as suddenly emerging late ghosts of past cultures and their powers—as atavisms of a people and its mores...[t]hey seem strange, rare, extraordinary; and whoever feels these powers in himself must nurse, defend, honor, and cultivate them against another world that resists them, until he becomes either a great human being or a mad and eccentric one—or perishes early."

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217 JS §10. Cf. BGE § 274.
CHAPTER TWO

Nietzsche “Reconstructed”?

The thrust of Nietzsche’s educational ideas cannot—nor did he intend for them to—have universal, least of all egalitarian, appeal. This could hardly be otherwise in an era when no notable philosophical or political figure in either the Anglo-American or Continental tradition openly opposes the secular theodicy of “human rights.” According to the Enlightenment orthodoxy, particularly as regards the task of education, the goal for human beings is to realize the human happiness of all. This fundamentally democratic, moreover anthropocentric, moral vision, rejects the notion of natural accidents of birth and station within hierarchy as fate. The democratic Enlightenment, and the Christian ethics upon which it is firmly based, provides the moral and intellectual underpinnings of the contemporary humanitarian project. Nietzsche however “wars” against the moral and intellectual force of the Enlightenment vision of the world—in which no injustice is impossible to rectify, no technical problem impossible to solve, and no project for the “improvement” of the conditions of human life impossible to realize—that is foisted continually upon students by teachers in the West.218

In this chapter, I address the general oversight or lack of recognition among contemporary philosophers of education of Nietzsche’s philosophy of education. Though it should go without saying, it must be emphasized that Nietzsche’s radical break with conventional morality and politics goes against the grain of the labors of most present-day American and British philosophers of education, who not only show a perfunctory commitment to democracy, but also engage in the widespread advocacy of the dispensation of democratic ideology and the elimination of human suffering. Obvious and subtle difficulties therefore arise from the fact that Nietzsche’s politics and his aristocratic educational ethics are, to the late-modern mind, repellent. Perhaps this is why many interpretations of Nietzsche today misappropriate and distort his philosophy in ways that conform with late- or postmodern political sentiments.219 By starting from where are now and ending up there, one is not challenged to think beyond the convention of current moral and political predilections. Such disingenuousness betrays the movement to moral-political uniformity Nietzsche forecast, one

218 See Lampert: “[W]hat counts as ‘progress’ in a culture committed above all to the progressive is in fact decay of a very precise sort, decay into the tyranny of an instinct for comfort and ease” (2001: 174; see also pp. 175 - 176. Cf. TSZ P; BGE § 202; GM I § 11.

219 Paul Smeyers writes in this vein that “it is not correct to project onto Nietzsche an aristocratic education of a few individuals,” in “Nietzsche and Education: Learn to Make Sense for Oneself, or Standing for One’s Ideas” in Nietzsche’s Legacy for Education: Past and Present Values, (Peters, Marshall and Smeyers, eds.) 2001:101. Motivated, one can only presume, by philosophically illegitimate notions of egalitarianism, Smeyers “projects” his own ineluctable biases.
which discounts differences or alternatives to the status-quo that might really matter.\textsuperscript{220}

While the patently democratic opinions that some recent postmodern scholars pass off in regards to Nietzsche may be commendable as political sentiments, they merely shore up conventional beliefs; they do not reflect his own aspirations, political, educational, or otherwise. Despite the efforts of contemporary scholars, we shouldn’t pretend that Nietzsche is a friend of humanitarian ethics, for, as can be readily perceived in his account of high culture and human typology, Nietzsche’s political enterprise is anathema to the agenda of advocates of social justice who seek to eliminate human privation. Nietzsche clearly endorses more human cruelty and suffering, not less.\textsuperscript{221} In that spirit, he wants to “overcome”—not accommodate—the sentimentality and rationalizations that the contemporary moral and political orthodoxy generate. Moreover, Nietzsche’s critique of modernity, the Enlightenment project, and the Christian biases that inhere in it, reveals the fault lines in the crumbling bedrock of late-modern moral, political, and educational project.

Nietzsche’s writings militate against almost everything hallowed in the modern world of political liberalism in the advance of a hierarchical pattern of what Georges Brandes tagged as Nietzsche’s “aristocratic radicalism.”\textsuperscript{222} This is to emphasize that Nietzsche’s philosophy and political education, even in its most recondite and cultured aspects, are inextricable from austere political exigencies that cannot be reconciled to democratic theory or practice. Both his early and mature writings (published and unpublished) attest forcefully and explicitly to the political component of his overall pedagogical attempt to transform culture and enhance human nature.\textsuperscript{223} Lampert remarks in such respects that

\begin{quote}
The political task [of Nietzsche] is therefore twofold: thwarting the goal of the democratic Enlightenment, the end of history that would be “the end of philosophy on earth.” And establishing the interests of philosophy where those interests are reasonably seen as the “highest interests of mankind.”\textsuperscript{224}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{220} Cf. BGE § 202.

\textsuperscript{221} See Ibid. § 270: “Profound suffering makes noble, it separates. . . . what separates . . . most profoundly is a different sense and degree of cleanliness” (§ 271). See also BGE § 62, 202, 225, 228-231, 293. Cf. The Greek State (1871). Cf. Parkes: “Nietzsche’s [ideas of ‘order of rank’ and ‘pathos of distance’]. . . [apply] to hierarchies among human beings and not to a putative superiority of humans over natural beings. Nietzsche is admittedly an elitist—but with respect to his fellows rather than to animals, plants, and other natural phenomena” (2003: 12). See also AC § 14.

\textsuperscript{222} See An Essay on Aristocratic Radicalism (1887). Cf. HH § 224; EH “Good Books” § 2. See also EH “Clever” § 8.

\textsuperscript{223} Cf. BGE §203, 208; see also JS § 377; TI “Improvers” § 3, “Germans” § 3-5, “Expeditions” § 48, “Ancients” § 2; AC § 57.

\textsuperscript{224} 2001:4. Cf. Strauss, Persecution and the Art of Writing 18; see BGE § 211 - 13. See also Strauss, On Tyranny 211; cf. BGE § 204
Nietzsche's sense of aristocratic culture intimates a nonutilitarian, indeed, posthumanist, regime in which the best, "most powerful," or wisest rule without having to make compromises with a nondescript mass population. This is an antidemocratic and authoritarian regime that has as its unambiguous goal the promotion and cultivation of virtue—formulated naturalistically in medical and aesthetic terms—to the fullest possible extent.

The generic disregard or, at best, misunderstanding and misappropriation of Nietzsche's political and educational thought in the Anglo-American discourse of the philosophy of education is due, therefore, to his open endorsement of aristocratic and hierarchical values. Both Nietzsche's critique of modernity and his related prescriptions for future change pose a serious threat to the sanctity and security, one might say the complacency, of contemporary moral-political assumptions and expectations—especially as regards education. His hostility toward modern education (which would surely be more intense were he still alive) can be understood as expressing a full frontal assault against all Christian-democratic justificatory tendencies. For these kinds of reasons, it is as unusual as it is difficult for partisans of egalitarian democracy to accept Nietzsche's philosophy of education on its own terms. Thus, one finds little regarding Nietzsche in the philosophy of education literature that has not been "reconstructed" in ways that supposedly conform with modern liberal political and educational penchants.

What little scholarship pertains to Nietzsche's political and educational thought reveals a vogue that, in effect, endorses "reconstructed" readings of Nietzsche as either a "theoretician..."

Cf. Rosen: "[W]e cannot appreciate the dangers of [Nietzsche's] political program if we do not perceive the validity of much of his diagnosis of Western society.... Nietzsche intends to accelerate the process of self-destruction intrinsic to modern 'progress,' not to encourage a return to some idyllic past" (1989: 191).

To reiterate, Nietzsche provides answers to the following questions or problems: (1) What is the aim or purpose of education; (2) Who is to be educated, and how or in what manner; (3) Who is qualified to be an educator—or what does the supremely qualified educator look like; (4) What is the precisely moral and political relationship of education to culture or society; and (5) What is the ontological relationship of culture or society to nature. Given that he undertakes these questions in the first place—at the beginning as at the end of his career—and that he formulates comprehensive answers to them, based on a new ontology of life and nature, Nietzsche is surely a philosopher of education, and indeed a definitively political educator, in the most complete and exemplary sense of the term.

For commentary regarding the suppression of Nietzsche's aristocratic politics see Quentin Taylor, who writes that "[a]s for the specific issue of Nietzsche's 'elitism,' there is no evidence of equivocation: his social philosophy is aristocratic in tone and substance from top to bottom.... This awkward issue was largely ignored or suppressed by most post-war scholars ...." (The Republic of Genius: A Reconstruction of Nietzsche's Early Thought, 1997:166).

For examples of more credible readings of Nietzsche, see David E. Cooper, Authenticity and Learning: Nietzsche's Educational Philosophy, 1983; Gary Lemco, Nietzsche as Educator, 1990.

of modern democracy,” or a “democratic individualist” thinker. There are two trends at work here. The first is the trivialization of Nietzsche, such that promotes a radically relativist impression of his stance in regards to axiology, as if Nietzsche is equivocal or ambiguous on issues of value, culture, caste, race, and political or social hierarchy. Jacques Derrida’s writing about Nietzsche, for example, fosters such relativist impressions. In a cryptic way, Derrida’s reading of Nietzsche shows the contrasts between the metaphorical and literal, rhetoric and logic, and exposes other central notions of philosophy as not having the foundation their use presupposes. Yet, for all the penetrating insights it affords, the deconstructive approach subverts Nietzsche’s philosophical, expressly political project, to refashion culture in affirmative, edifying, and “life-enhancing” ways.

The second trend is one of domestication. Nietzsche’s domesticators seek to assimilate him to the “radically democratic” visions of the Left, by advocating an interpretation of Nietzsche that suits the adoption of extreme measures in order to achieve equality, freedom, and the elimination of human suffering. Though Nietzsche is anything but ambivalent on Enlightenment principles such as “equality” or “freedom,” shows no interest whatsoever in meliorating the conditions of life in contemporary society, the domesticators nevertheless attempt in vain to enlist Nietzsche in the dissemination of a “progressive” liberal ideology in ways that seem to support a project to reform or revive Western democracy.

These “radically democratic” renditions of his thought grossly misrepresent both the spirit and substance of Nietzsche’s philosophy, political, recondite, and otherwise. They do this, one can only presume, in the service of their own prejudices; prejudices which favor themes of opposition, emancipation, and destruction—encouraging rebellion in a rabble-rousing manner.


233 See the discussion of Richard Rorty and William Connolly as paradigmatic figures in the contemporary domestication of Nietzsche for liberalism, in Keith Ansell-Pearson, An Introduction to Nietzsche as Political Thinker: The perfect nihilist, 1994: 165 - 179.


anathema to Nietzsche’s anti-revolutionary stance—to the exclusion of the more culturally (and ecologically) significant motifs of recodification and discipline. With a view to Zarathustra’s “ape,” who symbolizes the fool that misunderstands Zarathustra’s core message—a great longing for something higher, the postmodern “apes” should be seen as mimicking Nietzsche’s contempt for modernity. Yet these “apes” remain poisoned by the envy or vengeance that Zarathustra loathes (in himself, above all) and seeks to overcome; significantly, these “apes” are, like the vulgar people Nietzsche disdains, unable to create. The “essential difference,” argues Lampert, “between [Nietzsche] and the fool who apes him is an essential difference in what moves each of them, but whether by revenge or love, each is, nevertheless, moved to condemn the city.” The postmodern readings miss in such regard a central Nietzschean political principle: overcoming the despicable Last Man. Furthermore, they miss the crux of his objections to liberalism, democracy, socialism, and most everything ideologically redolent of what are referred to by postmodernists, feminists, and egalitarians of various stripes and colors in hackneyed terms of “universal emancipation.” Such sentiments are altogether out of place as interpretations of what Nietzsche affirms.

However well-intentioned or intriguing the trivializing or domestication interpretations may seem to the bien pensants of late-modernity, both are counterfeit portraits that irresponsibly—though understandably—serve to obscure rather than clarify Nietzsche’s core political and educational message. What both the domesticating and trivializing trends share in common is a resistance to what Nietzsche actually wrote. They ignore or deny, for example, the pronounced physiological and naturalistic dimensions of Nietzsche’s conception of racial typologies and the natural vertical rank order among human types. Such central aspects of Nietzsche’s philosophy cannot be wished away, glossed over, or ignored. Michael

236 Cf. TI “Expeditions” § 48: “—I hate Rousseau even in the Revolution: it is the world-historical expression of this duplicity of idealist and canaille . . . ” Cf. SE § 4.
237 TSZ III.7.
238 1986:186.
239 The uniform and overriding social-ontological egalitarianism of postmodernism eclipses, indeed precludes, the sort of hierarchical human relations and sacrifices that Nietzsche demands. Cf. BGE § 188, 258 - 262.
240 In such respect, a term employed often is “delete”—in that “deletion is necessary for the selective interpretation [of Nietzsche] for the project of re-envisioning his radical democratic potential” (Alan Schrift, “Response to Don Dombowsky,” in Nietzsche Studien, Vol. 31, pp. 296 -97, 2002).
241 See TI “Expeditions” § 33: “The value of egoism depends on the physiological value of him who possesses it: it can be very valuable, it can be worthless and contemptible. Every individual may be regarded as representing the ascending or descending line of life.” Cf. WP § 292 (18887).
Zimmerman confirms that Nietzsche’s “free use of race-based categories, his references to physiological degeneration, and his frequent talk of breeding a nobler race” are decidedly at odds with most current educational, political, and, for that matter, environmental, thinking, by way of indicating “the potential, but not inevitable, connection between politics of nature and the politics of race.”

Despite the clearly defined and unambiguous antimodern and antidemocratic elements of Nietzsche’s political and educational thought, most timely interpretations of Nietzsche’s philosophy of education suffer from the persistent characteristic defect of confusing a respect for difference (which Nietzsche endorses) with a respect—or pity—for subalterns (which he does not). The disavowal of the rule of power, mastery, and the cultural necessity of aristocratic authority, domination, and subordination of a nondescript mass population unseats Nietzsche’s deliberate and clear intent to revoke the instincts and ideas that underwrite democratic principles. Because they cast away his neoaristocratic ambitions and associated claims to privileged truth, both the deconstructive and postmodern readings of Nietzsche cannot be relevant for a genuine account of Nietzsche’s pedagogical politics.

For example, when Endre Kiss writes of “Nietzsche’s universalistic and humanistic way of thinking” in “emancipatory-universal” terms which “remain generally supportive of democracy and democratic theory,” one wonders who Kiss is writing about; apparently not the Nietzsche who endlessly and in the strongest and most offensive terms derides democracy, humanism, and, perhaps most notably, any and all claims to the universal rational authority of the idea of the “rights of man.” In a similar vein, Leslie Sassone’s claims that “Nietzsche is democratic because... each person is equally worthy of individualization,” betray a rhetoric bound to the moral and political language of Enlightenment liberalism which Nietzsche militates against. Sassone and Kiss overlook Nietzsche’s sustained, emphatic arguments against bloodless philosophical abstractions that countenance the reified categorical dignity of the

243 Nietzsche’s Ecology: A Critical Inquiry, 2003: 9, 34. Lampert notes further in such respect that “Zarathustra wants to rear lions in our midst; he wants such beasts of prey to be nurtured until they become capable of the greatest tasks... their ambition will be boundless” (1988:208).
244 Cf. GM I § 13 - 14.
245 Cf. EH “Clever” § 10, “Destiny” § 1.
248 Cf. JS § 377. See also The Greek State, p. 4 - 5.
"individual." Furthermore, Sassone’s and Kiss’s “democratic” Nietzsche is not just free of danger—a weary, castrated, domesticated and debilitated, indeed comical, caricature—but is made an unwilling and unlikely accomplice to a form of government and way of life that Nietzsche goes to great pains to refute and aims to “destroy” throughout his entire career. These counterfeit portraits of Nietzsche’s thought, exemplified by Kiss, Sassone, and others, do an unwarranted disservice to his legacy for political education.

Apparently, what interest there is in Nietzsche, in the philosophy of education, extends only as far as his writings can be abridged and accommodated to the dispensation of orthodox moral and political ideals. This tendency is consistent with the so-called “liberal” discourse of ideas in academia, which, for example, is loathe to admit forms of government under which certain typologies of people have flourished (historically) and may still hope to prosper. Modern political, moral, and educational theory tolerates only a narrow range of opinions yet calls it a free and open, moreover, a democratic discourse of ideas; but as soon as one steps outside the realm of received democratic wisdom one is either ignored or suppressed. The eagerness to ignore, suppress, or otherwise denigrate the inconvenient textual evidence in Nietzsche’s writings is a case in point; for his philosophy, taken as a whole, interferes with the safely democratic, thoroughly leveled progressive politics of the day. Pretending Nietzsche isn’t aristocratic merely betrays the disingenuousness of timely liberal discourse. Otherwise disinterest and indifference, or political confusion, generally plague Nietzsche’s expressly educational work.

Nietzsche would see the trivialization and domestication of his philosophy as symptomatic of the enslavement of late-modern minds to the ideals of the democratic Enlightenment. Most scholars, especially those writing in the philosophy of education and political science, are, on Nietzsche’s perspective, “levelers,” hardly the “free minds” he celebrates as advocating a natural order of rank. Rather than shore up conventional
predilections, by affirming humanity as it is today in the readily available and increasingly threadbare moral and political language of liberalism (whereby all egoisms and truths are supposedly free and equal\textsuperscript{256}), Nietzsche argues that truth is not relative or common—as some today portray him as saying it is.

Truth, Nietzsche thinks, is "rare," and rarely attained, sharable only in attainment.\textsuperscript{257}

This epistemological position underpins an inescapable ontological and political justification for the ranking of persons and perspectives in vertical hierarchy: the first principle of a caste system.\textsuperscript{258} How one stands in relation to the question of truth—particularly the natural necessities of “ascending” life—indicates where (in terms of rank) one stands in relation to nature as well as culture according to Nietzsche’s educational politics. To Laurence Lampert, this is “the most important issue” of Nietzsche’s philosophy: where one stands with respect for the relationship of the true to the good, or “the question of the value of truth in light of the enhancement of the species.”\textsuperscript{259} Nietzsche is not a radical relativist with respect to truth, although his position (on ontology) does relativize truth with particular respect to those who not only seek but \textit{embody} the truth and the perspectives of life and creation for which they are capable. Perspectives of high and low where the “right” to be high, healthy, or noble must be merited.\textsuperscript{260} The conscious effort to distort, falsify, or mishandle Nietzsche in the service of timely predilections demonstrates, again, that there is no room for Nietzsche’s aristocratic values in the discourse and dispensation of “radically democratic” aspirations.

Typical of postmodernism and academic discourse in general, the tendency to equalize perspectives applies today to persons as well as it does to practices and viewpoints.\textsuperscript{261} Nietzsche\textsuperscript{262} Except those that challenge the orthodoxy of egalitarianism. John Rawls, for example, argues that the ultimate goal of political liberalism is to eliminate all those views which threaten instability or civil strife, or which conflict with the core liberal belief in democracy. Rawls writes that “a society . . . contains . . . comprehensive doctrines. In their case, the problem is to contain them so that they do not undermine the unity and justice of society” (\textit{Political Liberalism}, “Introduction,” pp. xvi - xvii). Indeed, in the mature exposition of his ideas on political justice, Rawls argues that some persons must be prevented from starting civil strife as the result of their introducing challenges to the stability of the public order. He says, in other words, that it will be “necessary” to enforce the doctrine of equality, and “this happens,” he writes, “whenever someone insists, for example, that certain questions are so fundamental that to ensure their being rightly settled justifies civil strife” (ibid:14). Rawls has religious fundamentalism in mind, but his argument clearly applies to any political or social ideal that threatens or challenges egalitarianism. Cf. \textit{BGE} § 202.\textsuperscript{263} Op cit. § 43. Cf. Lampert, 2001: 97.

\textsuperscript{256} Cf. Ibid. § 265, 268, 271. See also WP § 763 (1887) \textsuperscript{264} 2001: 29. See also p. 62. Cf. \textit{BGE} § 4, 43.


\textsuperscript{26} Lampert notes that "[r]etail Nietzscheanism is bent on misreading the clear exclusivity of Nietzsche’s claims. Meetings of the academic Nietzsche societies consist of whole rooms of genuine philosophers. Each higher than Kant or Hegel? Each a Caesar of knowledge?" (2001: 199, n. 19).
would surely find today's caveats and disclaimers of a "multicultural" "tolerance for diversity" and "equity" as specious slogans symptomatic of little more than hollow boosterism. Moreover, he would see in such hosannas to nihilism a decadent vulgarization of perspectives which broadcasts the sentiment that everything is relative or otherwise equivalent, that is, democratically equal. The multicultural emphasis on difference, for example, to the neglect of rank-order, and of a "diversity" of perspectives to the neglect of a classification of such perspectives under a finite or limited number of types, has led to a distortion of what has been ascribed to Nietzsche in terms of perspectivism. But Nietzsche's perspectivism is not horizontal; it is vertical, moreover aristocratic. It is notable, then, that both democracy, in particular, and egalitarianism, more generally considered, are not well served by the attempt to assimilate all doctrines of emancipation into a horizontal celebration of "diversity" and "difference." The value of democracy (or for that matter multiculturalism) itself, Nietzsche would remind us, insofar as it has value at all, depends on a coherent, vertical rank-ordering of distinct regimes or alternatives, and therefore also upon the rational coordination of identity and difference.

The teaching of equality, thinks Nietzsche, leaves people with the misbegotten, culturally-destructive, and essentially nihilistic assumption that the only thing worth pursuing or living for is their own self-interest, manifest in the immediate gratification of popular appetites for material ease and comfort. This is the moral-individualism of the terminally mediocre modern "weakened personality." Today, no way of thinking or living is inherently better or worse than any other—save the promotion of aristocratic values or the natural order of rank, both of which are considered suspect, if not altogether criminal. Without much in the way of argument much less evidence, it is widely taken for granted that we (i.e., everyone in the modern era) are all egalitarians; those who profess another political sensibility are considered foolish or dangerous, not to be taken seriously in any case.

However, it remains unclear, Nietzsche argues, whether the egalitarian prohibition on the objections of skeptical protagonists of aristocracy is because aristocratic values and aristocratic regimes are based on an untrue understanding of ethics and politics or because people today

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262 Cf. JS § 377. See also TI "Expeditions" § 34 - 35, 37.
263 See Plato, The Republic Book VIII.
264 Cf. HL § 4.
265 Ibid. This passage continues: "The whole of modern society is subjective [and] weak . . . ."
266 Cf. TSZ P § 5; BGE § 198. Moral individualism stipulates a tacit "moral" distinction between the foolhardy aristocratic ambitions of the past and the presumably more prudent egoism of the present. This is the "moral" standpoint of the masses, which serves as a justification for mass democracy.
simply do not like them any longer. It is unclear, that is, whether the popularity, much less the legitimacy, of egalitarianism is a result of the revelation of the fact of human equality or whether it is just what most people happen to prefer today. For all outward celebrations of "diversity," "tolerance," and "difference," moderns remain, argues Nietzsche, "at one in their tough resistance to every special claim, every special right and privilege." 267 This insight into the uniform hypocrisy of modern democratic society is supported by Thomas Pangle's interpretation of Nietzsche's analysis of the relationship of the school to the state.

The state's governing apparatus enforces the peace in the name of principles that are understood to be universal. But the devotion to such "human" rights bespeaks monstrosity—the monstrosity of a society that orients itself by what is common, materialistic, and easy, instead of by some unique way of life that seeks to distinguish itself, in the manner of everything spiritual and rare...[T]he state fosters a relativistic "liberal education" which informs the young of innumerable past "values" without inspiring true dedication to any...man's very capacity for intense moral commitment atrophies...in a [world] denuded of vigorous sources of meaning... 268

Indeed, given that the dominant frame of mind in the late-modern academy is egalitarian, and remains, according to Nietzsche's critique of modern society, uncritically egalitarian, the now current predisposition of self-proclaimed "progressive liberals" who conduct themselves in a spirit of "free and open inquiry" indicates, despite claims to the contrary, that most public, professional intellectuals are far more conservative and narrow-minded than they are either willing or perhaps even able to recognize or admit. 269 Understanding the pervasiveness of egalitarian dogma goes to the core of Nietzsche's argument regarding the "moral uniformity" of democratic society, which, he thinks, leads to the overall "homogenization" and "diminution" of humankind into a "perfect herd animal." 270 The latent resentment of genius, of the one whose intelligence and creativity outstrips the ordinary population in novelty and daring, is, thinks Nietzsche, one of the more obvious signs of the mass mediocrization of culture and learning.

That a single individual could...produce something altogether new may well excite the indignation of those who cleave to the gradualness of all evolution as though to a kind of moral law: they themselves are slow and demand slowness in others—and here they see someone moving very fast, 267 BGE § 202.


269 This characteristic assessment of the essentially conservative and servile "scholar" spans Nietzsche's entire career. Cf. SE § 6; TSZ II.7; BGE § 207.

270 BGE § 202. If it is impossible in this day and age to claim authoritative reasons for preferring democracy to another way of life, Richard Rorty concedes, that "even if the typical character types of liberal democracies are bland, calculating, petty and unheroic...the prevalence of such people may be a reasonable price to pay for political freedom" (1991: 190).
do not know how he does it, and are angry with him.\textsuperscript{271}

What would come as no surprise to Nietzsche is that one today is permitted (indeed obliged—if one wants admission, recognition, publication, tenure, or funding) to further the liberal paradigm, or to work on what calls itself “conservatism” in some quarters. There is no meaningful moral or political diversity in what amounts to an intellectual charade; for “liberals” and “conservatives” are two sides of the same, worn-out coin. Nietzsche’s argument(s) regarding the overall “homogenization” of moral and political thinking seems to be confirmed by the fact that the contemporary academic paradigm depends for its survival on not critically inquiring into the status of its most basic convictions—depends, that is, on an unfounded presumption that the status of a universal egalitarian discourse is obvious, when it is not. This state of affairs in the academy, according to Nietzsche’s critique of the democratic educational system, amounts to an imposition of price-fixing, which stands in ironic contradistinction to the tenets of Enlightenment rationality and experiment.

Confirming Nietzsche’s critique, John Gray observes accordingly that

\begin{quote}
\textit{despite its overwhelming dominance in Anglo-American philosophy, liberalism has never succeeded in showing that liberal democratic institutions are uniquely necessary to justice and the human good. In all its varieties—utilitarian, contractarian, or as a theory of rights—liberal political philosophy has failed to establish its fundamental thesis: that liberal democracy is the only form of government that can be sanctioned by reason and morality.}\textsuperscript{272}
\end{quote}

Political liberalism has not been justified as being the superior form or only form of government by rational argument. Expecting some rational justification of this value system, Gray argues that advocates of liberal democracy fail to provide rational support to what is, in effect, the political religion of the contemporary intelligentsia, which combines the maudlin cult of “the people” with a sectarian passion for political and social amelioration. There is, then, a logical error in all democratic theory, for the choice of democracy appears to be, in and of itself, morally arbitrary and doesn’t justify anything other than that is the political preference of arbiters of the current moral and political fashion, not a self-evident, much less proven, truth. Partisans of democracy simply assume it to be self-evidently necessary that society be safely democratic and that people—if they are “reasonable”—conform with such an assumption. In such regard, Lampert rightly notes that the humanitarian march of “progress” consists “of many parties; but just as that movement gave the false appearance of a radical break with its Christian ancestor, it gives the false appearance of meaningful moral diversity.”\textsuperscript{273}

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{271} WB§ 1.
\textsuperscript{272} Post-Liberalism: Studies in political thought, 1993: 246.
\textsuperscript{273} 2001: 175.
\end{footnotesize}
conformist society that assumes self-evident "truths" about itself? The elimination of all those perspectives which threaten the herd, or which conflict with the core "progressive" liberal belief in democracy itself. The euphemism for such simple-minded "universal" conformity is "consensus." These surely unwelcome insights into the complacency, conformity, and intellectual hypocrisy of the modern moral condition are elucidated further by Lampert, when he writes of Nietzsche that the:

uniform modern "knowledge" of good and evil is dictated by "the instinct of the herd animal man," and the victory of this instinct eclipses and controls all other instincts, homogenizing them into uniformity. . . . what counts as progress . . . is in fact a decay of a very precise sort, decay into the tyranny of an instinct for comfort and ease.275

Nietzsche thinks it characteristic of advocates and defenders of democracy to deny or otherwise ignore the obvious historical truth that there are, in fact, a legitimate variety of forms of government under which human beings can flourish and may still have hope to prosper.276 The vainglorious assumption that economic and political liberalism, paraded under the ubiquitous banner of "humanitarianism" and "human rights," is the end point of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government, as trumpeted by Francis Fukuyama famously in 1989,277 betrays the imperial project of secular theodicy to which most late-modern educators are perfunctorily committed. Despite their confidence and false hopes, they have yet to successfully establish that democracy (or political liberalism broadly considered) is the only form of government that can be sanctioned by reason or morality. Nietzsche thinks that partisans of democracy and egalitarianism fail in any event to give a rational, much less moral, basis for their instinctual predilections, especially when it comes to educational matters.

—Our overcrowded grammar schools, our overloaded, stupefied grammar-school teachers, are a scandal: one may perhaps have motives for defending this state of things . . . [but] there are no grounds for doing so.278

276 Cf. GM I § 11.
277 Now echoed in the specious logic behind the wars of American-democratic succession being waged in the Mideast and South Asia today. Consider also the ever-expanding EU; the economic "liberalization" of China; NAFTA; etc.
278 TI "Germans" § 5.
There can be little doubt that Nietzsche would find the prior political commitments that lead most scholars to precipitate bogus interpretations of his philosophy in favor of current prejudices as emanating from the perspective of the weak and resentful, those, that is, who sublimate their envious hatred of strong and independent “free spirits” into “democratic” scholarship.279 This resentment, which carries over into a prejudice against privilege and hierarchy—in politics, education, morality, or aesthetics—, is, according to Nietzsche, the slave’s viewpoint. Moreover, this now ubiquitous instinctual proclivity betrays a “plebeian antagonism to everything privileged and autocratic.”280 Here the crisis in morality and politics that Nietzsche identifies is depicted by Lampert as a conflict between “two faiths . . . spiritual warfare” between monotheism (the “One God”) versus polytheism—the Christian god and “the uniform mass he serves pitted against many gods and the many nobles they serve.”281 Rather than confront Nietzsche’s philosophy with probity, the “tarantulas” (his derogatory term for preachers of equality) further the millennial old project of resentment by writing from the “standpoint of the masses” in “false and superficial” terms that pander to them.282 Those then who speak of a “democratic” Nietzsche reveal what he describes as a “contradiction between life and knowledge,” for they “completely fail to see what characterizes the culture of genuinely cultured peoples”283 in a reaction against hierarchy which at the same time avers to flatter the masses. Theirs is an act of what Nietzsche calls “spiritual revenge.”284

The psychological implications of the trivialization or domestication of Nietzsche, are clear enough; they signal the “revenge of the spiritually limited against those less so.”285 “The basic tendency of the weak and mediocre of all times is,” according to Nietzsche, “to weaken and pull down the stronger.”286 In order to sustain the currency of egalitarian biases, manifest in the global tyranny of democratic tendencies,287 the acknowledgment, much less probing

279 Cf. TSZ II.7. See also Ti “Germans” § 5: “What is the cause of the decline of . . . culture? That ‘higher education’ is no longer a privilege—the democratism of ‘culture’ made ‘universal’ and common . . . . Not too overlook the fact that military privileges absolutely compel too great attendance at higher schools, which means their ruin. —No one is any longer free . . . . to give his children a noble education: or ‘higher’ schools are one and all adjusted—as regards their teachers, their curricula and their instructional aims—to the most dubious mediocrity.” Cf. FEI § 1, 4.
280 BGE § 22.
281 2001: 175.
282 SE § 6.
284 GM I § 7.
285 BGE § 219.
286 WP § 345 (1885 - 1886). Cf. Ti “Problem of Socrates” § 6 - 7; GM III § 14; WP § 204 (1887).
discourse of Nietzsche’s political and educational philosophy is stifled. Contemporary Nietzschean scholarship in the philosophy of education suffers from what can be called “bad conscience,” for the “preachers of equality” find it necessary to deceive themselves and others about what Nietzsche actually wrote.\textsuperscript{288} He expected as much. In 1872 Nietzsche wrote:

\begin{quote}
the aristocratic nature of true culture is feared, because the people endeavor ... to drive the single great individuals into self-exile, so that the claims of the masses to education may be ... planted and [tended], in order that the many may ... escape the rigid and strict discipline of the few great leaders, so that the masses may be persuaded that they can easily find the path for themselves —following the guiding star of the [democratic] State!\textsuperscript{289}
\end{quote}

Despite efforts like this, Nietzsche has become a catchall philosopher for the masses, embraced as he is by Christians, liberals, feminists, postmodernists, anti-Semites, democrats, anarchists, and more or less every other identity-group or constituency that he expressly condemned.\textsuperscript{290} In contradiction to Nietzsche’s own assertion that he does not write for the “mob,” his philosophy is being manipulated and advertised in ways that seem to serve them. Stanley Rosen observes that:

\begin{quote}
[i]t is a remarkable fact that Nietzsche, a self-professed antichristian [and] ... opponent to academic philosophy, scourge of socialism, egalitarianism, and ‘the people,’ who espoused aristocratic political and artistic views [and] insisted upon a rank ordering of human beings ... is today one of the highest authorities, if not the authority, for progressive liberals, existentialist theologians, professors, anarchist speculators, left-wing critics of the Enlightenment and bourgeois society, propounders of egalitarianism and enemies of political and artistic elitism, the advance guard of women’s liberationists, and a multitude of contemporary movements, most if not all of which seem to have been castigated by Nietzsche’s rhetorical powers.\textsuperscript{291}
\end{quote}

Nietzsche cannot be accommodated on his own terms to democratic politics or egalitarian ethics. Firstly, and perhaps most profoundly, he thinks that democracy is a form of “physiological decay.”\textsuperscript{292} In its denial and revolt against the natural order of rank and social distinctions that Nietzsche considers necessary for all “higher life” to exist and flourish, democracy both eliminates the cultural climate which affords the highest, noble type of human while at the same time fostering social and political circumstances which lead to the mongrelization of the species. As an immediate consequence of the democratic social and

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext{288} Ibid. § 199.
\footnotetext{289} FEI § 3. Cf. BGE § 30.
\footnotetext{290} Cf. Daniel Conway, Nietzsche’s Dangerous Game, 1997: 149.
\footnotetext{291} The Mask of Enlightenment, 1995: 189 - 190.
\footnotetext{292} Cf. BGE § 203, 267. See also FEI § 1 - 3 (1872).
\end{footnotes}
political revolutions, the combined effects of the dissolution of caste segregation, indiscriminate class-mixing, and miscegenation, lead, in Nietzsche's view, not only to the "ruin of culture" but also to the psychophysiological degeneration of the species. I have ... defined the modern as a physiological self-contradiction. The rationale of education would seem to require that at least one of these instinct-systems should be paralysed beneath iron pressure, so as to permit another to come into force, become strong, become master. Today the only way of making the individual possible would be by pruning him: possible, that is to say complete. ... The reverse is what actually happens: the claim to independence, to free development, to laisser aller, is advanced most heatedly by precisely those for whom no curb could be too strong—this applies in politics, it applies in art. But this is a symptom of décadence: our modern concept of 'freedom' is one more proof of degeneration of instinct.

On Nietzsche's perspective, democracy "ruins culture" while it also reduces the human species to its most "unhealthy," "sick," and "miserable" state. Democracy, he thinks, is the spiritual and physiological expression of humanity at its sickest and most degenerate, where the best forces and instincts have been inhibited or debilitated, and the worst encouraged. The "radical mixture of classes, and hence races," he writes in 1885, "[leads to] a sickness and paralysis of will." Democracy is a pathological social and political form of "disintegration that mixes races indiscriminately" which produces "weaker human beings."

Thus, democracy betrays its Christian source. For democracy is, Nietzsche argues, a secularized version of Christian ethics, which itself is born of "slave morality." With the advent of democracy society has been reordered with the secular intention of achieving equality on earth; for this reason democracy leads logically, on Nietzsche's reading, to socialism. Nietzsche despises socialism because it obliterates the social division of labor and economic arrangements where the many toil so a few exalted human beings can distinguish themselves by

293 Bear in mind that Nietzsche rejects modern categories of class distinction, such as they are the consequence of the "slave rebellion" in morality and, just as significant, since they lack the requisite emphasis on "blood" to be found in both the ancien régime and in the ancestral patrician classes of Greek and Roman antiquity. Cf. BGE § 213. See also HL § 6; HH § 263; BGE § 26, 221.
294 EH "Clever" § 3. Cf. FEI § 1 - 4; SE § 1.
295 See BGE § 208, 223. Cf. TSZ IV.3 § 1: "Rabble ... means hotchpotch ... in that everything is mixed up with everything else, saint and scoundrel and gentleman and Jew and every beast of Noah's Ark."
296 TI "Expeditions" § 41.
297 Cf. Ibid. "Improvers" § 2; "Germans" § 5.
298 This is Plato's opinion also. See The Republic § .547, .561b - e. Cf. Leo Strauss, The Three Waves of Modernity (1959: 92).
299 BGE § 212.
300 Ibid. § 200, 199.
301 Cf. Ibid. "Expeditions" § 34, 38; AC § 5, 7.
302 Cf. GM I § 7, 10 - 11. See also BGE § 260.
their creativity. Moreover, socialism—like democracy—instills in subalterns feelings of entitlement and, as a consequence, foments sedition. The “danger of dangers,” according to Nietzsche, is that socialism and democracy will prevent the achievement of “the highest power and splendor actually possible to the type ‘human.’”

Christianity, and its bastard progeny—democracy and socialism—imperil everything Nietzsche holds sacred: nature, strength, health, and high culture. In the struggle against the social, political, and economic inequalities without which an elite of “great human beings” and the creative distinction their privilege sustains cannot thrive, “liberalism,” like its Christian forbear, Nietzsche observes, reduces humankind to an emasculated domestic “herd animal.” It is the “equalizing,” horizontal, and leveling character of democracy that indicates what Nietzsche describes in sharply critical terms of cultural and physiological “decadence,” “sickness,” “mediocrity.” Moreover, he is suggesting that the myriad social and political problems which have “corrupted” culture and the human species arose from the influence of biblical morality. Both Christianity and democracy give rise to what Nietzsche considers to be “abortions” or “miscarriages” of human potential: a “dwarf animal of equal rights and claims.”

It is however worth noting here that Nietzsche finds that “humankind is still unexhausted for the greatest possibilities” by way of acknowledging that “the very same conditions that will on average lead to the leveling and mediocrization of the human . . . are likely in the highest degree to give birth to exceptional human beings of the most dangerous and attractive quality.” He writes in such regard that “the same conditions that hasten the evolution of the herd animal also hasten the evolution of the leader animal.” This “leader animal” can serve as the progenitor of “future masters of the earth . . . a new master type and caste.”

Notwithstanding these insights into the “exceptional” transformative possibilities of

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303 GM P § 6.
304 CF. AC § 49 - 57.
305 See GM III § 14, WP § 204 (1887), WP § 252 (1887 - 1888) on “moral castrationism.”
306 T I “Expeditions” § 38.
307 Cf. AC § 46 - 49. See also BGE § 260.
308 BGE § 62, 203.
309 Ibid. § 203.
310 Ibid. § 242.
311 WP § 956 (1885).
312 Ibid. § 957 (1885).
modern democratic society,\textsuperscript{313} Nietzsche cannot be read credibly as endorsing or in any way defending democracy qua democracy. Although he does see some of the fecund possibilities, if self-undermining paradoxes, latent in democratic systems, this is hardly an endorsement of contemporary society. Indeed, partisans of political liberalism should be wary of the possibilities Nietzsche identifies. For the permissiveness, latitude, and laxity they prize (e.g., "value pluralism" a\'la Isaiah Berlin\textsuperscript{314}) allows for the growth of a most powerful exception to the multitude that they fear and loathe: the political tyrant (e.g., Napoleon—whom Nietzsche regards most favorably).\textsuperscript{315} Nietzsche uses the term tyrant positively—in the most “spiritual” and “intellectual” sense—with reference to the highest type of person who alone would be capable of not only destroying democracy but also, and more importantly, “overcoming” the ways of feeling and thinking that lead to the diminution of humankind.

It remains the case that Nietzsche regards democracy as not just a symptom of nihilism, but its contemporary configuration—in the soul or polis.\textsuperscript{316} In stark contrast to the claims some are attempting to make in his name today, Nietzsche finds most everything in modern social and political life insipid, laughable, disgusting, and despicable.\textsuperscript{317} Thus does Nietzsche speak of the urgent necessity of “overcoming” the ways of feeling and thinking modern humankind has absorbed from the Judeo-Christian and democratic legacies.

In particular, he explicitly condemns the vainglorious conceit of the modern technological stance toward the natural world, which lays waste to the ecosphere without regard for the future of life (not just human) on earth.\textsuperscript{318} The conquest of human nature, in the modern technological/utilitarian-moral sense, denotes the elimination of the human nobility and the desecration of the earth. Nietzsche’s pronounced endorsements of slavery—evident in all his writings from the earliest essays until the final books—suggests in such respects that he cannot

\textsuperscript{313} Cf. BGE § 26. See also § 24 - 25. This “exceptional” type is moreover, according to Lampert, “an exception among exceptions . . . [whose] propensity to live within a horizon of custom is dictated by the love of life . . . the difference between the truth they [the most exceptional] know and the simplification and falsification within which humanity lives” (2001: 63 - 64). These “exceptional” ones want, writes Lampert, to “preserve the possibility of human nobility . . . [Nietzsche] wants to believe that they can be transformed or spiritualized into the high desire and self-regard of high selves” (66).

\textsuperscript{314} Cf. Two Concepts of Liberty. 1969.

\textsuperscript{315} Ibid. BGE § 242. See also TI “Expeditions” § 38. Plato comes to a similar conclusion in The Republic, Book VIII. Cf. Lampert, 2001: 248 - 249.

\textsuperscript{316} Again, Nietzsche’s political philosophy is entwined with depth psychology. Like Plato, he turns politics into psychology and vice versa. By making politics a projection and crystallization of his own commitments and strategies for combatting nihilism in himself and his social context, Nietzsche’s political education can be seen to be the nurturing and radiation of a self-generated project of self-education. Cf. TI “Expeditions” § 38.

\textsuperscript{317} Cf. BGE § 202 - 204. See also The Greek State (1871); JS § 356, 377.

\textsuperscript{318} Cf. GM III § 9.
be read as promoting or otherwise relying on technological advances to lessen the burden of labor on the masses and thereby avoid the institution of slavery, much less human privation. Just the opposite is the case. He advocates more inequality and suffering, cruelty and difference; he advocates the way of nature—not the “earth-destroying” and “species-degenerating” modern utilitarian technology that divorces humankind from the natural order of things.\footnote{Cf. BT § 18. See also Lampert, 1996: 105.}

The now dominant utilitarian and egalitarian assumption that technological and industrial “advancements” have made the need for slavery and/or servitude obsolete as well as morally repugnant is a way of thinking Nietzsche condemns. Given that democracy, as a modern political and social phenomenon,\footnote{It needs to be noted here that modern egalitarian and utilitarian democratic theory and practice can be distinguished from the original Athenian democracy in three ways. Firstly, the idea of “the Rights of Man”—a modern invention—would have been incomprehensible to Athenians; secondly, the representative—not direct—character of modern government; thirdly, the absence in ancient Greece of a bureaucracy. For a summary of these and other crucial differences between modern democracy and ancient democracy, see David Greene, Man in His Pride: A study in the political philosophy of Thucydides and Plato (1950).} serves, in principle, the utilitarian standard of the greatest good for the greatest many,\footnote{This widely shared belief is reflected in the moral and political work of such vaunted ethical philosophers as John Rawls (1971) and Peter Singer (2004), for example.}\footnote{GM III § 9.} Nietzsche finds that the attempt to satisfy the desires of the multitudes comes at a devastating cost in terms of high human cultural achievement and natural health. Moreover, the interplay of the ever-increasing appetites of the masses with technological efficiency spells disaster not only for the maintenance of “true” culture, in Nietzsche’s estimation, but also for the preservation of the natural environment. Nietzsche sees the modern technological subjugation of nature—in the name of either commerce or social/political amelioration—as “hubris, our raping of nature by means of machines and the unthinking resourcefulness of technicians and engineers.”\footnote{TI “Expeditions” § 38.} He derides the democratic dreams of the “man who has become free,”\footnote{Ibid.} spurning “the contemptible sort of well-being dreamed of by shopkeepers, Christians, cows, women, Englishmen and other democrats.”\footnote{Cf. Ibid. § 39, § 41; SE § 4. See also Lampert, 1993: 279.} Inherently Christian utilitarian-egalitarian dogma and the “earth-destroying” practices it underwrites, on Nietzsche’s perspective, shows no respect for nature; it knows no limits to the abolition of natural order; it is, therefore, as reckless and wasteful as it is vain, ugly, and deluded.\footnote{JS § 130.}

The Christian resolve to find the world ugly and bad has made the world ugly and bad.\footnote{JS § 130.}
Nietzsche wants his “children of the future” to “destroy” (not “reconstruct”) the social, political, religious, and economic institutions and practices that have the heritage of the Enlightenment era by assigning strict limits to the conquest of nature. Nietzsche is pointing to a way of thinking and living that transcends the nature- and species-destroying customs of the modern era; his teaching contradicts the prevailing moral and economic assumptions and expectations of the times. On the myriad questions concerning technology and humankind’s relationship to the natural environment, Nietzsche (among the first of Western philosophers) recognizes that the dignity of human life is in as much jeopardy as the dignity of the natural environment.327

We have a different faith; to us the democratic movement is not only a form of the decay of political organization but a form of the decay, namely of diminution, of man, making him mediocre and lowering his value.328

Not surprisingly, Nietzsche thinks that the education, much less the rule, of the low forms of life comes at the expense of higher forms of life.329 Humankind is “made small” by contemporary education precisely because of the presence of “the small.” The modern school is, on this perspective, an institutional incarnation of demotic instincts. There is neither care nor desire to be “great.” The very idea of “greatness” is disparaged; the democratic-egalitarian school is content instead with much less. Indeed, the egalitarian relativization of value, thinks Nietzsche, all too often manifests in a latent resentment of genius, a contempt for the extraordinary products of the creative will on the part of those who outstrip the average in originality and audacity.330 To be common, and make deviating natures comply, is the goal of democratic-egalitarian education.331

The life-debilitating dogma of social and political liberalism manifests in the deliberate blindness induced in the contemporary herd by an adherence to a system of beliefs towards which they are compelled and compel others to be accountable. In 1888, Nietzsche observes that

327 Parkes notes in this regard that “[i]t would be difficult to be more ecologically prescient than this” (2002: 13).

328 BGE. § 203. Cf § 267.

329 Cf. BT § 18; SE § 6; BGE § 22. The 1848 Berlin rebellion and the 1861 Paris fires confirmed Nietzsche’s fears that art, culture, and genius could be destroyed by democratic social and political revolution. See Rüdiger Safranski, Nietzsche: A Philosophical Biography (Shelley Frisch trans.), 2002: 76. See also Babouvist Sylvain Marechal, who, in Manifeste des Égaux (1796), declares “Let, if necessary, all arts perish, if only real equality be reached!” Cf. Karl Marx, The Economic & Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 (Milligan Trans., ed. with introduction by D. J. Struik, 1964) pp. 243 - 244.


331 Cf. Op cit. 300.
“nothing today . . . wants to grow greater,” suspecting that “things will continue to go down, down, to become thinner, more good-natured, more prudent, more comfortable, more mediocremore indifferent, more Chinese, more Christian[,]”332 “[T]here is no doubt,” he adds ironically, “that humankind is getting ‘better’ all the time.”333 Leo Strauss complements Nietzsche’s insight, observing that
to the extent to which the formation of character is indeed intended [in education], there exists a very dangerous tendency to identify the good man with the good sport, the cooperative fellow, the ‘regular guy,’ i.e., an overemphasis on a certain part of social virtue and a corresponding neglect of those virtues which mature, if they do not flourish, in privacy, not to say in solitude: by educating people to cooperate . . . one does not educate nonconformists, people who are prepared to stand alone, to fight alone.334

In education today, the “regular guy” who goes along to get along, cooperating with his fellows (usually in the marketplace of either ideas or actual commerce) replaces the proud, if occasionally disdainful, cultured gentilhomme who alone is capable of exercising genuine political courage.335 It is against this atrophied background of so-called modern progress that the following Nietzsche’s proclamation from a 1884 should be read.

[L]earn this from me: In the marketplace no one believes in Higher Humans. And if you want to speak there, very well, do so! But the mob blink and say: “We are all equal.” “You Higher Humans”—thus the mob blink—“there are no Higher Humans, we are all equal, human is but human, before God—we are all equal!”336

Nietzsche’s follows the observation of the decline of culture in Europe and overall “degeneration” of the human species into a herd of market-driven consumers with an expression of profound admiration and approval for the aristocratic culture of antiquity, extolling the Homeric archetype of what Aristotle calls the “great souled” man.337 Nietzsche’s principal aspiration in such respect is to allow for the proud return and ascendancy of “the illiberal instincts,”338—“. . . a higher culture, a culture founded upon that of the ancients . . .”339—which, in turn, would permit for the return of aristocratic culture and “noble education.”340 In order to prevent further “degeneration” of politics, education, and culture, distinctions between
the “noble” and the vulgar must be clarified and enhanced. Differences based on ontological degrees of excellence (phrased in “renaturalized” terms of “health,” creative vitality, power, etc.) must be suitably recognized and valued if there is going to be a “return to nature” and subsequent renaissance of “true culture.” Here the distinction between a spiritual and instinctual potency and impotency precisely denotes the fundamental difference between Nietzsche’s master ethos from relativized and equalized modern notions of “social justice,” “emancipation,” and “autonomy.” To be sure, Nietzsche does not care about garden variety democratic freedoms, which generally stipulate what one is free from (e.g., oppression). Nietzsche is much more interested in what one is free for.

Do you call yourself free? I want to hear your ruling idea, and not that you escaped from a yoke. Are you such a man as ought to escape a yoke? There are many who threw off their final worth when they threw off their bondage. ... [S]how me your strength for [freedom] and your right to it!

This is the will of those of noble soul: they desire nothing gratis, least of all life.

He who is of the mob wants to live gratis; we others, however, to whom life as given itself— we are always considering what we can give best in return?

A sustained argument against the laissez-aller ways and mores of a dissolute liberal democratic society attends Nietzsche’s positive argument for the (re)establishment of authoritarian values. These arguments underpin a decisive standard of measure for political education that will, thinks Nietzsche, cultivate “higher humans” and lead to the “enhancement” of the human species.

Upward leads our way, from species across to over-species. But a horror is for us the degenerating sense that says: “All is for me. "Upward flies our sense: thus it is a parable of our body, a parable of an elevation. Parables of such elevations are the names of the virtues.

Nietzsche makes this essential, unequivocal point time and again throughout his writings. He argues, for example, that “for institutions to exist there must exist the kind of will, instinct, and imperative which is anti-liberal to the point of malice: the will to tradition, to authority, to centuries-long responsibility, to solidarity between succeeding generations backwards and

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341 Cf. JS § 356.
342 TSZ I.17. Cf. FEI § 1 (34).
343 ibid. III.12 § 5.
344 Cf. BGE § 188: “Consider any morality with this in mind: what there is in it of ‘nature’ teaches hatred of the laissez aller, of any all-too-great freedom, and implants the need for limited horizons and the nearest tasks—teaching the narrowing of perspective . . . .
345 Op cit. I.22 § 1.
forwards ad infinitum.” The “discipline” and “suffering” that are the edifying preconditions for aristocratic political and educational institutions to exist have been “lost” in the modern era.

The entire West has lost those instincts out of which institutions grow, out of which the future grows: perhaps nothing goes so much against the grain of the ‘modern spirit’ as this. One lives for today, one lives very fast—one lives very irresponsibly: it is precisely this one calls ‘freedom’. That which makes institutions institutions is despised, hated, rejected: whenever the word ‘authority’ is so much as heard one believes oneself in danger of a new slavery.

This is a society of “complete nihilism,” in Nietzsche’s words, wherein egalitarian tendencies are applied in ways intended, at least in principle, to benefit the worst off. The goal of democratic or socialist egalitarian regimes, phrased in terms of “social justice,” is “progressively” organized toward the end of eliminating suffering, and to prevent there being any losers. Furthermore and more specifically, as regards the “needy and covetous contamination” of the modern school and the question of “how [to] devise educational establishments which shall be of benefit only to these select few,” Nietzsche endorses a new set of perspectives on life-affirming, culture-sustaining institutions.

The regulations and standards prevailing at such institutions differ from those in a true educational institution; and what in the latter is permitted, and even freely held out as often possible, ought to be considered as a criminal offence in the former.

It is significant in such respect that Nietzsche contrasts the Bible’s and democracy’s concern for the “weak” and the “sick” with the relative indifference and “cruelty” of Aristotle’s magnanimous megalopsuchia. Aristotle’s megalopsuchia type—the great-souled proud man—prefigures the ideal for a Nietzschean philosophy of education. Nietzsche’s concern with a certain quanta of psychophysical energy or natural force recalls Aristotle’s megalopsuchia. John Richardson suggests that “Aristotle shares with Nietzsche [a] ‘viewpoint of health’ [that is] reflect[ed] . . . throughout his system, particularly as this differs from Plato’s. . . . Moreover, Aristotle like Nietzsche credits himself as healthy and credits his health
as a ground of his truth.” Nietzsche’s ontology, Richardson continues, “replaces the Forms with individual substances, especially living organisms; his psychology replaces a soul seeking release from the body with a soul that’s precisely a capacity of the body; his aesthetics replaces Plato’s anti- and postcorporeal goals with the ideal of an active life here and now.”

The key of nobility in this case is the embodied power, health, and “hard” confidence in the superiority of one over another. Genuine pride emanates from an instinctive, active self-reverence, a “strength of soul,” that can make it difficult (for the noble) to understand or empathize, much less notice, the persons the noble type ranks as low—the weak, the stupid, and the sick. Precisely stated, what is “bad” and “beneath” the noble is sickness, weakness, ugliness, the ontological inferiority of the green-eyed slave type—who desires that everything and everyone to be “equal,” who hates nature for creating disparity among superior and inferior beings. Here, the basic distinction between the master and slave, between the noble and the base, the natural and the unnatural, is that the noble/master type operates from an active will expressive of positive, healthy, univocal qualities; whereas the slave/egalitarian type wills reactively, negatively, resentfully from a position of inferiority (weakness). The slave type’s denial of the master or noble (and all the he or she embodies and values) serves, in effect, as denial of not only the drives themselves, but also of life itself. The self-abnegating “hatred of the ill-constituted” slave type denies and denigrates life for the reason that this type suffers from an “impoverishment of life.” The apparent “natural cruelty” of the opposite, archaic ideal of human virtue, which represents an “overfulness of life,” outrages and provokes the slave—hence, according to the Judeo-Christian and democratic-egalitarian table of moral values, such strength and power is, if exercised openly, considered sinful, repugnant, indeed, “evil.” Nature and the natural rank-order of human beings is “evil” for Jews and Christians—likewise the natural order of rank is despised and violated by secular democratic egalitarians. It is the manner of reactive dispositions to promote and sustain a spirit of vengefulness that has its source in an unwillingness to accept that nature or what happened in the past cannot be altered.

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1996: 277
Ibid. Cf. KSA 13.25 [6] (1888): “I have the greatest comprehensiveness of soul, that any human being has had.”
JS § 370.
BT § 18.
Cf. Genesis 3.
Cf. TSZ II.7. See also Lampert, 2001: 55, 62.
Ibid. II.20.
In radical antithesis to the long-standing nature- and time-despising point of view (still prevalent today in the coupling of democratic ideology and Christian theology) is the archaic disposition that is "richest in the fullness of life," precisely that which Nietzsche identifies with the "wholeness" of Aristotle's megalopsuchia type. Since the "great souled" human is a model of an "overabundance of life," it is the highest embodiment of an excess of will to power thus, in Nietzsche's estimation, "noble." He therefore advocates maintenance of requisite physical, psychological, and social "distance" between the higher, noble few and the base and resentful, for such distance affords the possibility for the creation of meaning and value that is "pregnant with the future." For envy and hatred, as well as toil, marks the lower caste as beneath the noble, whereby the resentment of the low helps to sustain the social distance between humans without which a few could not otherwise exercise their natural superiority and beauty.

The pathos of nobility and distance... the protracted and domineering fundamental total feeling on the part of the higher ruling order in relation to a lower order, to a "below"—that is the origin of the antithesis of "good" and "bad." (The lordly right of giving names extends so far that one should allow oneself to conceive the origin of language itself as an expression of power on the part of the rulers: they say "this is this and this, they seal every thing and event with a sound and, as it were, take possession of it.)

The "great human being" Nietzsche prophesies is "great" in virtue of his exemplifying—indeed embodying—a new, yet also archaic "natural" norm for human excellence. While "greatness" manifests in the power to legislate (name) value, the "greatness" resides primarily in a quanta of natural force or power vested at a primordial level (a quanta of will to power) within the body. Michael Zimmerman aptly identifies Nietzsche's "interpretation of humankind as a natural organism," adding that Nietzsche's condemnation of "Christianity (and similarly otherworldly religious or metaphysical traditions) for despising the body and nature," suggests "a this-worldly transfiguration of the human body that would correspond to his affirmation of nature." The affirmation of "natural cruelty" attends the promotion of a new politics whereby people who are more powerful, more spiritual, smarter, and more creative, who have more will to power and demonstrated themselves to be more full of life,

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359 See BGE § 270 - 271, 273, 284.
360 Op cit. Cf. TSZ II.21: "This is my doubt... and my secret laughter: I suspect that you would call my Übermensch—a devil!" See also Friedrich Hölderlin, "It is incredible that a man should fear the most beautiful; yet it is true." Hyperion I.11 § 16 (56).
361 GM I § 3.
363 Ibid.
are quite literally—not simply "metaphorically"—"over" those inferior to them.

Nietzsche advocates vertical—not horizontal—distributions of power. He phrases these relations in terms of distance that correlate with spatial configurations of axiological and ontological polarity such as active and reactive; health and sickness; cleanliness and decay; strength and weakness; beauty and ugliness; good and bad; master and slave; noble and base; etc.364 Nietzsche means, therefore, in "returning to nature" to "open up distances" between people. His plainly stated aim is to preserve the "the frightful nature and naturalness" of the cultural authority of the few over the many by political means of "preserving distance."365 The "pathos of distance" between classes, castes, and types of humans refers explicitly and inescapably to a natural order of rank organized according to an aristocratic structure of command and obedience, domination and subordination.366 Nietzsche’s educational and political enterprise seeks therefore to “preserve the social and political distance which divides” people in strict vertical hierarchies367 because his ideal for human excellence (like Aristotle’s) is impossible to sustain outside its archetypal cultural context. The affirmative disposition of authentic nobility denotes the psychophysiological source from which Nietzsche’s politics radiate. This supreme type of human most likely occurs and flourishes in a certain type of society or culture; Nietzsche clearly thinks of encouraging those types of regimes that are isomorphic with the high types they produce.368 In this respect, his writings tell a history (or genealogy) of cultures, locating different human typologies as phases in the procession of Western civilization. Furthermore, the antichristian, nature-affirming archetype of high human and cultural possibility is not only noble, according to Nietzsche, but also divine.369 A new, re-enchanted locus of the sacred (power) is grounded in the body and the earth in Nietzsche’s

364 Cf. BGE § 271.
365 See KGW 10 [63] (1887). Cf. WP § 997 (1884). See also AC § 57.
366 Cf. EH “Clever” § 9.
367 Cf. BGE § 271. See also EH “Wise” § 6.
368 Cf. Ibid. § 260, 262.
attempt to restore the original virtú of moral virtue.\footnote{Like Machiavelli, Nietzsche extolls pagan virtù against Christian virtue. Machiavelli condemned the education of his day as "corrupt." Its corruption was due, in his opinion, "without doubt to the cowardice of the men who have interpreted our religion according to indolence and not according to virtue" (quoted in Sebastian de Grazia, Machiavelli in Hell, 1989: 104). Nietzsche's general advice, like Machiavelli's, is to be bold in the archaic sense rather than timid in the Christian way. Nietzsche is promoting many virtues of prowess, courage, strength (virtus in Latin derives from vir—man); he is endorsing qualities desirable for a man which includes a certain ruthlessness. Both Nietzsche and Machiavelli believe that virtue as such can be taught. Machiavelli writes with regard to the educational element in the Discourses that "[i]t is that virtue and this vice, which I said one finds in one man alone, one also finds in a republic." It depends, he continues, "on the education in which you have been nourished," and "what one says of one alone, one says of many who live in the same republic together" (ibid. 105). Cf. The Prince § 18, 25 - 26. See also EH "Clever" § 1: "I am interested in quite a different way in a question upon which the 'salvation of humankind' depends . . . the question of nourishment . . . how to nourish yourself so as to attain . . . maximum strength, of virtù in the Renaissance style" (ibid. § 1).}  

What is good?—All that heightens the feeling of power, the will to power, power itself in human being.  
What is bad?—All that proceeds from weakness.  
What is happiness?—The feeling that power increases—that resistance is overcome.  
Not contentment, but more power; not peace at all, but war; not virtue, but proficiency (virtue in the Renaissance style, virtú, virtue free of moralic acid).  
The weak and ill-constituted shall perish: first principle of our philanthropy. And one shall help them do so.  
What is more harmful than any vice?—Active sympathy for the ill-constituted and weak—Christianity.\footnote{AC § 2. Cf. TSZ I.22 § 1, III.10 § 2.}\footnote{Ibid. § 18.}\footnote{See Ibid. § 57.}  

The alternative of Christian or ancient Greek ethics is a choice, for Nietzsche, between a life of the sickly, mediocre, resentment-driven herd and a life-affirming existence of the free-willing master ethos of the naturally noble and powerful few. It is a choice, moreover, between the un- or anti-natural and the natural. The disagreement with respect to the best or most natural way of life carries over into a conflict concerning what it is that Nietzsche defines in terms of health and cleanliness on the one hand, and sickness, decadence, ressentiment, and the "contradiction of life" on the other.\footnote{Ibid. § 18.} The difference is crucial for understanding what completes a "higher morality." It is significant that Biblical morality excludes the natural proud magnanimity of the Greek ideal, for in biblical terms poor, weak, and pious are nearly synonomous—whereas for the Greek these are base and therefore bad qualities.\footnote{See Ibid. § 57.}
might become good, but that he might become insolent, scornful, an annihilator.\textsuperscript{374}

Just as Nietzsche's political thought does not conform with the so-called progressive political agenda of "radical democrats," neither does it fit with modern conservative movements.\textsuperscript{375} He rejects the politics of both the Right and the Left as "petty politics,"\textsuperscript{376} for both yield to public opinion and are tied inextricably to the democratic movement of modern times.\textsuperscript{377} Nowhere in the corpus of his writings does Nietzsche encourage the improvement, reform, or preservation of existing liberal societies.\textsuperscript{378} Nietzsche's aim is to accelerate the decline and ruin of the decadent West; modern liberal societies of the democratic sort as envisioned by either conservatives or progressives, including the educational institutions at their behest, are exactly what Nietzsche aims to destroy.\textsuperscript{379}

I am, moreover, convinced that the numerous alterations which have been introduced into these [educational] institutions within recent years, with the view of bringing them up-to-date, are for the most part but distortions and aberrations of the originally sublime tendencies given to them at their foundation.\textsuperscript{380}

There is, therefore, virtually nothing within the spectrum of modern politics and very little in contemporary society\textsuperscript{381} that has meaningful relation to the presumed object of Nietzsche's philosophical energies. Modern society must, Nietzsche teaches, be "overcome." Furthermore, there is no possibility of combining his "aristocratic radicalism" with the "decadent" ways and mores of democratic society. It must be recognized, then, in a manner that many contemporary philosophers of education who write about Nietzsche seem to ignore or

\begin{itemize}
\item[374] TSZ I.8.
\item[375] Nietzsche cannot be assimilated credibly to nationalist or fascist political movements either. First, both movements are incompatible with the rule of philosophers. Secondly, Nietzsche not only renounces nationalist politics—German or otherwise—but he openly scorns the fascist/nationalist idiosyncrasy that celebrates the inherently democratic principle of the rule or spirit of the nondescript masses (e.g., "the people" or \textit{Volk}).
\item[376] EH "Case of Wagner" § 2. Cf. EH "Destiny" § 1.
\item[377] William Preston argues that "[i]t cannot be emphasized too strongly that fascism, whatever its tactical utility where it can succeed in dividing and diverting the socialist-minded rabble, is totally incompatible with the needs of an authentically new order capable of nourishing the creative aspirations of a privileged few. Fascism, in short, is nothing but a new dogmatism, disguised as beyond good and evil perhaps but really just plebeian at heart" (Nietzsche as Anti-Socialist: Prophet of Bourgeois Ennoblement, 1995: 463).
\item[378] Cf. TI "Expeditions" § 43.
\item[379] Cf. Leo Strauss, On Tyranny, 1959: 211. See also BGE § 204 (end).
\item[380] FEI Introduction, p. 9. This passage illustrates Nietzsche's reverence for the power of origins or the originary grounds of an art or discipline, evident also in the piety he displays toward Homer and the presocratic philosophers.
\item[381] As for Nietzsche's probable opinion of contemporary society, Aaron Ridley writes: "If Nietzsche had had \textit{us} for contemporaries, his dismay upon looking around would surely have been still greater" (Nietzsche's Conscience, 1997: 11).
\end{itemize}
forget, that one cannot be both an aristocrat, as Nietzsche defines the term, and a modern
democrat. No credible synthesis is possible because a synthesis in this case entails the sacrifice
of the decisive claims of either one of the two elements. The seeming synthesis of
“progressive” or otherwise “radically democratic” ideals with a “reconstructed” Nietzschean
philosophy, so characteristic of postmodern readings, necessitates the subordination of
Nietzsche’s politics to contemporary politics. But these views are axiologically as well as
ontologically opposed. They are irreconcilable because any attempt at synthesis must
suppress or eliminate the distinctive character of either Nietzsche’s ontology and ethics or the
political economy of contemporary morality. The profound incompatibility between aristocracy
(rule of the best) and democracy (rule of the people) is of a depth that few, in a day and age that
forgets what true nobility is in the first place, seem ready or willing to admit.

The problem I raise here is . . . what type of human being one ought to breed,
ought to will, as a more valuable, more worthy life, more certain of the future.

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382 Again, the same holds true for what calls itself “conservatism” is some quarters.
383 Cf. Lampert: “Nietzsche’s view is both ontological and axiological; comprehending fact and value, it
includes a perspective on the way of all beings—to be is will to power—and a disposition toward that
way—an unbounded Yes and Amen to everything that was and is” (2001: 2).
384 Don Dombowski suggests that the closest “we may get Nietzsche to democracy is through
Bonapartism: autocratic will in the guise of popular rule. Bonaparte is the model for the Nietzschean
commander; not only his virtù, but certain of his policies and political techniques: simulation and
nonlinear tactics.” This is the opinion of Xenophon also. In Cyropaedia, Xenophon argues to the effect
that the best possible political order is an aristocracy masked as a democracy. See Leo Strauss, “The
Problem of Socrates: Five Lectures” in The Rebirth of Classical Political Rationalism: An Introduction to
the Though of Leo Strauss (Pangle ed., p. 146).
385 Ibid. § 3.
CHAPTER THREE

Nietzsche’s Justice

I teach: that there are higher and lower humans, and that a single individual can under certain circumstances justify the existence of whole millennia—that is, a full, rich, great, whole human being in relation to countless incomplete fragmentary humans. 386

Political justice, for Nietzsche, presupposes that there are different types of human beings, each with their own unique privileges and responsibilities. 387 Accordingly, Nietzsche’s concept of “rights” indicates, as it did in antiquity, the recognition and acceptance of particular—not universal—“rights to” or “rights of” privilege. Nietzsche’s antipathy toward democracy precludes his conceding claims to universal human rights, 388 which are generally and most recently understood as those very general norms that regulate the interaction of members of a democratic polity in the practice of their freedom(s). These are the basic rights to the greatest possible measure of equal individual liberty, rights of participation and deliberation that accrue to one in voluntary associations, rights of legal protection, rights of equal opportunity to participate in processes of opinion- and will-formation through which citizens exercise political autonomy, and rights to the provision of living conditions that are socially safeguarded. 389 Such categorical imperatives that regard the so-called individual in rights-based terms are, according to Nietzsche, bloodless abstractions not only destructive to high culture, but, because they abstract from what is mortal (body and earth) expressive of a deep “hatred of the human, and even more of the animal, and the material.” 390 Although not concerned with the “common good” of the common human being, Nietzsche’s sense of political justice stands to benefit the greater community of life that sustains high human potential—his is a “joyous science” on behalf of the human, the animal, and the mortal, material world of nature. 391 Those “human rights” that reflect the modern belief in the “common good,” must, therefore, be overcome and done away with altogether in favor of a more comprehensive and natural system of justice that gives fullest recognition and scope to the activity of those who demonstrate themselves to be most virtuous and full of life. This sense of justice complements nature.

386 WP § 997 (1884).
388 Cf. BGE § 11, 188; WP § 890 - 892 [1887].
390 GM III § 28.
391 Cf. Lampert, 1993: 446.
The two most recent influential treatises on "rights" in the late modern Occident, by John Rawls,392 and Robert Nozick,393 famously address themselves to the popularly assumed rights of individuals. Each of these public intellectuals represent, in their respective and various ways, what may be fairly called an effort to shore up conventional beliefs.394 Since at least Kant and Locke, it is generally assumed and taken as settled that the "individual" can expect to have strong and far-reaching "rights." Nobody seriously disputes this to be the case in moral, social, or political thought.

Accordingly, Rawls' definitively egalitarian reading of rights395 is formulated in terms supplemental to a "just society" (or "social justice") and can be seen as an attempt to ensure the assumption of the "liberties of equal citizenship." In other words, Rawls promotes a morality that constrains the advantaged to admit that the possession or exercise of their advantage(s)—naturally or otherwise endowed—depends upon the permission of an egalitarian society, one which will persuade the disadvantaged, especially the weakest among them, that whatever inequalities exist are to their distinct advantage. The state presumably functions, therefore, to ensure that superior humans "agree" to make sacrifices for the benefit of the disadvantaged and the weak.396 On the other hand, in that Nozick forwards an argument for a minimalist state, such that supports the so-called libertarian agenda, which rather favors a reading of "rights" that is an alternative to other forms of political liberalism (e.g., Rawls' radical egalitarianism), Nozick leaves one wondering what, if anything, the state (or culture) may expect from its citizens. Nozick can be read then as defending a patent and ubiquitous utilitarian version of moral individualism. In the parlance of Isaiah Berlin (a leading exponent of "value pluralism" in the rights-based liberal tradition), Rawls proposes a more positive reading of liberty; Nozick perhaps a more negative one.397

These modern readings of "rights" and "justice," however, for all their apparent 392 A Theory of Justice, 1971.
393 Anarchy, State, and Utopia, 1974.
394 John Gray notes of Rawls that "the absurdity of this project has, indeed, been tacitly acknowledged by one of this [past] centuries subtler liberal thinkers, John Rawls, when in his later work he revealed that he aims only to give a coherent philosophical statement of the character and premises of a particular historical tradition—the (American?) tradition of constitutional democracy" (Post-Liberalism: Studies in Political Thought, 1993:246).
395 Rawls' "original position" proposes a social contract according to which every human gives their adherence to civil society only on the condition that they be guaranteed certain minimal rights. Consider also his famous "difference principle" (op cit.) as underpinning the egalitarian tendencies of his portrait of a thoroughly democratized, rights-based civil society. Cf. WP § 280 [1887] and § 864 [1888].
396 This seems to be where Rawls' "veil of ignorance" secures unanimous consent as regards the "choice" of liberal society as he construes it.
397 Two Concepts of Liberty, 1969.
differences, show careful concern for what has become the irrevocable claims of a totally
depersonalized, "transcendental" abstraction called the "individual." Both interpretations of a
rights-based procedural democracy betray an unquestioned liberal commitment to the concerted
enterprise of denying (what Nietzsche thinks to be) a very obvious human truth—the natural
(indeed ontological) fact that there is a legitimate variety of types of people. By starting from
where are now and ending up there, they don't go beyond conventional principles for the
preexisting moral and political predilections.

In Rawls, for example, the quite explicit egalitarian goal is to make deviating
natures—for instance, actual or potential geniuses, or the socially/naturally privileged—feel
unjustified, guilty, or somehow accountable to the mass population (especially the
disadvantaged). His unequivocal aim is to benefit the worst off: society and the whole world
should, thinks Rawls, be progressively organized toward the end that there should be no worst
off at all. All resources (specifically natural, we can assume) should be turned increasingly to
eliminate suffering, to food, and to house, and to care for the destitute and downtrodden. Rawls
doesn't want there to be any losers—he campaigns (just as Nietzsche forecast in the portrait of
the Last Man) against struggle and suffering; he wants to eliminate discrimination and throw
into disrepute the very idea (much less effort) to have more or be(come) better than others.

Everyone wants the same thing, everyone is the same:
whoever feels differently goes voluntarily into the madhouse.

Since Nozick seems to want to preserve some degree of competition and, therefore,
some range of socioeconomic disparity, the individual "rights" of the powerful, intelligent, and
naturally-talented, he would surely oppose a radically-egalitarian society a'la Rawls, since the
exceptional few would be unjustly constrained by the tyranny of an otherwise average majority.
Nozick would just as surely surely hesitate to distinguish the exceptional or privileged in ways
that granted them ontological valuative superiority over their inferiors. Although Nozick sees
difference between persons and practices, he maintains the strictly egalitarian principle that
though they remain different or unlike persons and practices, they are not in practice or

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398 See Allan Bloom, "Justice: John Rawls Vs. The Tradition of Political Philosophy" in The American Political Science Review, vol. 69, pp. 648 - 662, 1975. In his scathing review, Bloom argues that Rawls' "method and the man he wishes to produce impel me to think that Nietzsche—abused by Rawls although not culpably but ignorantly—might provide a more appropriate title for this book [A Theory of Justice]: A First Philosophy for the Last Man" (662).

399 TSZ P § 5. "One is clever and knows all that has happened: so there is no end to their mockery. One still quarrels, but one soon makes up—else it is bad for the stomach. . . "We have invented happiness"—say the last humans and they blink. —"
ontologically better or worse than each other. Nozick is concerned not to have others (especially the state) impose their practices on others; this principle is supported by the belief that one not think one's practice better than others. Nozick always keeps in mind that everyone—and most everything—is equal; he implies that to suppose that what I am doing is better than what others do is to discriminate in ways that impose wrongly or immorally. Of course, he would never (as Nietzsche would) disvalue someone or something because it is ugly, or unintelligent, or weak, or even weak-willed—because to do so would contradict the libertarian principle (committed as it is to moral individualism) of to each his own (it would on his calculus, be an unfair constraint on the liberty of the moral individual). Nozick will not, as does Nietzsche, give essential and active priority—cultural, political and otherwise—to the highest forms of human life. Nozick would surely deny that any such criterion (of essence) has rational—much less political—validity.

However that may be, the net effect in both Nozick's and Rawls' theories of liberalism, and those forms kindred to them, is that exceptional persons are censurable for thinking, much less expecting or acting, to accord themselves privileges which might otherwise exempt them from the norms of conformity. One could argue that though Nozick defends competition, actually he eases or relaxes the true or genuine nature of competition between practices (and the persons who perform them). Moreover, how well (how gracefully, how beautifully, how nobly) one performs in comparison with others matters little—and less and less—in the insipid, relativist, and hopelessly plebeian world of moral individualism. This tendency toward moral and aesthetic myopia is reinforced by the eroding away of culturally or politically authoritative intersubjective standards of excellence and the concomitant dissolution of material penalties for failure (and rewards for success).

Nozick, furthermore, doesn't seem all that concerned with how well one does something as compared with or against an other; he is only concerned that one (any one) can do what one chooses unencumbered by others, which seems to mean that one can expect to do something only as well as one typically, that is, commonly, does. This thinking caters to the lowest common denominator, which, of course, is the point. Hence people aim to do things adequately. The valuative standards (of excellence) once implicit in specific practices, which challenge one to do something to a high or exceptional degree, are felt now to contradict the principle of metaphysical equality or relativism inherent in moral individualism and democratic society. So,

400 Cf. GM I § 5; AC § 6.
401 Cf. op cit.
Nozick is saying, in effect, that it really doesn’t matter what a person does or how well (as long as it doesn’t inhibit the rights of others to pursue their own bliss); we’re all just human beings after all, and so all of equal metaphysical worth.

The modern denial of hierarchy (implicit in democratic theory and the related ideas of egalitarianism and moral individualism) signals the chief metaphysical obstacle to the possibility of culture—and education—as Nietzsche envisions it. Whereas he denies the “instinct-corrupting” proposition of the equality of humans entailing that of their similarity (a premise that neither Nozick and Rawls, nor any of the three prevailing theories—egalitarianism; utilitarianism; and rights theory—of social justice/choice, question), Nietzsche rather celebrates the conception that there are as many distinct humanities as there are social (i.e., caste) categories.

It is argued that “an assumption or moral equality between persons” is shared by all three theories of social choice (i.e., egalitarianism; utilitarianism; and rights theory) that are common to political liberalism. All three, writes Thomas Nagel, “attempt to give equal weight, in essential respects, to each person’s point of view. This might even be described as the mark of an enlightened ethic.” What’s more, Nagel explains that the vaunted liberal principle of “impartiality is also egalitarian in itself. . . . [for it] generates a greater interest in benefitting the worse off than in benefitting the better off.” Nagel, like Rawls and Nozick, follows, therefore, in the long train of the Kantian project (which Nietzsche clearly deplores) which tries, in principle, to “view things simultaneously from everyone’s point of view” as if they were all equal “in principle.” But this tendency is, for Nietzsche, definitively nihilistic: symptomatic of the logic of the slave’s psychology and morality, which, not coincidentally, leads to its own ultimate dissolution. This equalizing applies, of course, not just to persons but to those view points and practices whereby everything, being thoroughly leveled, is viewed “democratically” equal: that no way of living or thinking is better than any other and that an aspiration to distinction is the root of “evil.” Since, on the other hand, Nietzsche thinks that all values

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402 That is, the categorical imperative inherent in all modern political theories of liberalism to honor a metaphysical equality of every person.
404 Cf. BGE § 221, 262.
406 Ibid.
407 Cf. AC § 11.
408 Op cit. 67. Nagle goes on to say that “[w]hat seems bad is not that people should be unequal in advantages or disadvantages generally, but that they should be unequal in [those] for which they are not responsible” (ibid. 71).
(moral or otherwise) are tied to specific perspectives and can be best (or not) only for them, he objects to Kant’s categorical imperative and the liberal sentimentality which flows from it.\textsuperscript{409}

While Nietzsche might agree to some version of a project that sees things from as many different perspectives as possible, he would certainly hold that when all such perspectives are assembled and evaluated, some will and should be ranked over others in strict hierarchy.\textsuperscript{410} Some may very well be discarded altogether. In other words, there will surely be some people, individuals, and groups (read: castes) whose “reasons” or motivations do not count (politically or otherwise) and whose “moral” priorities may not only be incomprehensible but culturally censurable in Nietzsche’s eyes—precisely because, on the Asklepiatic analogue, they are unhealthy and, moreover, “incurably” so. In this regard, the postmodern tendency to confuse Nietzsche’s respect for difference or plurality with a respect for subalterns or weakness becomes apparent. That is, postmodern readings characteristically ignore or distort Nietzsche’s deliberate and clear intent to rescind the instincts and ideas that legitimate democratic principles and practices. As discussed above, an emphasis on “difference” that disregards the central, organizing principle of rank-order—which avers to celebrate a “diversity” of perspectives to the exclusion of a classification of such perspectives under a finite or limited number of types—corrupts and vulgarizes Nietzsche’s concept of perspectivism. Moreover, there are no “individuals,” per se, for Nietzsche.\textsuperscript{411} There are only particular persons—he is not concerned with the human condition as an aggregate so much as he is with the lives of particular types of human animals.\textsuperscript{412} And only the highest and best—most powerful and healthy—among them.

Nietzsche’s writings reveal a radical preference for hierarchies (long before the thoughts

\textsuperscript{409} Cf. TSZ III.11 § 2; AC § 11.

\textsuperscript{410} E. O. Wilson’s ideas expressed as follows complement and lend insight to Nietzsche’s in similar respects: “[Whereas] Rawls would point us toward egalitarianism regulated by the state, Nozick [would point us] toward libertarianism in a minimalist state. The empiricist view in contrast, searching for an origin of ethical reasoning that can be objectively studied, reverses the chain of causation. The individual is seen as predisposed biologically to make certain choices. By cultural evolution some of the choices are hardened into precepts, then laws, and if the predisposition or coercion is strong enough, a belief in the command of God or natural order of the universe. . . . Ought is not the translation of human nature but of the public will, which can be made increasingly wise and stable through the understanding of the needs and pitfalls of human nature. . . . [Ought] is just shorthand for one kind of factual statement, a word that denotes what society first chose (or was coerced) to do, and then codified. The naturalistic fallacy is thereby reduced to the naturalistic dilemma. The solution of the dilemma is not difficult. It is this: Ought is the product of material process. The solution points a way to an objective grasp of the origin of ethics. . . . It also recognizes that for the same reason new moral codes may need to be devised, with the potential in time of being made sacred” (Consilience, 1998:274 - 75). Cf. GM III § 14.

\textsuperscript{411} Cf. BGE § 188. See also JS § 372 and 377.

\textsuperscript{412} Cf. AC § 57.
and teachings of the Übermensch and will to power emerge); his political, educational, and ecological thinking is in many striking respects emblematic of the so-called “particularism” of the ancien regime.

That is, in opposition to the leveling tendencies that are associated with the universalism and utilitarianism of rights-based modern political liberalism, Nietzsche rather esteems the uniquely valuable contributions of certain privileged sects of the population who can and, if permitted, will flourish in ways that most simply cannot. His bias for the higher degrees or poles of human possibilities determines a cultural-political (and moral) ideal, which focuses on the role of education in breeding an elite. Such a supreme cultural framework is, of course, radically nonegalitarian: it has strongly distinct classes or castes, each with their own specific moralities.

Insight into Nietzsche’s particularism suggests, furthermore, that one acknowledge that his perspectivist attack on modern egalitarian moralists issues from, what Nietzsche thinks is, their failing to see (or admit) how the true good is a natural good, an expression or activity of power and vitality. There is a substantive, rather embodied, content of the range vital activities that distinguishes certain types of people as good, thinks Nietzsche, which rightfully distances them from others; but egalitarians furtively try to pass off the same qualities (of moral goodness) on everyone alike. Egalitarians of all stripes and colors address a single moral lesson to all. They go wrong, thinks Nietzsche, by preaching the same good for all, and that all can have equal access to it.

As shown thus far, Nietzsche’s entire corpus of work is dominated by the intensification of his earliest and broad bias in favor of elites. Walter Kaufmann finds the assertion that the “goal of humanity . . . [lies] only in its highest specimens,” to be the most “basic statement of Nietzsche’s philosophy.” Indeed, Kaufmann considers this proclamation “the most crucial point of his philosophy of history and theory of value—no less than the clue to his

414 Cf. BGE § 265, 271, 282, 287.
415 Cf. Ibid. § 257, 262.
416 Cf. AC § 57.
418 Cf. Louis Dumont, *Homo Hierarchicus: The Caste System and Its Implications*. 1966: 13 - 20. Note also Harold Blooms’ observation, consistent with Nietzsche’s in this respect, of Paul and Mohammed: “A genius for universalism may be the rarest of gifts in Western religion: Paul and Muhammad, otherwise so different, are the largest instances of it that we know” (*Genius*, 2002:142). Ironically enough the next universal “religion,” of the secular variety—democratic “humanitarianism”—is presently at war with its estranged Moslem forbear.
419 Nietzsche, 1968: 149.
‘aristocratic’ ethics and his opposition to socialism and democracy.” Nietzsche’s lament, as regards both the ruin of education and culture, concerns a modern world in which humans are no longer conceived as hierarchically ranked in various social species, but as essentially—i.e., metaphysically—equal and identical. This insight is tied again to the idea that the differences of nature and status between individuals and communities are reasserted today by egalitarians of various stripes and colors in ways that are anti-natural, nihilistic, and often resentment driven (e.g., nationalism or racism), in a manner, moreover, which has disastrous implications for the maintenance of cultural diversity.

Nietzsche’s writings consistently reflect an alternative, characteristically naturalistic and tragic-aristocratic belief that privation or failure is justified by (or appropriate to) one’s class or caste. He doesn’t, to say again, believe in an idea of common humanity. He wants to restore belief in distinct human values, even in the valuation of the past and nature, symbolically and actually. Social hierarchy, a precondition of justice in “true” culture can only arise and be sustained, thinks Nietzsche, by the toil of the masses. The tragic, higher culture of the Übermensch (the paradigm of mighty-genius incarnate) requires the severe subordination of the majority of the population. Most people, that is, are to be “sacrificed” to the beauty—art, science and grandeur—destiny has waiting for an otherwise elite few. It is this elite upon whom Nietzsche bestows the task of legislating cultural value.

Inequality is simply inevitable, and, moreover, natural, according to Nietzsche. His ideas reflect a “naturalized” conception of justice understood in terms of just desert and

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420 Ibid.
421 Moreover, the universal homogenization of humanity (a project accommodated by the invocation of “natural rights” or “human rights” and other democratic false promises) obscures the difference between health (active) and sickness (reactive), which Nietzsche understands as a basis for the distinction and rank-ordering of different types, natures, and unities as patterns of accumulated power and beauty. Cf. Deleuze, 1962: 60.
422 The psychiatrist Jonathan Shay observes that “[m]odern habits of nationalism and racism have blended with the biblical idea (e.g., Exodus 17:14, Deuteronomy 13:14) that God’s enemies should be exterminated like vermin” (1994: 114). That both racism and nationalism still plays such a large role in the psychology and politics of otherwise self-proclaimed modern liberal democrats (in the West: in both America and Europe) one cannot underestimate the place of Judeo-Christian prejudices in the democratic-egalitarian project of “complete nihilism” which consumes the late-modern epoch. Yet, ironically, such nihilism at the same time also deems “discrimination” against the ugly, or unintelligent, or weak, or even weak-willed, just as “unfair” as discrimination against race, religion, or ethnicity.
424 Cf. WP § 943 (1885).
425 Similar arguments are presented in the contemporaneous essays: The Greek State, Homer’s Contest, and PTG. The preaphoristic writings, notably The Birth of Tragedy (1870 -1), share structural parallels as regard questions of caste, hierarchy and slavery in “high” culture.
426 See AC § 57.
427 Cf. BGE § 22, 188. See also HH § 233 and The Greek State.
intellectual honesty or responsibility, what he later equates with “conscience,” indicating a definition of hierarchy according to its original meaning: a ladder of command in which lower rungs are encompassed in the higher ones in regular succession. It is a matter of systematically graduated authority within a cultural complex that has, especially in the mature writings, distinctly religious overtones; he advocates that religion and politics can be complementary to nature “about the value of life,” just as he found them to be in archaic Greece.

For Nietzsche the presence of religion, or, better stated, the divine, seems indispensable to the project of “translating the human back into nature.” A sense of the sacred (phrased in terms of the mortal divinity body and earth) applies whenever the differentiated elements of the whole are judged in relation to the ecological whole—even, and especially, if that judgment is philosophical as in Plato’s Republic or Zarathustra’s “children’s land.” Nietzsche's definition of hierarchy hence propounds a political principle—a physiodicy—by which the elements of the whole (natural, aesthetic, cultural) are ranked in relation to the whole. The three continuous characteristics of hierarchy again apparent here are: separation (i.e. a “pathos of distance”) between the pure and impure, clean and unclean, noble and base, healthy and degenerate; a division of labor or slavery; and a rank order of groups and individuals as relatively superior or inferior to each other.

The existence of higher humans, “genius,” and the cultural context that presupposes the advent of the Übermensch demands the suffering and labor of “slaves.” Culture thus requires the stewardship of a privileged regency whose function is to impose a “saving unity” upon and therefore “justify” the suffering of society as a whole. The very few who celebrate their creative art should, thinks Nietzsche, be materially sustained by the work of subalterns.

A corollary of slavery and social division, and the kind of justice that’s central to enabling the tasks of “true” education, is the higher castes’ independence from drudgery.

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428 GM II § 2.
429 Op cit. § 205.
430 Cf. Ibid. § 49. See also The Case of Wagner, "Epilogue."
431 Cf. Ibid. § 274.
432 Cf. Ibid. § 188: "Slavery is, as it seems, both in the cruder and in the more subtle sense, the indispensable means of spiritual discipline and cultivation [Zucht und Züchtung], too. Consider any morality with this in mind: what there is in it of 'nature' teaches hatred of the laisser aller, of any all-too-great freedom, and implants the need for limited horizons and the nearest tasks—teaching the narrowing of perspective. . . . 'You shall obey—someone for a long time: else you will perish and lose respect for yourself'—this appears to me to be the moral imperative of nature which, to be sure, is neither 'categorical' as the old Kant would have it (hence the 'else') nor addressed to the individual (what do individuals matter to [nature]?), but to people, races, ages, classes—but above all to the whole human animal, to man.” See also WP § 758 [1883].
433 If nature is art (Kunstwerk) for Nietzsche, it is equally true that art is nature. Cf. Rosen 1989:221.
Leisure (the noble Greeks and Romans, of course, prized *otium* \(^{434}\)), plays a pivotal role in the production of the philosopher, artist and saint (archetypes of genius\(^ {435}\)). Leisure affords opportunity to develop a "[d]ecided faith in oneself [because a] leisure class ... make[s] things difficult for [itself] and exercise[s] much self-overcoming."\(^ {437}\) Referring to the historical examples of Greek culture and that of the French in the era of Louis XIV, Nietzsche celebrates the cultural value of the "ability for *otium*, the unconditional conviction that although a craft in any sense does not dishonor, it certainly takes away nobility."\(^ {438}\) The premise that it is "necessary ... to have leisure to stop and think."\(^ {439}\) supports Nietzsche's argument that a person who "does not have two-thirds of his day for himself is a slave, whatever he may be: a statesman, a businessman, an official, or a scholar."\(^ {440}\) The production of "great human beings" is contingent upon a "superfluity of time,"\(^ {441}\) opposed to the "haste," "plebeian noise," and "crude obligations" that characterize contemporary life — most contemporary scholarship included.\(^ {442}\) The "free spirit" can be cultivated, thinks Nietzsche, only when some people are living in relative leisure and idleness ("I mean leisure with a good conscience"\(^ {443}\)); a social division of labor factors centrally in the scheme of cultural maintenance. Again, in view of the high spirituality of "genuinely religious life," Nietzsche holds to the "aristocratic feeling that work disgraces... that it makes the soul and body common."\(^ {444}\)

A higher culture can come into being only where there are two castes of society: the working caste and the idle caste, capable of true leisure; or, to express it more emphatically,

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\(^{434}\) Cf. HH, Preface § 8. See also BGE § 58 and WP § 94, 943. The Greek word for leisure is *scholé*, the word from which "school" of course derives — and that corresponds with the original meaning of "liberal education" (and education for free men—as opposed to slaves and plebeians). See also Strauss, *Liberal Education and Responsibility*, 1962.

\(^{435}\) SE § 5.

\(^{436}\) Nor can it be emphasized strongly enough, in view of Nietzsche's subtle appreciation of the edifying importance of role *nutriment* ("the question of place and climate ... genius is conditioned by dry air and clear sky—"), that the higher castes exercise the greatest "selectivity in [their]... recreation. ... The times of work and fruitfulness are followed by the time of recreation." Indeed, he countenances that one's "instinctual sagacities," especially during times of "spiritual pregnancy," are availed during proper recreation in the right place, time, and climate. EH "Clever" § 1 - 3.

\(^{437}\) WP § 94 (1884).

\(^{438}\) Ibid. See also *The Republic* § 485a: .501b - c: 517 c.

\(^{439}\) Op cit. Cf. HH § 283, 284; see also WP § 943 (1885).

\(^{440}\) HH § 283.

\(^{441}\) AC § 49.


\(^{443}\) BGE § 58. Cf. GM II § 2.

\(^{444}\) Ibid. He adds, with a view to the modern way of life, that "industriousness has, from generation unto generation, dissolved the religious instincts. ... it seems that [moderns] have no time left for religion, the more so because it remains unclear to them whether it involves another business or another pleasure... ."
Consciously bearing the burden of the entire history and future of humankind, it is Nietzsche's aim to recover for education a standard of justice that will permit for the cultivation of supreme human types—imposed under “tragic” circumstances seemingly inhospitable to the satisfaction and contentment of the average human. He is searching for what is best in humanity—not for utilitarian or utopian solutions which, in opposition to everything natural, promise to make life “better” or easier. His anti-meliorative, post-humanist agenda provides no relief—or tolerance—for the weak or otherwise “incurably” diseased masses. Nietzsche takes as his starting point the “sphere that lies far above the world of necessity, indigence, and struggle for existence.” Complete and genuine justice, therefore, lies in recognizing, accepting, and affirming that there are fundamentally different types of human beings, each with their own unique privileges and responsibilities. Rights, properly speaking, sanction inequalities. Only a very few persons, moreover, can expect to meet and exercise the highest privileges and responsibilities of earth and body-redemption. The unwillingness to accept the politics that flows from such a morality, the ontology from which it issues, and the probity it reflects, manifests today in the centuries-old demand of “equal rights.”

The catastrophe of democracy and socialism alike, according to Nietzsche, is not only that they allow for—indeed encourage—the mediocre to make claims the unique privileges and responsibilities of “true” education and cultural leadership that they can never adequately attain, but that such a decadent political society continues to feed the vengefulness and the envy of the weak and ill-constituted. Against this rights-invoking egalitarianism, Nietzsche holds that rights are meaningless and irrelevant unless they allow for rights that are in practice special, that authorize the claims of some unique or special treatment otherwise denied the many. Justice, on such account, denotes an entitlement to a way of life which in actual practice is beyond the purview of the masses. Of course, this account of justice flows from a support of cultural inequalities that would be undermined and altogether precluded were the democratic tendencies...
not purged. Thus, overcoming the instinct-corrupting influence of these democratic tendencies is, in the interest of justice, of principal importance in the scheme of a Nietzschean political education.
CHAPTER FOUR

Nietzsche's Political Education

Though his philosophy of education develops over time, Nietzsche—the "physician of culture"—never repudiates the view of his time as "sick." Nor does he waver in his expressed "faith" in the creative possibilities of "great human beings." Nietzsche's view to late-modern social-political malaise and the contingency of developing the "highest types" of human being to their fullest potential is evidenced by an extreme devotion to the cause of cultural renaissance in the writings at the earliest stage of his philosophical development. His way of opposing modernity is formulated both as a diagnosis and attack on contemporary "sickness" as well as the highest expression of "health," energy, and strength. These views, which are formulated in axiologically opposed terms of the Übermensch and the "philosophers of the future" versus the complete nihilism of the terminally-decadent Last Man, carry through until Nietzsche's final position is declared in the "mature" writings of the late 1880's. The educational and political polemics that Nietzsche raises at the earliest stage are problems he grapples with throughout his career. Moreover, his interests are for the most part positive—"affirmative"—in that he proposes new, "life-enhancing" ways to think about certain social and environmental problems such that complements life on earth.

Given that he seeks to prepare the few "great human beings" for the "rule of the world," Nietzsche's philosophy of education entails a pedagogical politics—action on the part of philosophy. A large part of what philosophy demands, for Nietzsche, is thinking about the good and then acting in accordance with such insight. "All political action," Leo Strauss remarks in such regard, "has then in itself a directedness towards knowledge of the good: of the good life, or the good of society." According to Nietzsche, the good of culture calls for the production and sustenance of the "highest types" of human beings. This "fundamental goal" is the complete political good in his estimation because it fulfills, "perfects," or "complements" nature. The justification for Nietzsche's radical aristocraticism consists accordingly in a disciplined pattern of the education and breeding of an elite who are, he thinks, in most every way—soul, spirit, and body—superior to an otherwise nondescript mass.

450 Cf. JS § 99, 102.
451 BGE § 208. Cf. FEI § 5.
452 Cf. Plato, The Republic § 533d: "... as for those children [we] are rearing and educating in speech ... [and] deed ... [to] rule the city and be the sovereigns of the greatest things."
453 "What is Political Philosophy?" (1954) p. 3
Considering “the philosopher as great educator,” Nietzsche wants to take responsibility for cultural transformation and renaissance education. Nietzsche seeks to reconstitute society in toto. Notwithstanding the fact that he wrote for a select few, this political education represents a teaching for all humankind to live by. In these respects, his elitist standards mirror those of other great educators in the tradition of classical political philosophy.

Casting himself in the lifelong-role of educator, Nietzsche provides answers to the following questions. What is the aim or purpose of education? Who is to be educated? What attributes and qualities are distinctive of an educated or cultivated human being? What is the relationship of education to culture and politics? In such respects, Nietzsche’s philosophy furnishes a definition of what the goal of “true” education is—or ought to be. In 1872, at the beginning of his philosophical and educational career, Nietzsche opened his fourth of five lectures delivered to his colleagues at Basle with the following words:

It is more and more clearly evident that we have no educational institutions at all; but that we ought to have them. . . . So there are no cultural institutions! . . . I for my own part know of only two exact contraries: institutions for teaching culture and institutions for teaching how to succeed in life. All our present institutions belong to the second class; but I am speaking only of the first. . . .[of] true, aristocratic culture, founded upon a few carefully chosen minds; . . . This spirit, linked to the Greeks by the noblest ties, and shown by its past history to have been steadfast and courageous, pure and lofty in its aims, its faculties qualifying it for the high task of freeing modern man from the curse of modernity—I see only a resplendent file of the highest natures moving toward this goal . . . .

Near the end of his philosophical career Nietzsche states that his philosophy should be read as “school for gentlemen,” echoing and reaffirming his earliest pedagogical belief in the “maieutic and educational influences on noble youths, with a view to eventually producing a genius.” Nietzsche, like Plato, Xenophon, Aristotle, and also Machiavelli, sees the most important “task” for education and culture to be the production or formation of a ruling

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454 Cf. The Greek State; BGE § 257, 260; AC § 57.
456 Cf. EH “Untimely Essays” § 3.
457 FEI § 4.
458 EH “BGE” § 2. This section continues: “. . . that concept [of the gentleman] taken more spiritually and radically than it has ever been taken. . . . All the things of which the [modern] age is proud are felt as contradictions to this type, almost as bad manners.”
459 BT § 15. Cf. SE § 3 - 5. See also FEI § 1 - 5.
460 Cf. The Republic, § . 376c; .396b; .402a; .489e; .505b; .519d; 569.a.
elite of "gentlemen" whose purpose is sustained by the political authority of an aristocratic caste. According to both the classical and Nietzschean model of political education, the caste of *gentilhommes*, the *kaloskagathos* or *gennaios* (the well- or hightborn) must maintain a firm hand on political power so as to permit for the propagation and rearing of future generations of a "renaturalized" nobility. A rising nobility must, according to Nietzsche, be formed again by educators who are up to the task of the political reconstitution of culture—this is why "we are in greater need of [the] highest teachers," "educators who are themselves educated; superior, noble, spirits" who "demonstrate how one ought to live." High culture needs to be disciplined and strengthened by the wisdom of a new philosophy of life, mediated to society through the rule of "gentlemen" educated in the discipline of "higher life" and cultivated by good "breeding." Aristocratic culture so conceived is the "rule of the best" by nature and training.

Nietzsche wants to protect, equip, and enhance a potential "new nobility" in body and instinct, thereby preparing them for the "rule the earth." The "great evaluators and creators" he has in mind are the most vital, healthy, and strong who face the future resolutely and devote their energies to the "legislation of value" and that which "will be." They alone, thinks Nietzsche, are capable of creating the new philosophical, mytho-religious, political, and scientific horizons of culture. In the promotion of the "breeding" of a new aristocracy—a

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464 FEI § 4; SE § 5 - 6; HL § 10; BGE § 61 - 62; 274.
466 Nietzsche cannot be read, then, as endorsing or otherwise defending the existing royal lines of Europe; in fact he renounces the titled aristocracy of his day—seeing them as corrupted by the consequences of class-mixing as they are by Judeo-Christian morality. Cf. TSZ III.4, III.12 § 12, IV.3 § 1. See also *The Republic* § 519a - c.
467 Cf. TI "Germans" § 7. See also *The Republic* § 518d, re: the pedagogical "art of turning around . . ." BT § 20, TI "Germans" § 5, AC § 35. See also SE § 2. Cf. Strauss: [Such] teachers are not easy to come by [today] . . . Such men are extremely rare. We are not likely to meet any of them in any classroom. We are not likely to meet any of them anywhere. It is a piece of extraordinary luck if there is a single one alive in one's time" (*What is Liberal Education?*, 1961: 43).
469 Cf. BGE § 26, 208, 213, 218, 221. Nietzsche insists that in order to really understand his writings, one must respond to his words more by feeling rather than thinking. Cf. HH § 41; BGE § 3, 16, 26, 205, 224, 231, 253; GM I § 11, II § 2, 17. See also WP § 440 (1888): "Genius resides in instinct; goodness likewise. One acts perfectly when one acts instinctively. Even from the viewpoint of morality, all conscious thinking is merely tentative, usually the reverse of morality."
470 Cf. *The Republic* § .520e: " . . . we shall be laying just injunctions on just men. . . each of them will certainly approach ruling as a necessary thing— . . ."
471 See TSZ III.12. Cf. *The Republic* § .525b: " . . . our guardian is both a warrior and philosopher." See also § 535a - b, .536b.
472 Cf. FEI § 1- 4; HL § 9; SE § 5. See also TI "Expeditions" § 44; AC § 4.
project intertwined with what can only be called a eugenics program—Nietzsche points to the educational and political value of a stronger, more “natural” human whose most distinctive capacity “begets and gives birth” to world-interpretations that determine the course of history. He writes in such regard that his philosophy represents “a morality . . . which desires to train human beings for the heights, not for comfort or mediocrity, a morality with the intention of training a ruling caste—the future masters of the earth.”

The philosopher as we understand him, we free spirits—as the man of the most comprehensive responsibility who has the conscience for the over-all development of humankind—this philosopher will make use of religions for his project of cultivation and education, just as he will make use of whatever political and economic states are at hand . . . [for] the selective and cultivating influence . . . [of] the strong and independent who are prepared and predestined to command . . . for the ability to rule . . .

Nietzsche wants to “rear a new kind of human being . . . in whom the duration of the necessary will and the necessary instinct will be guaranteed through many generations—a new master type and caste[.]” The breeding and training of this “master caste” consists above all in the formation of character, taste, and style—“a dietic regime [of] . . . refinement in form and intention” in the arts of thinking, writing, and the legislation of value. The rearing of the gentleman ruler here anticipates, indeed, presupposes, the cultural life of a new nobility. A strictly rank-ordered political and cultural hierarchy, mirroring the natural rank-order of things, is, therefore, as necessary for Nietzsche’s new political and moral order as it was for the ancients. As Nietzsche’s philological training taught him and his later genealogy of morality leads one to understand, certain personal types are more or less probable within certain types of society. Hence he promotes certain cultural and educational conditions in isomorphic relation to the personal types they produce. The “noble” type inhabits a particular social-historical place—he or she is a member, indeed the “goal,” of a specific kind of society, which is, according to Nietzsche, the ideal case of cultural “health.” It accords this reading of

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474 Cf. Plato, The Republic, 424a-b. Eugenics, a term coined by Francis Galton in 1884 (see also his Hereditary Genius), derives from the Greek gennaios—“wellborn.” See also JS §11.

475 Cf. BGE § 206, 230. See WP § 996 (1885 - 1886): “The sublime human has the highest value, even if he is terribly delicate and fragile, because an abundance of very difficult and rare things has been bred and preserved together through many generations.” See also WP § 987 (1884).

476 WP § 957 (1885). Cf. § 958 (1884).

477 Op cit. § 61.

478 Ibid. § 206, 230.

479 EH “BGE” § 2. Cf. TI “Germans” § 6 - 7. See also The Republic § 533d - 536d.

480 Cf. BGE § 257 - 259; GM I § 2; AC § 57.

philosophical anthropology that authentic gentlemen, on both Nietzsche's and the classical models, regard the cultivation of virtue as choice worthy for its own sake; whereas the vulgar disagree as regards the ends of human possibility, much less the highest good. In particular, the "noble" and base disagree as regards the first principles and goals of life and culture. Thus does Nietzsche restore to both philosophy and education their original political and moral heuristic: the cultivation of excellence in the "highest types" who can (and should) serve as leaders and paragons of culture. In 1888 he writes that this

the greatest of all tasks, the higher breeding of humankind, together with the remorseless destruction of all degenerate and para­sitic elements, will again make possible on earth that superfluity of life out of which the dionysian condition must again proceed. I promise a tragic age: the supreme art in the affirmation of life.

Nietzsche's "new teaching" is equal parts destruction and creation. Firstly, he seeks to destroy and "overcome" the Christian and democratic egalitarian prejudices and practices that have resulted in the "degeneration" of human being. As discussed above, this degenerative propensity, manifest in Christianity and democracy, is symptomatic of nihilism. The denial of human greatness, likewise the rejection of the natural rank order of humankind, is a distinctively egalitarian fallacy which fosters the debilitating assumption that there is nothing "great" left for humankind to accomplish. The widespread assumption that the universalization of Western liberal democracy is the final form of human government that marks an end point of humankind's ideological evolution is a hallmark of the vainglorious conceit of the "Last Man." This "degeneration" of willing effects a loss of striving and action, spreading the virulent relativist belief that nothing is true, that everything is permitted. Nietzsche's formula for nihilism indicates the culminating stage of what he calls "slave" values. The slave's leveling, resentment-driven logic—inherent in both Christianity and democracy—leads to its own decay

482 BGE § 30, 43.
483 See Plato, Crito 49d 2 - 5. Cf. Leo Strauss, Liberal Education and Responsibility, 1962: 12 - 15, 24 - 25. See also The Republic § .519c: "... those who are without education and experience of truth would never be adequate stewards of the city, nor would we have those who have been allowed to spend their time in education continuously to the end—the former because they don't have any single goal in life ... the latter because they won't be willing to act ... ."
484 Cf. TI "Expeditions" § 49.
486 Cf. TSZ I.15. See also EH "BT" § 5.
487 Cf. TSZ P § 5, III.12 § 27. The Last Man is the hypostasis of modern humanity and, according to Nietzsche's critique of modern values, remains as indifferent to the possibility of species-enhancement as he is to earth redemption. The average modern, that is, is "incapable of understanding or appreciating what is rare, great and uncommon, that is to say, what is essential and vital" (SE § 6).
and dissolution.\textsuperscript{488} We now live in this culminating stage in which a system of safely democratic, relativist values undermines itself and society slips into a nihilistic void of valuelessness.\textsuperscript{489}

There he lay now, sick, miserable, filled with ill-will towards himself; full of hatred for the impulses toward life, full of suspicion of all that was strong and happy. In short, a ‘Christian’. . . . In physiological terms: in the struggle with the beast, making it sick can be the only means of making it weak. This the Church understood: it corrupted human being, it weakened him—but it claimed to have ‘improved’ him . . . .\textsuperscript{490}

† † †

In order to understand Nietzsche as the political educator he clearly saw himself to be,\textsuperscript{491} one must take into careful account his “fundamental goal” for culture and politics: “the cultivation of genius” and the “enhancement” of “great human beings.”\textsuperscript{492} With particular and careful respect to nature, these core terms of his pedagogical politics sustain from his earliest writings—and public lectures\textsuperscript{493}—until the end of his philosophical career. With such unambiguous naturalistic goals (the nobility of genius and “great humans” being naturally occurring types\textsuperscript{494}) in view, Nietzsche seeks to legitimate the dispossession and subjugation of certain (weaker) human types; in that he clearly advocates the reinstitution of a caste system.\textsuperscript{495} Nietzsche not only defends but recommends the cultural and political “justice” of the institution of slavery; this principle is the “great justice” of the natural order of rank that accords the primordial necessity of all life.\textsuperscript{496} In one of his earliest writings, \textit{The Greek State} (1871), it is declared that:

\ldots slavery is the essence of Culture; a truth which of course, leaves no doubt as to the absolute value of Existence. \textit{This truth} is the vulture that gnaws at the liver

\textsuperscript{488} Cf. BGE § 260.\textsuperscript{489} Thomas Green observes today that “[i]t used to be possible to frame the central questions of moral, civic, and aesthetic education by asking how can we educate persons so that they come to value things that have worth. But in a world in which things no longer have worth, we can no longer frame the educational questions in that way . . . . when we imagine such caring [about value] to be missing from the critical attitude . . . . then what we imagine is exactly what is meant by alienation and anomic, or normlessness . . . . If by ‘values’ we mean to refer such evaluative beliefs, then we must be prepared to ask how such beliefs are formed and, therefore, what it required for them to change” (Voices: The Educational Formation of Conscience, 1999: 129, 39, 142).\textsuperscript{490} TI “Improvess” § 2.\textsuperscript{491} Cf. TI “Expeditious” § 36; 38 - 39; 44; 48; EH “Clever” § 9, “Good Books” § 1. See also BGE § 208 - 212, 262; AC § 57. See also Lampert, 2001: 2 - 4; 190 - 203.\textsuperscript{492} See Leo Strauss, Persecution and the Art of Writing, 1962: 211.\textsuperscript{493} See On the Future of Our Educational Institutions (1872)—a series of five public lectures delivered by Nietzsche while a university professor of philology at Basle.\textsuperscript{494} Cf. AC § 4.\textsuperscript{495} For a sociological elucidation of caste system, see Louis Dumont, Homo Hierarchicus: The Caste System and Its Implications (Complete Revised English Edition), translated by Mark Sainsbury, Louis Dumont, and Basia Gulati, 1970.\textsuperscript{496} BGE § 213; see also § 219.
of the Promethean promoter of Culture. The misery and toiling of men must still increase in order to make the production of the world of art possible and a small number of Olympian men. Here is to be found the source of that secret wrath nourished by Communists and Socialists of all times, and also by their feeble descendants, the white race of the 'Liberals,' not only against the arts, but also against classical antiquity.497

There can be no mistaking Nietzsche's conviction that hierarchy and social stratification are essential to the political maintenance of "true culture."498 "The differential social space Nietzsche opens up," Don Dombosky notes rightly, "is predicated on an order of rank and class division; it is not"—as the "radical democratic" readings of Nietzsche suggest—"a horizontal field."499 Leo Strauss observes in this regard that, for Nietzsche, "suffering and inequality are the prerequisites of human greatness."500 Nietzsche affirms in the strongest possible terms that "higher humans" must be willing to employ others, and even do them violence, to further the goal of saving humankind and the earth from the despair and destruction that nihilism has wrought. In 1872, again during his fourth public lecture "On the Future of Our Educational Institutions," Nietzsche declares that he has

told much about the genius, . . . the apexes of the intellectual pyramid: it would, however, seem that between the broad, heavily burdened foundation up to the highest of the free and unencumbered peaks there must be countless intermediate degrees, and that here we must apply the saying natura non jacit saltus. Where then are we to look for the beginning of . . . culture; where is the line of demarcation to be drawn between the spheres which are ruled from below upwards and those which are ruled from above downwards? And if it be only in connection with these exalted beings that true culture may be spoken of, how are institutions to be founded for the uncertain existence of such natures, how can we devise educational establishments which shall be of benefit only to these select few?501

The natural order of rank is the most important counternihilistic issue of Nietzsche's political teaching. An overarching conception of hierarchy is at the core of Nietzsche's attempt to devise a new pedagogical understanding of the relationship of the true to the good. Truth, however, is not for everyone. It is something that he thinks is "of benefit only to [a] select few." The vast majority of people—including the "scholars" (who Nietzsche derides unremittingly502)—can

497 The Greek State, p. 7. See also the later, "mature" books for virtually verbatim echoes of this position, cf. BGE § 208; 260 - 262; AC § 57.
498 Cf. FEI § 1 - 5; SE § 5 - 7.
501 FEI § 4. Cf. The Greek State p. 16. See also AC § 57 for a recapitulation of this idea at the end Nietzsche's career.
502 Cf. SE § 6; BGE § 206 - 207. Nietzsche juxtaposes the "most valuable" "complementary humans" (the "genius") to the scholar—"a man without substance and content." See also Plato, The Republic § .519c.
only endure so much of it. 503 Most people are, in other words, *physiologically* and *
psychologically* incapable of bearing the burden of probity. 504 On this perspective, Nietzsche’s 
preoccupation with distinctions and hierarchy denotes an attempt to resurrect a level of social 
stratification lost in contemporary society. He believes that “... the line should be drawn 
between that which is ruled from below upwards and that which is ruled from above 
downwards.”505 Restoring an “order of rank among capacities”506 to society is needed to 
generate a few extraordinary human beings whose existence not only “justifies” all human 
life—as well as the suffering, struggle, and effort required for “true” culture to exist in the first 
place. It would also, not coincidentally, “redeem” the earth.507 For it is nature, thinks Nietzsche, 
that ordains social hierarchy.508 Nature dictates the ranking of different types of human beings 
as high and low; strong and weak; beautiful and ugly; superior and inferior.509 Human 
interpretations and values are more or less “true,” in Nietzsche’s estimation, so far as they are 
in accord with nature’s taxonomy. 

Furthermore, Nietzsche argues there is, at this crisis point in history,510 no credible or 
viable political alternative available to us; he links this “natural” necessity, in concert with 
unmistakable political and moral overtones, to the times. Given that modern social and political 
regimes have a long-demonstrated incapacity to defend the environment’s security from near 
total ecological disaster, Nietzsche’s forecast that liberal capitalism and socialism alike place the 
earth at the disposal of a nondescript mass population is valid. It is a fact that modern 
humankind, whether operating under the banner of democracy or communism, has in only 
several decades had more of a destructive and ruining effect on the earth and atmosphere than 
did all of previous human civilizations.511 Moreover, as global populations now aspire to a life of 

503 “To be truthful—few can do it! And those who can, will not! Least of all, however, can the good be 
truthful. ... to be good in that way is a sickness of the spirit” (TSZ III.12 § 7). Cf. HH § 33; JS § 357; 
BGE § 39, 42; GM II § 16. 
504 Cf. BGE § 259. 
505 FEI § 4. 
506 EH “Clever” § 9. 
507 Cf. JS § 109. 
508 Cf. AC § 57: “Nature, not Manu, separates those pre-eminently spiritual, those pre-eminently strong 
in muscle and temperament, and ... the mediocré—the last and greatest number, the first as select.” 
509 Cf. BGE § 219. See also § 39, 43. 
510 An insight confirmed by the readily apparent global social and political crises of the 21st century. 
Most significant, over a third of the species on Earth could be extinct by 2050 (the mid-range estimate 
is that 24% of plants and animals will be committed to extinction by then). Global warming is directly 
responsible for the radical depletion of biodiversity and the degeneration of the natural environment. 
And global warming is linked to the cumulative effects of ever-increasing rates of human population, 
consumption, waste, and the emissions of carbon dioxide and other “green house” gases that trap 
and hold heat in the atmosphere. 
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American-style philistine consumption and contentment, in the name of specious terms of liberty and social justice, it is only too apparent that neither the liberal democratic nor the Marxist-Leninist regimes promise to protect, much less restore, the ecological balance necessary to sustain life (not just human) on earth.\footnote{See HL § 6; HH § 263; BGE § 142; TI "Expeditions" § 36.} “Great politics,” Nietzsche states explicitly, is therefore demanded by the times.\footnote{BGE § 208.}

This is precisely the point that the so-called reconstructed postmodern readings of Nietzsche miss or ignore. For they deny or are otherwise deceived about Nietzsche’s lifelong conviction that there is an order of rank in nature which must be honored culturally, morally, and politically in order to be, as he says, “healthy.” Postmodernists and radical democrats, that is, miss altogether what is the most significant organizing principle of political society—and leading norm for a Nietzschean political education: health (of body and earth). Despite this serious elision, Nietzsche’s naturally-attuned elitism should be recognized as the necessary means of fostering a society in which the most intelligent and creative, the most energetic and powerful human beings (the most “natural” and “spiritual” in his estimation) can live safe from the threat of contagion and violence (spiritual and physical) from the masses who, he argues, exercise their anti-life resentment-driven revenge in the forms of Christian-democratic morality and politics—including the economic and institutional arrangements that attend them. Nietzsche advocates a society that does not pursue comfort, ease, and material advantage in a plebeian spirit of commercialism, but one that rather recognizes and values human excellence, health, vitality, and creative affirmation of the natural order of rank. These qualities promote life, especially what he calls “ascending life,” and should, therefore be protected, enhanced and rewarded. In such respects, Lampert suggests that

\begin{quote}
Nietzsche’s thought grounds a postnationalist politics that loves the earth as humanity’s home, a politics that could no more side with modern humanism and the now appalling rights it has granted humans over the community of life that sustains it, than it could side with the dead theisms that single out the human as the one thing worth saving from an earth worth damning.\footnote{1993: 279. Cf. Thomas Heilke, 1998: 153.}
\end{quote}

Nietzsche’s understanding of the human place in the natural world informs his vision of a tragic or “Dionysian” regime that would be an ecologically-responsible and -responsive place
in which a new edifying sense of what’s natural and conducive to ascending life prevails. This is a model for “high” or “true” culture wherein those who are “noble” by birth and training are “consecrated” to the “perfection of nature.” These “noble” few will be in positions of cultural and political authority, guided by a “higher” “master morality” well suited for organizing people into a strict caste system. Such a social template is the best design for bringing about the “life-affirming” and “life-enhancing” conditions for the future evolution of the human species. With a view to nature, Nietzsche advocates “great politics” to build a new social order on that natural order, in that he furnishes an educational politics for the “basis for culture” which celebrates the truth of nature.

The cardinal Nietzschean axiom of rank order (Rangordnung) is reflected in the bifurcated typology of human psychophysiologic temperaments that he posits between masters and slaves; the healthy and the sick; the strong and the weak; and so on. Nietzsche discerns hierarchy at the biomedical level of psychophysiology. In the contemporary vernacular, this view is sociobiological. The doctrine of will to power accords the reductionist view of sociobiology, which holds that all kinds of knowledge, from physics and chemistry to psychology and philosophy; sociology and history; ethics, religion, and politics, can be reduced to science. With respect to biology, physics, and psychology, Nietzsche’s formulation of will to power explains change in nature (and the human soul) immanently, suggesting the interrelatedness of all things, and establishing a comprehensive ontology or account of the way of all beings. “This conclusion,” notes Lampert, “leads inexorably to an experiment in how human life might best be lived.” Nietzsche in any case discerns two fundamental source of

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515 Cf. WP § 1041 (1888); JS § 370. See also Lampert’s description of Nietzsche’s cultural vision that recovers “the natural and human past within the mystery of the whole,”: “A culture built on the joyous science . . . [a] culture aware of its place in the immensities of space and time, aware of its place on earth among species that evolve and falls extinct, aware of its heritage as a spirited species bent on surpassing” (1993: 445 - 446).
516 Cf. TI “Ancients” § 4 - 5. See also SE § 2; WB § 4; JS § 382.
517 Cf. Plato, The Republic, 423d.
520 Cf. AC § 52.
522 Thus science requires superintendence and supervision [from philosophy]; a hygiene of life belongs close beside . . . the problem of science itself . . . in which science is viewed under the optics of the artist, and art under that of life” (HL § 10, BT “Self-Criticism” § 2). See also TSZ II.13 - 19.
perspectives, two irreducible orders of the soul: strong and weak.\textsuperscript{524}

The value of egoism depends on the physiological value of him who possesses it: it can be very valuable, it can be worthless and contemptible. Every individual may be regarded as representing the ascending or descending line of life.\textsuperscript{525}

Different interpretations can be judged according to their source: the body. The way to judge interpretations arises from Nietzsche's insights into the nature of human psychology and physiology, the embodied source of all interpretations.\textsuperscript{526} Nietzsche does not value each and every truth or perspective on truth as equal. The use of his perspectival genealogical method allows him to juxtapose accepted, unnatural truths with natural ones in order to expose the former for their contextual source and effect and thereby argue that one truth or perspective is not as epistemologically operable as another in view of a metacriterion of ascending life.

Behavior or the activity of the body enables identification of character, which, in turn, justifies or legitimizes the truth-speaking (truth-bearing) power of knowledge for Nietzsche.\textsuperscript{527} The "truth of the body" must not, according to Nietzsche, be understood from an epistemological, but an ethical, indeed ontological, perspective.\textsuperscript{528} Once identified it becomes possible to evaluate actions differently relative to characters or types of human beings (or cultures or regimes) in view of the manner or style in which almost anything is done.

\textsuperscript{524} Cf. BGE § 22 - 23.
\textsuperscript{525} TI "Expeditions" § 33. Cf. AC § 57. See also WP § 292 (1887).
\textsuperscript{526} Preston notes that for Nietzsche, "nuanced feelings for distinctions mark a few men off as gentilshommes and born psychologists (EH "The Case of Wagner" §4). . .[and] in Nietzsche's words, 'psychology is almost a measure of the cleanliness or uncleanness of a race’" (1995: 218).
\textsuperscript{527} Béatrice Han argues that, for Nietzsche, "the truth content of a proposition does not depend on its adequation with an objective referent . . . but on its link to the living singularity of its author as expressed by the notion of an archaic 'tyranny of truth' (HH § 261). A truth claim is one that is asserted by someone truthful (the Master). . . . Nietzsche's own existential practice of philosophy seeks to revive [this] magisterial understanding of truth . . . we must first create ourselves in order to regain the authority to speak truth” ("Nietzsche and the 'Masters of Truth'” in Nietzsche and the Divine (Lippitt & Urpeth eds.) 2000: 117). Cf. WP § 69 (1885 - 1886).
\textsuperscript{528} Homer provides the first example, in the second Book of The Iliad, where Odysseus assaults the commoner Thersites (described as "the ugliest and most repulsive of all men who marched on Troy") for speaking up in the assembly. Although Thersites merely repeats what Achilles has already stated (a truth regarding Agamemnon), he is portrayed as daring to challenge the authority of a superior by way of argument. Notably, this is the first and only time in Homer that a commoner speaks up and expresses his view (a proto-democratic moment, as it were). Odysseus answers this attempt not by argument, but with a severe beating: Odysseus "drove him with a sceptre and chided him with loud words . . . 'to sit still and hearken . . . to thy betters: but thou art no warrior and a weakling never reckoned whether in battle or in council.’ The point is clear enough to Xenophon, for example, who cites this passage as an instance of the fundamental difference between noble and base, and the warrant to speak politically (cf. Memorabilia lines 198 - 202). From Homer to Xenophon on to Nietzsche, the first democratic principle (of free speech and participation) is directly attacked. As Homer has Odysseus state: "It is not good for a multitude to rule, let there by one lord only" (.203 -.208).
On the perspective of will to power, there are two basic moral types, which correspond with two orders of the soul or body—and these orders correspond with a typology of political regimes.\textsuperscript{529} Politics is a projection or radiation of psychology.\textsuperscript{530} For Nietzsche, as for Plato, psychology and politics coincide; there is a direct correlation between the composition of the soul and the constitution of the city—and both can be evaluated in medical-aesthetic terms of "health."\textsuperscript{531} Moreover, the study of the forms that natural processes take in the evolution of human psychophysiology correspond with the activity of moral and political thought.\textsuperscript{532}

The fundamental human duality in morality is, for Nietzsche, codeterminous with the nature of life itself. This idea underscores the tension between ascending and degenerating life.\textsuperscript{533} According to the isomorphism of psychophysiology and politics, the natural order of rank is protested (or ignored) by those who judge themselves—consciously or not—to be harmed by it. The modern teaching of equality, Nietzsche suggests, is simply a reaction against the inequality of natural life—especially ascending life.\textsuperscript{534} Preachers of equality, he argues, express a resentment of "higher life" and nature in an attempt to "right" a natural wrong. Thus, egalitarian morality is a form of sublimated revenge on the part of the degenerate against the naturally gifted, those more powerful and healthy than the rest. Christian-democratic norms are, on Nietzsche's perspective of the genesis of Judeo-Christianity, "malice spiritualized"—a

\textsuperscript{529} Cf. Plato, \textit{The Republic} Book VIII .544d - e.

\textsuperscript{530} Cf. TI "Expeditions" § 38.

\textsuperscript{531} Cf. \textit{Homer and Classical Philology} (1869) pp. 146, 151, 167, 170; PTG § 1 (27); HL § 8 (103); JS § 99, 102, 382; TSZ III.12 § 7, III.13; TI "Expeditions" § 38; AC § 1. See also Plato, \textit{The Republic} .408a - .415d, .444d, .491b.

\textsuperscript{532} See TI "The 'Improvers" § 3 - 5. Lampert's reading of these aphorisms from1886 elucidates that Nietzsche "sketches the life history of aristocracies on an evolutionary model, a kind of punctuated equilibrium in three phases. First, a fixed kind or type hardens during long periods of constant unfavorable conditions. Second, the type decays when conditions ease and individual variations are permitted to grow; these are 'the turning points of history' as new possibilities flourish and compete with one another for supremacy. Third, the newly generated individual variations face extinction from a nonnatural force, moral preachers who strive to preserve the old type morally by preaching it into preservation. What is morally preserved, however, can be only a mediocre reflection of what the actual hard conditions first generated. . . . [W]e now find ourselves in the unprecedented danger of a comprehensive third phase. the 'tensed bow' at the end of the moral period generates new individual variants whose flourishing is felt by most as a danger. . . . Nietzsche, the opposite of a moral preacher, preached danger calculatedly, with a view to enhancing the species through a culture that encourages a jungle growth of competing variations. . . . [It] employs the dangerous to establish an aristocratic society, and to that task Nietzsche now gradually turns. In the midst of the moral preaching of mediocrity, itself an understandable response to the fearsome decay of a whole civilization, Nietzsche moves in a different direction employing different means" (2001:271-72). Cf. JS § 354.

\textsuperscript{529} Cf. PTG § 8. See also HL § 6: "But only superior strength can judge, weakness is obliged to tolerate if it is not to make a hypocritical pretense of strength and turn justice sitting in judgment into an actor. . . . Objectivity and justice have nothing to do with one another."

\textsuperscript{534} Cf. HL § 3: "There is lack of that discrimination [today] of value and that sense of proportion which would distinguish between [types] in a way that would do true justice to them." See also JS §382.
reactive “fight against the ‘exception,’” which constitutes “the favorite revenge of the spiritually limited against those less limited—also a sort of compensation for having been ill-favored by nature.” The egalitarian impulse thus betrays a struggle, which began with slaves against their masters, on the part of the weak against the strong. According to this genealogy of morality, Christianity and its secular progeny—democracy and socialism—mask a deep hatred of nature for generating a disproportionate difference between the superior and inferior.

† † †

Nature is in its depths much richer, mightier, happier, more dreadful; in the way you usually live you do know it: learn to become nature again . . . and then with and in nature let yourselves be transformed by the magic of [love] and fire.

Nietzsche’s forward-looking project to revive the pathos of antiquity in the midst of modernity should be seen to be in accord with the specific aim of restoring a more natural sensibility and order to politics and education. In raising the level of culture to a more natural state, the “renaturalization” of humankind does not entail a return to simpler, edenic times; instead it involves an “ascent” to something higher and freer, a “frightful nature and naturalness.” Such a return to nature requires a reengagement with long suppressed or denied instinctual energies without regressing to a primitive state of existence. Moreover, Nietzsche’s project requires “the courage for health and also the contempt” for a way of life—religion, morality and politics—which “teaches misunderstanding of the body” and nature. His idea is to channel the primal powers latent within human being into new and higher forms of human consciousness. Nietzsche wants to retrieve the instinct for health, the will to life and “everything well-constituted, proud, high-spirited, beauty above all.” This strategy entails

535 BGE § 219.
536 Cf. ibid. § 260. Cf. Homer, The Odyssey 4 § 27, 61 - 64, 206 - 08: “[M]en whom I take by their looks to be of divine descent . . . [whose] lineage has left a stamp upon [their] looks; [they] are the sons of kings, those sceptered favourites of Zeus, for inferior parents could not breed such men as [they] . . . Good breeding cannot be hidden when a man’s father has himself been blessed by Zeus at birth and at his marriage, like Nestor.” See also Aristotle, The Politics VII. I re: the aristocratic catalogue of virtues (which are) passed down and maintained by virtue of good breeding. Cf. BGE § 264; WP § 942 (1884).
537 WB § 6.
538 Cf. AC § 59 - 60.
539 TI “Expeditions” § 48. In such respects, Nietzsche volunteers that “Napoleon was a piece of a ‘return to nature’ . . .
540 Cf. BGE § 230. See also WB § 6.
541 AC § 51.
542 Cf. GM I § 11, III § 14. See also TI “Improvers” § 2.
recapturing an understanding or view of a form of human life in itself worth living — "greatness of soul,"544 — which, as such, could become the source for the justification of the highest forms of human endeavor.545 The "ennoblement of humankind is enclosed within this supreme task," Nietzsche writes in 1876, "to consecrate the individual human to something higher than himself."546

Ask yourself why you, the individual exist . . . . For the question is this: How can your life, the individual life, receive its highest value, the deepest significance? How can it least be squandered? Certainly only by living for the good of the rarest and the most valuable exemplars, and not for the good of the majority, that is to say those who, taken individually, are the least valuable . . . 547

Nietzsche is prepared to "sacrifice human beings" to the "cause" of creating the "rarest and the most valuable exemplars" of humankind.548 He writes in this vein that "a good and healthy aristocracy accepts with a good conscience the sacrifice of human beings who, for its sake, must be sacrificed, must be pushed down and reduced to incomplete human beings, to slaves and tools."549 "The magnitude of an ‘advance’ can even be measured," Nietzsche argues elsewhere, "by the mass of things that had to be sacrificed to it; humankind in the mass sacrificed to the prosperity of a single stronger species of human—that would be an advance.550 Nietzsche links cruelty and creativity inextricably, in ways that reflect apparent, “life-enhancing” natural necessities.551 A single person can justify the existence and privations of an entire society of people; one genius or “great human being” can be the meaning-giving hub on which culture turns.

One thing is more necessary than another . . . . The purest shall be master of the world;

544 Ibid. § 50.
545 Cf. HL § 10. See also PTG § 1; Homer’s Contest pp. 34 - 35; BGE § 207.
546 WB § 4. Nietzsche continues in this passage to state that: "the definite rejection of this task would be the saddest picture imaginable to a friend of the human. . . . There is only one hope for the future of humanity: it consists in his retention of the sense of the tragic." Cf. BGE § 295.
547 HL § 9, 6. Cf. TSZ P § 3 - 4; AC § 1.
548 TI "Germans" § 5, 7.
549 BGE § 258.
550 GM I § 12.
551 See JS § 109. “Necessity” is something Nietzsche identifies, like Spinoza, in naturalistic terms of a probabilistic end or "purpose"—a notion that can be elucidated with respect to an idea of chaotic mutability. Cf. WB § 1, 5: "No event possesses greatness in itself . . . . This is why even the individual deed of a man great in himself lacks greatness if it is brief and without resonance or effect . . . —whereas to be great and to possess a clear grasp of necessity have always belonged strictly together. . . . A single great artist might be a chance event . . . . but the appearance of a series of great artists such as the history of modern music discloses—a series equaled only once before, in the age of the Greeks—makes one think it is not chance but necessity that rules here. This necessity is precisely the problem. . . . " See also FEI § 4; BT § 9,10; HL § 10; SE § 8; WB § 1, 5; BGE § 13, 274.
the least known, the strongest, the midnight souls, who are brighter and deeper than day.552

Here affirmed, however obliquely, is Nietzsche’s insight that inequality, suffering, and exploitation are nature’s inescapable means to high achievement—human and otherwise. Again, it is nature, thinks Nietzsche, which ordains ranking different “types” of human beings into categories such as high and low, noble and base. Life itself, he argues, “needs” the order of rank it has generated, which has both in the wild and in human history brought health and harmony to cosmic chaos.553 On this perspective, the relationship of nature to culture is not necessarily problematic, but complementary. True culture is, for Nietzsche, not a work against nature; but a “perfected” or “enhanced” copy of nature.554 Nietzsche’s political education attempts to approximate or mirror processes of natural, healthy life and elevate them wherever possible to the spheres of instinct, thinking, and practice.

Every enhancement of the type “human” 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 human and human, and that needs slavery . . . .555 To be sure, one should not yield to humanitarian illusions about the origins of an aristocratic society (and thus of the presupposition of this enhancement of the type “human”): truth is hard.555

Graham Parkes writes that “[i]n this sense nature can serve as the standard for Nietzsche’s task of the ‘renaturalization’ of humanity—a humanity that might reasonably be expected to expend its energies tyrannizing itself for the sake of culture rather than tyrannizing nature for the sake of commercial profit.”556 Rethinking the relationship of the human animal, and the organization of culture, to nature refreshes and repositions political and educational problems by introducing original, comprehensive, and challenging pedagogical questions. Moreover, the reconfiguration of cultural values with specific regard for political education suggests a new set of moral imperatives which, heretofore, have been ignored or denied by moderns under the sway of “humanitarian illusions.” One can appreciate Nietzsche’s disdain for the environmentally-destructive rapaciousness characteristic of the calculative, utilitarian, technologically-driven Enlightenment domination and destruction of nature in the name of specious “humanitarian” causes.

553 TSZ II.10.
554 Cf. SE § 3, 5. See also AC § 57.
555 BGE § 257. Cf. GM I § 1.
Indeed, Nietzsche rejects the human-nature dichotomy characteristic of the anthropocentric modern secular religion of humanitarianism. The human-centered egalitarian ethics of modern democrats and socialists privileges a hypostasis of denatured "humanity" over the rest of natural creation for no apparent reason other than pure, petty selfishness. Moreover, this so-called liberal humanitarian ethos does not regard the destruction of the ecosphere as politically or morally problematic. It is the anti-natural moral hypocrisy or cognitive dissonance of Christian-democratic morality that Nietzsche decries on a number of different levels, particularly as regards the self-undermining paradoxes of the body-loathing and nature-divided aspects of anthropocentrism which leads to the "degeneration" of the species and spells doom for the future of all life on earth. "The human being is by no means the crown of creation," he writes, "every creature is, alongside the human, at similar level of perfection."557 Parkes indicates that Nietzsche's attitude is in such respects a "kind of 'ecocentrism'" and therefore of "special relevance to environmental ethics, insofar as ... someone who experiences from [his] perspective is unlikely to exploit the natural world out of selfishly anthropocentric motives."558

Now the most terrible thing is to sin against the earth, and to revere the entrails of the unfathomable more than the sense of the earth.559

Striving against the anti-natural and life-diminishing impulses behind the democratic and socialist movements, notably including the economic liberalization of society, Nietzsche endorses the life-affirming values of aristocracy. He takes the side of nature in promoting aristocratic regimes for the chief reason that such social and political orders lead to the enhancement of human beings and culture—as well as the redemption of earthly, mortal existence. By abandoning the metaphysical, religious, moral, political, and economic systems of thought characteristic of Western philosophy and society, Nietzsche goes beyond the small-minded egoism of the anthropocentric perspective. In so doing, he aims to reestablish the foundation for a new way to understand and value life grounded in the affirmation of nature. The affirmation of nature entails the restoration of aristocratic caste systems arranged in vertical hierarchy.

For Nietzsche the issue is not whether such castes of high human beings exist, but the question of how these castes should be ordered and controlled in view of subordinating...
everything in culture and the self—according to a soul-polis analogue—to a higher purpose of “renaturalization.” This point supports Nietzsche’s argument that certain, specific and contingent types of persons and culture belong to the value concept of political education.

Conversely, modern educational institutions have completely lost sight of this once and future concern for the extraordinary requirements of human excellence—and indeed militate against any aristocratic, much less natural, cultural foundations. Moderns deny the acknowledgment of human nature, much less human typologies which can be evaluated in ontological, medical, or aesthetic terms of superiority and inferiority. In such respects, Nietzsche points to the democratic-egalitarian attempt to deprive higher humans the exercise of their natural strength and power—while, at the same time, pretending to universalize specific characteristics of human excellence in an impossible manner that divests such qualities of their original content.\textsuperscript{560}

Against this deviant, denatured trend, Nietzsche’s cultural, political, and educational aspirations are described in decidedly sectarian, cruel, and antidemocratic terms that mirror nature, in that he appreciates and follows the perspectives of the natural phenomena that bring ascending life into the world.\textsuperscript{561} Nietzsche’s teaching at once discredits the dangerous fallacies and opinions upon which the enterprise of modern society depends for its order and peace of mind, while also establishing a life-enhancing moral imperative for future culture.

Now look for once at an aristocratic commonwealth—say an ancient Greek polis or Venice—as an arrangement, whether voluntary or involuntary for breeding (Züchtung): human beings are together there who are dependent upon themselves and want their species to prevail, most often because they have to prevail or run the terrible risk of being exterminated. . . . They do this with hardness, indeed they want hardness; every aristocratic morality is intolerant—in education of youth. . . . they consider intolerance itself a virtue, calling it “justice.”\textsuperscript{562}

As a philosopher of political change and renewal, Nietzsche is a political educator in the classical aristocratic sense. On this perspective, political education seeks to create or reproduce a certain kind of polity composed of certain kinds of people. The aim of political education, more specifically stated, is to develop young people (some more than others to be sure) into informed, cultured, and wise leaders capable of ruling.\textsuperscript{563} Political education equips or cultivates an elite to

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{560} Cf. Deleuze 1962:183-89. See also AC § 39.
\item \textsuperscript{561} Cf. TI “Expeditions” § 33, 38 - 39. See also TSZ II.10, III.1, IV.12 § 4 - 7; EH “Untimely Essays” § 3.
\item \textsuperscript{562} BGE. § 262. Cf. WP § 959 (1885 - 1886). See also JS § 354. Lampert observes that by “aiming to forge a new nobility, [Nietzsche] employs the charm of the dangerous and different, writing like a pied piper for souls naturally predisposed to the noble.” (2001:272). Nietzsche’s aim to revive aristocratic culture thereby invests hope in the successful seduction of aristocratic individuals who may carry through the completion of his task.
\item \textsuperscript{563} Cf. Leo Strauss, What is Liberal Education?,1961: 43. See also FEI § 5.
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be princes or leaders of society; it entails their preparation for a certain kind of life at the crown of a society bound by specific cultural horizons which are reinforced or aided through support of ancillary religious, political, and social institutions. Without a functioning and effective political educational system, those favored by nature and breeding do not and will not become fully human: *aristoi* (the best).\textsuperscript{564} Political education depends, therefore, upon a distinct vision of the value of life—which is the goal or aim of culture. Such normative criteria are nourished by specific philosophical roots that exist within temporal and spatial, moreover natural, horizons. While the intents and applications of “education” may vary widely today, political education remains, classically considered, political and moral at its foundation. Nietzsche is first and foremost a political and moral educator.

Never have moral educators been more needed, and never has it seemed less likely they would be found; in times when physicians are required most, in times of great plagues, they are also in most peril.\textsuperscript{565}

Educators, the first prerequisite of education, are lacking (except for the exceptions of the exceptions): hence the decline of . . . culture.\textsuperscript{566}

What is today called education does not mean education (the meaning of which derives from the Latin *educare*\textsuperscript{567}), much less political education, proper.\textsuperscript{568} Contemporary education is not concerned with the formation of character or taste and the preparation of rulers (much less citizens); it is rather engaged, to varying degrees of success, in the instruction or training of employees and consumers, merchants, shopkeepers, and entrepreneurs. At best, the modern educational system is a market-driven vocational enterprise in careerism and specialization.\textsuperscript{569} At worst, it is a failed (or failing) attempt at social therapy, conditioned as it is by a quasi Christian-democratic pity for the weak, sick, and torpid, as well as fear of litigation from those same special masses of subalterns who aggressively seek so-called social justice in the form of financial remuneration.\textsuperscript{570} Modern education is in either case a utilitarian construct; it aims to

\textsuperscript{565} SE § 2.
\textsuperscript{566} TI “Germans” § 5. Cf. FEI § 1.
\textsuperscript{567} To rear. The French *educere* is to “lead forth.” To educate, then, according to its original meaning in Latin, French, English, or, for that matter German (*Erziehung*—to draw out; *Bildung*—to form), entails the formation of innate faculties and capabilities—to cultivate the intellectual, moral, and aesthetic potential of the learner with an aim to political rule. Cf. FEI § 2; SE § 1. See also Heilke, 1998: 132 - 133.
\textsuperscript{568} Cf. FEI § 4.
produce useful people, employees and consumers basically, who can produce and acquire things; it is not political education. Today the academy is the province of, at best, merchants and tradesmen; not gentlemen, much less capable citizens of a vital republic. According to Plato, a genuine (political) education is not "practiced for the sake of buying and selling like merchants or tradesmen, but for war and ruling." He argues further that "education is not what the professions of certain men"—metics, lawyers (alt. sophists), scientists, and scholars—"assert it to be." Plato, like Nietzsche in this respect, sees that education, whether it be in decadent Athens or decadent Europe (both examples surely surpass the late-modern American educational system in most every conceivable respect), has lost its way. The goal of the contemporary "educational" system is, Nietzsche observes, to "make people current."

"Utility," thinks Nietzsche, has in the modern era been "made the object and goal of education." Instead of the edification of a higher culture, which ought to be the sole aim of advanced civilizations and the educational institutions at their service, there is an emphasis on the banal materialism of a society oriented to what is "current" and useful. The cultural authority of the contemplative, creative, and nonutilitarian life of the gentleman is devalued; and those who otherwise seek to approximate a more authentic way of life for themselves are invariably ridiculed and shunned by the practical-minded majority. The pejorative term for those who strive to outstrip their contemporaries is as often as not "elitist." The end results are clear enough, however, in the form of "creations of utilitarian vulgarity" that reflect the democratic standpoint of the masses." The modern educational system rationalizes its plebeian ways and mores from the basis of "the needs of the masses, that is from the laws which move the lowest

571 Former president of Harvard. Derek Bok writes that higher educational institutions "currently display scant interest in preparing undergraduates to be democratic citizens, a task once regarded as the principal purpose of a liberal education and one urgently needed at this moment in the United States."
572 The Republic § .525c. Cf. TSZ 1.10,18.
573 Ibid. § .519b - c.
574 Ibid.
575 SE § 6.
576 FEI § 1. Cf. BGE § 260: Slave morality is essentially a morality of utility." See also § 174.
This deplorable state of affairs in modern education is a direct consequence of the pervasiveness of economic theory in most every aspect of social, political, and educational life working in concert with the ascendancy of ideas like "negative freedom," both of which reflect the profound moral uncertainty that attends the liberal relativization of value.\textsuperscript{579} Stated differently, the fact-value distinction — benchmark of late-modernity — has eroded the bases of conviction that this regime or culture is good or just, that reason can support claims to our allegiance, that some persons, in virtue of their health, power, strength, birthright, and wisdom, are morally superior to others, and thus politically authoritative. In the place of substantive, vivifying traditions and politically authoritative ethos there is the impoverished, bloodless economic criterion of value.\textsuperscript{580} As morality and aesthetics lose the practical foothold in social and political reality they possessed in other times, what is good and right, beautiful, or valuable is no longer embodied in patterns of cultural (i.e., ethical) life. Market driven commercialism and consumerism supersedes former ethical and aesthetic horizons of meaning and value.

The so-called negative freedom of late-modernity accommodates the emancipatory possibilities which, in turn, directly accommodate increasing commercial activity in so-called open markets — while doing nothing substantive to compel humans to take the care required to maintain the health or vitality of civic life, the natural environment that houses them, much less their own bodies. Forget about the fate of future generations of human beings or the rest of the ecosphere. Since the idea of negative freedom makes no positive claims whatsoever to the value or style of life, much less the good life of the republic or culture or nature, the idea of negative freedom denotes what can be called moral timidity, if not hypocrisy, and, above all, political weakness. Such is the character of negative freedom, for it is indicative of the pathological condition of both late-modern humankind and the greater ecological sphere of existence that suffers beneath the weight of ever-increasing hoards of liberated human beings. Whatever value

\textsuperscript{578} HL § 9. See also Andrew Delbanco’s two essays in The New York Review of Books ("Colleges: An Endangered Species?," March 10, 2005, Vol. LII, no. 4 pp. 18 - 20; & "The Endangered University," March 24, 2005, Vol. LII, no. 5, pp. 19 - 22) in which he explores the atrophied condition of contemporary higher education, coming to the conclusion that in "our 'postmodern' moment, we no longer have any consensus about what culture is or should be, yet the need for cultured authority has become more urgent" (3/24/05, p. 21).

\textsuperscript{579} As Isaiah Berlin formulates the idea, in Two Concepts of Liberty (1958), individuals should be left alone to do what they want, provided that their actions don’t interfere with the "freedom" (or "liberty") of others. Such patently "liberal" thinking addresses itself only to what people desire, not with what they might desire if they only knew better.

\textsuperscript{580} Cf. FEI § 1, re: the "... barbarism ... [of] economical dogma, for the expansion of education ... — the desire to minimize and weaken education. ... Thus, a specialist ... this narrow specialisation on the part of our learned men ..."
the contemporary educational system has in this scheme is mostly destructive, for it does nothing, in effect, to counter or remedy the overall pathological condition of the world. Relativistic liberal education educates the masses in commercial values without inspiring true dedication to anything more substantive than the gratification of a desire for ease and comfort. The spiritually-impoverished product of the late-modern educational system has, generally speaking, lost the capacity for authentic moral commitment. The timely, all pervasive sense of so-called humanitarian value that does however prevail, to varying degrees, in this otherwise relativist world of negative freedom is one of a banal form of advantage or unit of measurement regarded in economic terms of rational self-interest, cost-benefit, marginal utility, or distributive justice.

In other words, the only durable criterion for the evaluation and determination of value in the modern or late-modern West is one of economic efficiency construed in terms of moral individualism. This criterion for judgment is characteristic of the nineteenth-century idea of Marxists and capitalists alike, which regards the hypostasis of the individual (or the worker) within a framework of economic analysis. Decidedly economic dimensions of “value” are, therefore, the only ones that the contemporary political and educational system widely recognizes and endorses. This can be readily observed in the promotion of ideas like social justice phrased as they are in vulgar terms of socioeconomic success and the redistribution of wealth. Today’s educational system is not concerned with high human achievement, virtue, or cultural and political excellence, much less a coherent or substantive civic ideal of citizenship. Rather, the educational system is oriented to the banal meritocratic assumption and expectation that “education pays” dividends of socioeconomic success to those who have attained the credentials that the educational system confers.

What the money-makers really want when they ceaselessly demand instruction and education is in the last resort precisely money. In this regard, ideas like “functional” or “procedural reason,” expressed, for instance, by Jürgen Habermas (among other celebrated public intellectuals), theoretically afford an “abstract unity of concrete differences.” Habermas seeks a “new universalism” at the level of “theoretically"  

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581 Thomas Green describes, “a distinctly twentieth [one might add twenty-first] century world in which people have values but without any corresponding assumption that worth is actually present in the world or presented to us in experience” (1999:129).  
583 SE § 6.  
of "democratic procedure." He argues, for example, that "functional reason" developed, like money, to compensate for the dissolution of symbolic cultural life, and the tightly controlled political-economic system(s) that sustained them in the pre-modern era. Functionalist reasoning operates, he notes, through the "media" of "money and power." According to Habermas, the spheres of market and state respectively allow for more "integrated" forms of "rational" self-interested action. Significantly, there is, on this perspective, no "reason" for anyone to recognize, much less agree, on basic moral or aesthetic norms. The only thing people share today, according to the accepted wisdom that Habermas and like-minded liberal partisans of democracy reflect, is the "functional" value of money and "procedural reason." Together these ideas express the essential and moving idea of a late-modern democratic form of life. What's more, these ideas hinge on an insipid principle of impartiality or liberal neutrality, the categorical idea that the needs and interests of each and every individual must, in principle, be taken into account when forming the rules and norms that will regulate their life together.

This trend, now widely accepted, is in keeping with the utilitarian, patently democratic, and, moreover, leveling principle that every individual's welfare counts (more or less) equally; where, in fact, the median is typically the lowest common denominator. According to this ubiquitous, though very thin moral and political principle, governments—and the educational institutions at their behest—are required, or at least expected, to act so as to maximize the happiness of as many individuals as possible. This procedural sentimentality echoes in the hollow boosterism of the "no child left behind" policies today. In principle, for better or, in actuality, for worse, the idea of "benefitting the greatest number" of people projects a bland, politically impoverished picture of a world organized and managed according to a fundamentally "functional" economic principle of utility. Since moral, aesthetic, cultural, and spiritual orders are today considered merely a matter of subjective taste(s) not of social, much less political,

585 Ibid.
586 See Habermas, 1996, p. 107. Habermas' procedural theory of law and democracy indicates that, like most democratic theorists, in principle, expectations of individuality and freedom, social order, and democratic participation are compatible with one another. This felicitous arrangement can be sustained, "in principle," when citizens mobilize together and act in responsible ways that accord with what is in form and substance (neo) Kantian morality. Of course, Habermas, like most contemporary democratic theorists, elides the very significant fact that, despite their vaunted "principles," most people do not, nor have they historically, in actual practice, exercised their freedom in ways even minimally consistent with the flowery promises of democratic Enlightenment. Habermas secures the sanctity of his elision(s) by raising the specter of the "hangman's noose" (like his Christian forbears) as a prohibition on the objections of skeptical protagonists, such as Nietzsche, to the self-undermining paradoxes of democratic life. See William Connolly, Why I Am Not a Secularist, 1999, p. 10.
educational, or natural importance, only one widely shared "value" remains: money.

Again, this state of affairs is indicative of the propensity to use economics (or its close
cousin sociology) rather than moral or philosophical debate, much less auto- or aristocratic fiat,
to adjudicate human differences and arrive at normative judgments. The prestige of economic
theory among other social scientists, legal scholars, and political scientists—even some quarters
of psychology—is clear enough, in that they all apply its analytical methods to their own
disciplines under the label of "rational choice theory." Questions of value, however attenuated
and lifeless are thus reduced invariably to the abstraction of things and people into "resources"
and "individuals" that are more or less commensurate in translatable units. So, if money is the
only universally accepted and recognized common denominator of the "value" of those units,
then the transformation of the conventional understanding of value into a commercial or
monetary one (as opposed to a virtuous or aesthetic or natural one) is a key indicator of the
modern transition away from organic values of ancient origin, like honor, divine right, and the
customs of feudal or aristocratic allegiance. The drift away from virtue ethics and the associated
symbolic framework that prescribed identities, order, and tradition to people from a foundation
of an aristocracy of taste, power, and value has been lost. The banal certainties of money and the
market prevail; gone is the confident, life-giving unity of cultural feeling (ethos), whereby
people, as Nietzsche writes approvingly, once felt united by blood, language, custom, cultural
familiarity or topography.

Rather, today people are, generally speaking, amidst the messiness, confusion, haste, and
leveling of mass democracy, with all its noise, overpopulation, disease, and wanton wastage of
nature, united only by their commercial appetites under the banner of a new "global"
economy. Whereas commercial activity used to be more or less an autonomous entity with its
own economy—relegated to the nonpolitical activities of the third estate—it has increasingly
infiltrated almost every human activity—churches, schools and universities, airports, hospitals,
recreation, and, perhaps most notably, political life, etc.—such that it is virtually impossible to
disentangle and separate the fate of these originally noncommercial entities from the corrupting
influences of the market. Indeed, they now support each other, so much so that is hard to tell

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588 Cf. Anita Woolfolk, Educational Psychology (2001). See also Ericson and Ellet, "Misleading the
Students: Conceptual Difficulties in Woolfolk's Account of Motivation" (2002).
589 Cf. HL § 1, 4. See also PTG § 1 and AC § 57.
590 This comprehensive vision of the future of the human condition was forecast by the Scottish
Enlightenment theorists, such as David Hume, Sir James Steuart, Adam Ferguson, and Adam Smith
(see esp. An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations, 1776; see also The Theory
(2004).
where one ends and the other begins. Commercial activity has become central to modern human life in most every conceivable respect. In a related and telling way, questions of distributive “social justice” are formulated in exclusively socioeconomic terms, which are, of course, reducible to a certain dollar figure. Accordingly, a widespread (near global) litigious passion is fueled by the expectation of remuneration for any perceived “injustice.”

Robert Nozick, for example, endorses the idea that all areas of our social life have been redescribed in economic language. Nozick is, of course, the celebrated avatar of libertarianism and foil to John Rawls’ equally influential contractarian egalitarianism. It is significant that, despite the fundamental differences between their political theories, both remain committed to the fundamental principle of moral individualism, and both concern themselves with questions of “distributive justice” phrased in economic terms. The implication is clear enough: the appeal of such utilitarian theorizing in one area of life (social and political) makes it suitable for others as well. Betraying the work of Adam Smith’s “invisible hand,” Nozick goes so far as to apply economic language to the question of why one might love one’s spouse. Indeed, this way of thinking or loving (i.e., “trading” with a “fixed partner”—a calculated rational exchange) doesn’t seem at all unusual to most of us today; Nozick merely shores up conventional assumptions and expectations (of rational self-interest) with the imprimatur of authority that academic philosophy supposedly confers. His thinking on such matters is simply an extension of current predilections. In method and substance his “philosophy” fits the taste of the times.

It is no accident then that most people speak of nature and the earth in terms of measurable resources, that nature, reduced to a lifeless economic commodity, is just a standing-

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891 Cf. BT § 18. Again, such thinking is reflected also in the “normative principle” that education “should pay” socioeconomic dividends, which are commonly construed in banal terms of “success.” Education is therefore viewed, rightly or wrongly, as an instrument—like the courts—of furthering “social justice.” See Ericson and Ellet, "Justice and Compulsion in the Educational System" (1984). Consider further the fact that Iraqi citizens are now suing the American and British governments for the “violations” of their “human rights” during the Iraqi coalition offensive. Everyone, it seems, must get paid.

892 In Anarchy, State, and Utopia (1974), Nozick questions the primacy of one of Rawls’ two basic principles of justice—that of arranging social inequalities so that they are to the greatest benefit of the least advantaged. Nozick favors a utilitarian strategy for maximizing freedom, despite who may hold more freedom. He also strongly favors rights which establish a floor of equality, while eliminating the necessity of a ceiling to limit the individual or collective enterprise. Thus he endorses the so-called “night watchman” state, that is “limited to the functions of protecting all its citizens against violence, theft, and fraud, and to the enforcement of contracts, and so on...” (p. 26). Such a state is a minimal political conception which is, according to him, more favorable than anarchy for the same reasons why state-of-nature theorists since Hobbes have advocated an explicitly political solution to basic problems of philosophical anthropology.

reserve of “property” or “resource” waiting to be “developed,” “exploited,” “consumed” by a correspondingly bloodless abstraction known as the “rational individual.” This “rational” commodification and consumption of nature informs the thinking behind New Resource Economics, for example, which describes nature with an economic vocabulary and applies market principles to the assumed benefits of defending the environment. Reeking of cynicism and irony, these self-described “conservationists” assume that theirs is a rational defense of the economic integrity of the environment—in keeping with what’s good for business (e.g., ecotourism). A tendency to reduce questions that really have nothing inherently to do with economics is assumed, that is, to be “rational,” and, by extension and loosely speaking, right, by most people, because of the moral vacuum—the euphemism for which is “liberal neutrality”—we presently occupy.

Most people remain neutral, that is, on questions what constitutes a good life. The facile relativism which underlies moral individualism is underwritten, albeit indirectly, by the political individualism of Locke, and, more recently, by Isaiah Berlin’s concept of value pluralism, both of which, for all their respective differences, are given a patina of glamour by the new age rhetoric of self-fulfillment in the promotion of a timely assumption that moral positions are not grounded in the nature of things but are ultimately just adopted because one finds oneself drawn to them for whatever reason. More recently, Richard Rorty, paragon of disenchanted postmodern liberal irony, reflects this position as concerns such matters as they pertain to political liberalism. His position, redolent of the influence of thinkers as diverse as Nietzsche

Thinking which is informed by the Cartesian mind-body dualism that supposedly guarantees the “objectivity” of science, or the “impartiality” of philosophy (including economics and the social sciences), that turns nature and the earth into a res extensa, that is, dead, mechanical interacting matter.


Notwithstanding the fact that a great deal of transparently crazy, criminal, unhealthy, or simply bad behavior is “rational” according to the various arbitrarily narrow formulations of the demands of rationality.

Although value pluralism is not an argument for radical skepticism, or for relativism; it is a moral philosophy that stands equivocally between relativism and absolutism. From a value-pluralist perspective, some things (the great evils of human existence, for example) are objectively bad, to be avoided in both our individual and collective lives. Conversely, some things are objectively good (cf. Hampshire on the “minimum common basis for a tolerable human life” or H.L.A. Hart on the “minimum content of natural law”). There are, in other words, multiple goods that cannot be reduced to a common measure, cannot be ranked in a clear order of priority, and do not form a harmonious whole. There is, in any case, no single or definitive conception of the good valid for all individuals: what’s good for A may not be equally good for B. Nor is there one preferred structure for weighing goods. In our moral as well as material lives, it is argued that there are more desirable goods than any one individual or group can possibly encompass; and to give one kind of good pride of place is necessarily to subordinate, or exclude, others. Some individuals and groups may be morally broader than others, but none is morally universal.

Contingency, Irony and Solidarity (1989).
and Berlin, is a timely exemplar of value pluralism, in that he argues that there can never be good reasons for imposing one set of values based on their superiority. There are, he thinks, no credible, much less authoritative, rational and moral grounds for asserting the superiority of one set of values over another—it seems that mere preference, provided that it doesn’t impinge upon the exercise of other preferences, is a sufficient basis upon which to maintain a consensus of otherwise incommensurable opinions. There is, however, no conviction in a definitive or politically authoritative moral truth or value. The implication of value pluralism is clear enough to Rorty and those of his ilk: the incommensurability of “good” reasons and values.

Despite the posturing in the academy, the hard evidence of liberal neutrality in established late-modern Western democracies and elsewhere (e.g., India, China, Russia, Brazil—the most populous nations on earth) is plain enough in view of the purely economic terms that are uniformly employed to describe and estimate the so-called value of the natural environment. Indeed, the most popularly disseminated concepts of rationality and freedom, the principle fruits of the Enlightenment, carry with them—from Rawls to Nozick, Habermas, Rorty, and beyond—the imprimatur of economic language and theory in terms of costs and benefits. This near universal pattern in social, political, and educational theory is sustained largely by a historical convergence of views and attitudes (accelerated by communications technology) that speak to the diminution of cultural diversity. With the collapse of communism (which in any case was an economic ideology), and no ideological obstacle to the spread of democracy and free markets, these essentially economic descriptions of rationality, freedom, and nature continue to proliferate. The common assumption being, apparently, that the world will inevitably unite into a single economic unit. The expectation being, moreover, that the utilitarian-democratic paradigm of value supports and extends the emancipatory promise of universal freedom.

The corrosive effects of this current orthodoxy are only too evident in the global conduct of education and politics in the West. Free trade and democracy, peace and prosperity are

599 Such thinking was clearly behind the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, for example, according to which seventy nations (America not among them) agreed to limit the emission of carbon into the atmosphere in wholly utilitarian terms of cost-benefit analyses. True to the utilitarian economic and democratic principle that every person’s welfare counts equally (not taking into account the other living beings of the biosphere), countries were allotted emission “quotas” based upon human population.

600 The only apparent obstacle seems to be the resistance of the Islamic world, which, despite its fundamental opposition to “Western” (i.e., Judeo-Christian/liberal-democratic) values, is very much connected (indeed invested) in global economics—especially in the Mideast and parts of South East Asia, where the biggest export is oil, upon which the rest of the world depends.

assumed (despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary) to go hand and hand. Devastatingly unfortunate for genuine cultural and human diversity, or ecological balance and health, free-market capitalism is the developed and developing world’s only thriving secular religion. This is so in large part because of capitalism’s flexible, relativist creed, which allows for the jettisoning of any belief that might otherwise clash with the pursuit of profit and individual gratification, ease, and comfort. That most individuals and groups in a world of political-economic liberalism disdain moral persuasion as regards debates on nature or what is natural comes, then, as little surprise. Why should they care—when there is no ought any more? Such disenchanted “common sense” confidence in the fact-value distinction rests on the liberal, relativist, what Nietzsche would call nihilistic, assumption that no one can hold a moral high-ground, that no one—thing, or place—is more worthy, in and of itself, than another.

In the last resort, the free market frame of mind, after having destroyed the moral authority of so many other institutions and traditions, inevitably turns against itself by exhausting natural and cultural diversity to the point of earth- and species-destroying nihilism: total environmental collapse. Now long-standing anti-natural theoretical abstractions, cornerstones of the Enlightenment project which underwrite the congeries of liberal or progressive assumptions and expectations, deny the possibility of credibly invoking an intrinsic or antecedent human nature, much less the virtue of nature or natural systems.

Despite the fact of gains and insights afforded by cognitive science, neuroscience, genetics, ecology, and evolutionary theory, people still generally resist the implications of acknowledging things like common human animality; inherent interests and propensities; and individual preferences and biases as being hardwired aspects of the body. Nor do they take into serious, conduct-transforming account the destructive ecological impact their way of life has on the community of life that surrounds them. This reluctance to admit for human nature or the human relationship to nature holds fast especially when such findings and evidence have challenging implications for moral or political adjudication. To admit for these fact-based scientific discoveries—which should at this point be beyond legitimate debate for anyone who considers him or herself to be intellectually honest, much less moral—into our discussions of

602 Multinational, regional alliances/organizations such as NAFTA and the EU are the most obvious and leading examples of the “rational choice” of nation-states.
603 Again, Rorty is adept on such matters of liberal irony and relativism. His “position” betrays the shifting sands under political liberalism, which, if it is to give itself any identity and content, must be able to argue for precisely such values that, in case of conflict, trump others. And this ability to argue coherently, much less authoritatively, is what Rorty claims is, under present circumstances of liberal irony, more or less an impossibility.
what, for example, constitutes a “good” or healthy life, would, according to conventional thinking, be dangerous and, of course, illiberal. It certainly would not, on the democratic-utilitarian calculus, be to the everlasting benefit of the greatest number of people to act — politically or educationally — on the implications of such findings.

The demotic facade of liberal neutrality on questions of human nature can be traced back, at least, to the emergence of the concept of the *tabula rasa*, an idea which, strangely enough, is redolent of the denatured Enlightenment concept of the “natural rights” of humankind. 604 Locke’s “blank slate” is the epistemological theory that knowledge comes solely from experience. 605 This idea—which Nietzsche argues constitutes a “debasement and lowering of the value of the concept of ‘philosophy’” 606—has had far-reaching social and educational implications, chief among them as justification for modern political and moral prejudices, according to which any differences between individuals (or races/peoples) come not from differences in innate constitution but from different experiences. As the idea of freedom—the principle corollary of rights—gained currency and took the place of virtue—the distinctive mark of transition from the *ancien regime* to the modern era—the understanding of what a good life entails disintegrated.

What was formerly the province of the happy few devolved into a market-oriented, and therefore plebeian venue for the pseudo happiness of the numerical majority—whom are supposedly capable, in principle, of making rational choices. Reflecting the ascendancy of economic theory, a utilitarian norm of so-called happiness regards a depersonalized, disembodied, *a priori* individual who has no apparent connection with the life-ground (i.e., biology, psychology, anthropology, ecology) of an actual person. If the insipid happiness and

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604 Cf. WP § 343 (1883 - 1888): “An ideal that wants to prevail or assert itself seeks to support itself (a) by spurious origin, (b) by a pretended relationship with powerful ideals already existing, (c) by thrill of mystery, as if a power that cannot be questioned spoke through it, (d) by defamation of ideals that oppose it, (e) by mendacious doctrine of the advantages it brings with it, e.g., happiness . . . peace[.]”

605 See Locke’s essays *Concerning Human Understanding* (1689), the *Second Treatise of Government* (1689) and *Some Thoughts concerning Education* (1693) for an integration of his thinking on liberal social reform. See also Hugo Grotius, *The Law of War and Peace* (1625). Both Locke and Grotius are “natural law” theorists who speak of “natural rights” as classified by status rather than source, even though they tend to have institutional, not natural, origin and expression. What today are called “human rights” derive from “natural rights,” whereby doubts about the existence of God undermine acceptance of any divinely sanctioned “natural law,” which leads to doubts about self-evident moral truths. Whereas “human rights” are those possessed by virtue of being a human, modern definitions of “humanity” leave for a thin account of what a human actually is. Thus, modern declarations of “human rights” include not just political but also social and economic rights, which explains why “natural” or “human rights” are used independent of nature as such.

606 BGE § 252: “. . . it was Locke of whom Schelling said, *understandably, je méprise Locke* . . . .” Nietzsche argues that German philosophy arose in opposition to the “English-mechanistic doltification of the world[.]” Cf. Plato, *The Republic* § .518b.
emancipation of the many are given higher priority, Nietzsche observes, the result is a democratic-utilitarian society in which mass taste (now under the commercialized rubric of "rational choice") triumphs. But, as Nietzsche reveals, the orientation of the democratic state to comprehensive welfare, so-called human dignity, freedom, egalitarian justice, and the protection of the weak impedes—if not precludes—any prospects for cultivating human excellence, precisely that which the Greeks originally called happiness: *eudaimonia.* The geniuses and great human beings vanish from history, according to Nietzsche, and along with them the last vestiges of what it really means to be happy. Not the happiness for the greatest number but the the most mediocre is the consequence of the democratic-utilitarian dystopia.

Today's so-called good life—which really isn't *good* in the original sense of the term—does not consist of both a "what" and a "how," as it did in premodern times. Today, that is, common assumptions and expectations—particularly in education—concern only a matter of a "how." There is no "what" per se. Although Locke's vogue seems to be waning (officially) in some quarters, most people still adhere to the Enlightenment fiction that human beings have no nature to speak of; that humanity is acquired, not cultivated—much less given—from something natural and antecedent to individual choice; that everyone is, moreover, fundamentally equal. The "denaturalized naturalness," in Nishtani Keiji's phrasing, of the mendacious doctrine of natural rights relieves people, under the body-negating rubric of negative rights, of

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607 Cf. SE § 4, quoting Schopenhauer Nietzsche writes: "A happy life is impossible: the highest that a man can attain to is a heroic one. He leads it who, in whatever shape or form, struggles against great difficulties for something that is of benefit of all and in the end is victorious, but who is ill-rewarded for it or not at all. . . . [He] stands in a noble posture and with generous gestures. . . ." See also TSZ IV.20: "For do I aspire after happiness? I aspire after my work!"

608 Cf. BGE § 22. See also Homer's Contest (1872): "When one speaks of humanity, the idea is fundamentally that this is something which separates and distinguishes man from nature. In reality, however, there is no such separation: 'natural' qualities and those called truly 'human' are inseparably grown together. Man, in his highest and noblest capacities, is wholly nature and embodies its uncanny dual character" (p. 32).

609 Originally a good man was one who behaved in a manner becoming of a noble, who was free and good as a consequence of his nobility. "Freedom" distinguished him from a common person or slave. Goodness and liberality refers to and indeed presupposes slavery. Not everyone can be "free."

610 Cf. BGE § 231. See also SE § 1 (129); HH § 41; EH "WP § 70 (1886 - 1886), 109 (1885), 440 (1888). Nietzsche, in these passages and elsewhere, starts, as an educator and philosopher, from the premise of a fundamental "whatness," as it were, of human being; his arguments flow, throughout his career, from such foundations regarding the innateness of "commanding instincts" (EH "Clever" § 2). Cf. EH "Clever" § 9: "That one becomes what one is presupposes that one does not have the remotest idea what one is."

611 Which, he writes, "sees life as an enemy, a hatred and resentment toward the order of rank that is essential to affirmative life" (1990: 41).
the responsibility of caring for, much less fulfilling or perfecting an inherent nature.\textsuperscript{612} Such
denaturalization is but a projection of the impoverishment of the definition of value in a world
denuded of value.

The idea of value pluralism is, as noted above, committed to the view that there is no
particular value that is better than others;\textsuperscript{613} this is an idea which, upon reflection, seems to
contradict itself. For if the concept value pluralism is to have any rational coherence and/or
warrant, it presupposes that its so-called value rests on definitively good reasons for accepting it.
But value pluralism implies there can never be definitively, overriding good reasons\textsuperscript{614} for
imposing one set of values based on their superiority (rational or otherwise). On this
perspective, one can see that Berlin’s idea is not only incompatible with Nietzsche’s
perspectivism (which countenances the strict rank-order of value as tied to specific
perspectives—Nietzsche doesn’t relativize value\textsuperscript{615}) but also with liberalism itself. Liberalism, if
it is to give itself any identity and content, has to argue precisely for such values that, in the case
of conflict, trump others.

Given the fundamental moral disagreement on the values which ought to be reflected in
laws and policies and the apparent incommensurability of good reasons on offer, it may be the
case now that it is considerably more difficult (than is characteristically assumed) to achieve
rules to which all those who live in or according to the liberal project can freely consent. It is in
such recognition of the corrosive effects of historicism, cultural-identity relativism, and the fact-
value distinction that one also recognizes the eroded bases of conviction, authority, and belief
(that the modern liberal-democratic regime is good or just or that reason can support its claims
to allegiance) which Nietzsche diagnoses as nihilism. The contemporary custom of politically-
correct, neighborly tolerance, and liberal neutrality is considered to be an elemental part of
advanced, late-modern democracy; the assumption being that a definitive and politically
authoritative positive moral code is not only impossible to achieve (in terms of consensus), but
also beyond the scope of polite, indeed rational, discourse. But the preaching of tolerance and

\textsuperscript{612} Accordingly, Habermas' democratic "proceduralism" "relieves" late-modern citizens of the exacting
expectations of republican-like virtue. Habermas considers those qualities that justify democracy, such
as honesty, intelligence, reason, and justice, are "dispensable" in "actual practice" (Habermas on Law

\textsuperscript{613} Given the qualification that some things are objectively bad (e.g., mass murder) and good (minimum
content for natural rights).

\textsuperscript{614} Other than those expressed in the vaguest and most ambiguous or abstract terms, such as what
Stuart Hampshire calls the "minimum common basis for a tolerable human life" or what H.L.A. Hart calls
the "minimum content of natural law."

\textsuperscript{615} Cf. WP § 857 (1888). See also TI "Expeditions" 33, 38.
diversity to the exclusion of genuine rational discussion and inquiry betrays reason and morality equally.

In stark contrast to the late-modern paradigm outlined above, the heuristic enterprise of political education, on its classical understanding, entails the shaping, ordering, and composition of the soul of certain members of a particular community. Soul formation is the proper domain and original value of political education. This priority of high, natural human achievement projects an inherently philosophical enterprise into the edification of high culture, for it has as its aim the cultivation of virtue or a range of natural human excellences in the best and the brightest potential leaders and rulers of culture. Nietzsche—a philologist by training—thinks like the ancient Greeks that philosophy originates and is initially practiced in the service of education, as care for the soul. His is a pedagogical project, moreover, which he considers to be not only culture-sustaining, but also health-giving and, perhaps more importantly, life-enhancing.

Therefore, the organizing principle of Nietzsche's political education is to raise the level of culture, a project he equates with the renaturalization or enhancement of human life. Again, the unifying metaphor of agriculture or cultivation is most operative here, for the value of and for life is the concern of first priority. The edifying value of higher life justifies making higher (i.e., "healthier" and "stronger") human being the leading norm for an educational project that seeks to cultivate "great human beings" who "complement" life and nature. It is in celebration of such

savage egoism [that the]dangerous and uncanny point has been reached where greater, more manifold, more comprehensive life transcends and lives beyond
the old morality; the 'individual' appears, obliged to give himself laws and to develop his own arts and wiles for self-preservation, self-enhancement, self-redemption.

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616 The trope of the "health of the soul" can be traced to Ariston of Chios [pupil of Zeno, the founder of Stoicism]. Cf. Plato, The Republic §.444, for the original introduction of the idea of justice conceived in homeopathic terms of ordered health (of the soul)—phrased with reference to the physician-god Asklepios (§.408 - .410). See also Xenophon, Cyropaedia. Moreover, according to classical republicanism, "politics" is defined as the "art whose business it is to care for souls" (Lorraine and Thomas Pangle, The Learning of Liberty, 1993: 32 - 53, esp. pp. 39 - 40).

617 Gesammelte Werke 16:38. Leslie Paul Thiele observes of Nietzsche and Socrates in this respect that "[a] truly philosophical education always entails the manipulation of the soul" (1990:167).

618 "Soul" (Seele)—as distinct from Spirit (Geist)—for Nietzsche is ultimately a based on corporeality, that is, an embodied, fecund configuration of instincts and drives. Cf. TSZ III.13: "Souls are as mortal as bodies." See also TSZ III. 14 for an account of Zarathustra's cultivation of soul.

619 Cf. PTG § 1. See also JS § 120: "... health could look like its opposite in another person." See also BGE § 61 - 62.

620 Cf. SE § 1, 3; TSZ I.8; JS § 371; BGE § 262; EH "Good Books" § 4. See also WP § 959 (1885 - 1886).

621 BGE § 262.
Since Nietzsche promotes the idea that human beings are essentially embodied organisms, animals whose attitudes, beliefs, and values are explicable by reference to particular physiological necessities about them, he supplants generally approved or agreed upon explanations of human development (e.g., *tabula rasa* or an economic criterion of “value”: money) with decidedly more naturalistic or physiological (i.e. “comprehensive”) explanations that are expressive of aristocratic aesthetics and politics. Human excellence and greatness are, therefore, understood in terms of flourishing life, health, and spiritual-intellectual potency.\(^622\)

It should be recognized that Nietzsche makes a distinction between nature and life, which accords a distinction between nature and human.\(^623\) The opposite of life is death, the opposite of natural is unnatural or anti-natural. Death is natural. The unnatural may live, as Nietzsche’s analysis of the Last Man and a look around contemporary society confirms, yet not in health and, all too often, rather in an “artificial,” “domesticated” and misbegotten way that is “anti-natural”\(^624\) and “life-denying.”\(^625\) Lampert argues on this perspective that “Nietzsche’s advocacy of the natural must combat the very much alive unnatural and antinatural that broke out so long ago among us human beings that they have come to seem natural.”\(^626\) Nietzsche’s advocacy of the natural appears unnatural, at least inhumane, and dangerous to us today; consequently his educational program (to “renaturalize,” and thereby “enhance” human life) entails a politics to achieve its ends. Ascending life, “great health,” and culture should, therefore, be understood in direct ecological and axiological relationship to one another in Nietzsche’s educational politics. These fundamental components of ascending, natural life are one in an original—organic and ontological—unity that stand in contradistinction to the “denaturalized naturalness,” which, Nishitani comments, “sees life as an enemy, a hatred and

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622 Cf. HH § 583 & D § 272, 540.
623 Op cit. §22. See also Homer’s Contest p. 32 (noted above).
626 1996:65. The partisans of the un- and anti-natural are the Last Men, those who, because of innate cowardice, uncleanness, and sickness, renounce the “highest virtues of life” (EH “Why I am Destiny” §3), and who exist “at the expense of truth and at the expense of the future” (ibid.). Last Men are nihilism incarnate. Cf. TSZ P §5, II §14; BGE §62; WP § 2, 3.
resentment toward the order of rank that is essential to affirmative life.\textsuperscript{627}

What is life? — Life — that is: continually shedding something that wants to die. Life — that is: being cruel and inexorable against everything about us that is growing old and weak — and not only about us.\textsuperscript{628}

A authentic political education, on the Nietzschean view, necessarily entails the active cultivation and disciplined training of the strongest by nature, the most powerful would-be commanders and lawgivers, those world-interpreting human beings that can be understood in direct, indeed isomorphic relation to the naturalistic and psycho-physiological scale of medical-aesthetic value which accords with “ascending life.”\textsuperscript{629} Nietzsche is pointing to the forward-looking geniuses or leaders of the life of culture, the creative persons who are able to translate their high spirituality, intelligence, and experience into thought and action.\textsuperscript{630} These exceptional types of people are valuable, and deserving of political action in the service of philosophy, he thinks, precisely in virtue of their fecund capacity to create meaning and value. Their cultivation and training leads, according to Nietzsche, to their discovery and attainment of the highest of human possibilities. These “highest types,” therefore, are vital exemplars of the value of life and culture itself. The existence and flourishing of the “highest types” of humankind, on both the classical and Nietzschean perspectives, not only exemplifies the highest cultural achievement but also justifies human existence. This inherently classical republican virtue precept of existence-justification validates the heuristic value of Nietzsche’s political education.

The verdict of the philosophers of ancient Greece on the value of the existence says so much more than a modern verdict does because they had life itself before and around them in luxuriant perfection and because, unlike us, their minds were not confused by the discord between the desire for freedom, beauty, abundance of life on the one hand and on the other the drive to truth, which asks only: what is existence worth as such? . . . The individual must be consecrated to something higher than himself — that is the meaning of tragedy . . . — this is what it means to have a sense for the tragic; all the ennoblement of humankind is enclosed

\textsuperscript{627} Nishitani Keiji, 1990:41. Blondel observes of today’s problem of culture: “In this way, tragic Greek culture uses illusion as an affirmation of life conceived as a tragic contradiction, while the Christian illusion masks, beneath the affirmation of a ‘celestial nothingness’ as the body’s negation. The route followed by culture as a bodily vital idiosyncrasy, analysed genealogically, leads us to ‘translate back into nature’ this culture which seemed to be separate from nature.” 1991:69 (cf. : 44, n. 22: WP §343). The feeling of being divided against itself, this world or body against another supernatural or ideal world, fosters the notion of the supernatural or categorical; moreover it is a symptom of a sense of alienation from nature and natural cycles of existence — manifest in resentment and fear of nature.

\textsuperscript{628} JS § 26.

\textsuperscript{629} Cf. TI “Expeditions” § 33.

\textsuperscript{630} Cf. FEI § 4. See also BGE § 211 - 212.
Nietzsche’s pedagogical politics show concern with education, moreover, only insofar as a political education may be instrumental to the formation, continuance, and promotion of culture and the ennoblement of a select few in concert with the enhancement of natural life on earth. Eric Blondel observes accordingly that “Nietzsche’s speculations have the particular quality, as the problem of culture as history shows, of never forgetting their goal: that of interpreting a reality, life, and cultures, and of being useful only to the extent that they are self-effacing when they finally come face to face with a body, an individual, a being, an existence, in short, Life.” These valuable, indeed, on Nietzsche’s perspective, interdependent, goals, in virtue of their achievement or fulfillment, confer a life-enhancing and life-justifying value on human existence that, he thinks, to reiterate, “redeems” the aristocratic cruelty and natural enmity of life.

Enhanced, justified, and redeemed, furthermore, is the considerable distance he puts between the mediocre multitudes and the “higher life” of rare “great human beings.” The thick line that he draws between humanity en masse and the strong(er), highly cultivated individuals—who are distinguished from the vast majority of humankind by their healthy manner, their style, their power and creative energy—speaks to his estimate of any given society or political system as contingent on its relation to nature, culture, and the production of “higher humans” who not only create, but actually embody life-justifying value. Nothing in nature, least of all human beings, are “equal.” Nor should one—if one is honest and moral—want something (or someone) to be what it is not (and can never be). Nietzsche’s political education,

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631 SE § 3, WB § 4. Cf. KSA 19 [1] p. 3 (1872 - 1873): “The object is to show how the entire life of a people reflects in a flawed and confused manner the image presented by its supreme geniuses: they are not the product of the masses, but the masses exhibit their aftereffect. . . . [II] There is an invisible bridge connection one genius with another—that is the truly real ‘history’ of a people, everything else amounts to a shadowy, infinite variations made of inferior material, copies formed by unskilled hands. The ethical strengths of a nation, as well, are exhibited in its geniuses.”


633 Cf. The Greek State, p. 4, 6 -7; BGE § 262: “[E]very aristocratic morality is intolerant—in the education of youth . . . calling it ‘justice.’ . . . The dangerous and uncanny point [being that] where the greater, more manifold, more comprehensive life transcends and lives beyond . . . [the aristocratic individual] appears, obliged to give himself laws and to develop his own arts and wiles for self-preservation, self-enhancement, self-redemption.”

634 Cf. BGE § 32. See also Lampert: “Aiming to forge a new nobility, [Nietzsche] employs the charm of the dangerous and the different, writing like a pied piper for souls naturally predisposed to the noble. [He] gradually shifts [his] focus from the social to the individual, from aristocratic classes that once ruled society and looked back upon distinguished forbears to aristocratic individuals separated from the common by experiences based in suffering and looking toward the future for themselves and their like” (2001: 272).
moved by a spirit of probity and a love of life, sides with nature in promotion of what nature grants and makes possible. In the presentation of a political-aesthetic teaching that remains “loyal” to the earth and “true” to the body, Nietzsche affirms the natural order of rank, which can rightly be interpreted in terms of justice. This ecological reading of phusis as will to power serves as the organizing principle of high culture—the new nomos.635

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The political-educational task that Nietzsche sets for himself is to overcome nihilism through the creation of a “new nobility.” This goal represents a counternihilistic belief in the future possibility of creating an elite humanity and higher caste—of a renewed faith636 in “greatness of soul.” The existence of such a new ruling caste depends, Nietzsche argues, upon a new teaching on virtue;637 it also entails the “use of whatever political and economic states are at hand.”638 Nietzsche’s political education aims, therefore, to establish philosophy’s “responsibility” for the future of the human species. The teaching on new virtue, which is specifically related to the Übermensch or complementary human,639 is grounded in the will to power ontology—Nietzsche’s comprehensive account of nature. The “bestowing virtue” is a love of life and all that brings higher life into existence; it is a love of the “finite,” mortal world of becoming and possibility;640 it “remains faithful to the earth.” The new “responsibility” that accords Nietzsche’s assessment of the earth and body is ultimately left to a beyond-human type, the crown of a “new nobility” that embodies a more “naturalized” way being human, one that transcends the “degenerate” human condition extant.641 By remaining “true” to both the “body” and the “earth” Nietzsche points to the power that sanctifies life, as well as a new relation to nature and the human body. By affirming that nature (and history) provides the raw materials for the creative evolution of the species and culture, he teaches a way to be beyond the

635 Cf. Lampert: “The natural order of rank is protested only by those who judge themselves to be harmed by it. [Nietzsche] addresses those who have been favored by nature and could be presumed to have no quarrel with her, or at least not the quarrel that moves the teachers of equality who desire the correction of nature or the ‘humanitarian emendation’ of nature” (1986: 97). Cf. TSZ II.7. See BGE § 22. See also Plato, The Republic § 533d.

636 JS § 102.

637 BGE § 212. See also TSZ I.5, 11; WP § 752 (1884); BGE § 202, 258. Cf. Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics IV.3.

638 Cf. TSZ II.12; BGE § 257 - 296.

639 BGE § 61.

640 Cf. Op cit. III.10 § 1

641 Ibid.

642 Cf. GM II § 12.
human condition extant. The value-creating “over-humans” do not as yet exist, however. And those who might parent them are for the most part, according to Nietzsche, “wounded” ill-suited for public, much less political life.

These exceptional “least known [and] strongest” must be found and segregated from the herd. Then they must be trained—“translated back into nature”—if they are to parent those who will become “masters of the world.” They must be “enhanced if life is to be further enhanced.” Nietzsche’s pedagogical politics therefore entails, according to George Stack, “a morality of affirmation that is antiutilitarian and positive, a morality in which nature, art, and culture would be sustained in dialectical tension in the existence of spiritually strong individuals.” These are the contours of the new virtue Nietzsche that prescribes for the exceptions—not the majority. It is important here to distinguish between two sets, or stages of humankind. Each stand in different, though continuous, relations to Nietzsche’s ideal culture: as parent to child. First, there are the “great human beings,” the “most spiritual,” intellectually and physically superior persons—the high points of human power, genius, and achievement. Secondly, and more crucially, is the next phase of human evolution that this first type will parent: the Übermensch.

The word “overhuman” designates a type that has turned out supremely well, in antithesis to “modern” men, to “good” men, to Christians and other nihilists—a word which, in the mouth of Zarathustra, the destroyer or morality, becomes

643 Uber translates as “over” —the Übermensch are “over,” above, and “across” the human condition extant. See TSZ P § 3 - 5. Cf. BGE § 230 - 231; GM II § 2.

644 Cf. EH “BGE” § 1: “Included here is the slow search for those related to me . . . all my writings are fish-hooks . . . . If nothing got caught I am not to blame. There were no fish . . . .”

645 Cf. TSZ III.13; BGE § 274. See also Plato, The Republic, 408d; 491c - d.

646 Cf. WP § 985 (1885).

647 Cf. Plato, The Apology 32a [34]. See also The Republic, § 410a - d, re: “the pedagogical art of judging those best by nature.”

648 Cf. Richardson, 1996: 164. See also TSZ III.4, III. 12 § 12, 24.

649 See FEI § 4 re: “the apexes of the intellectual pyramid . . . the highest of the free and unencumbered peaks . . . .” Cf. PTG P, § 1; AC § 57.

650 See TSZ P § 3, 6, I.1, II.20, III.2 § 11, III.4.
The core message of Nietzsche's philosophy proclaims the pedagogical and necessarily political task of cultivating to the next-phase of the evolution of the human species. The urgency of the creation of the "overhuman" is underscored by the realization that the greatest of the "great human beings" are still too small and incomplete. They are in need of convalescence and rehabilitation. The project in education and discipline will, admittedly, take generations of breeding to fulfill, but Nietzsche (via Zarathustra) attempts to overcome this historical problem (of human nature) by both resisting the seduction of pessimism—which tempts him to declare that everything is in vain—and affirming the edifying possibility of "enhancing" the species to a new level of culture. This lesson regarding humankind's natural history goes to the heart of Nietzsche's teaching on besting the crisis of nihilism that threatens the future of not only humanity but all that is earthly.

And it is my art and aim, to compose into one and bring together what is fragment and riddle and dreadful chance.

The pedagogical challenge at the core of Nietzsche's political education is to bring the master and slave moralities—the crux of the historical crisis of value—into direct confrontation, thereby stimulating the instinctual energies of both the "master" and "slave" types in constructive, edifying ways, to help, in virtue of an integration of radical opposition, give rise to the highest of human possibilities—the "Roman Caesar with the soul of Christ." This is Nietzsche's refined image of a new aristocrat, a true gentilhomme, the epi tome of the "synthetic" human being who symbolizes the healthiest and most complete composition of antagonistic tendencies or traits. With a view to Zarathustra—precursor or forbear of the overhuman—, Nietzsche writes of "this most affirmative of all spirits; all opposites are in him bound together into a new unity. The highest and lowest of forces of human nature." This gentleman par excellence embodies an order of rank that agrees with (complements) the natural
and historical possibility of human perfectibility. "Here the human being is overcome every moment," writes Nietzsche in his philosophical autobiography, "the concept 'overhuman' here becomes the greatest reality—all that has hitherto been called great in human being lies at infinite distance beneath it." 663 This image of embodied wholeness and supreme health, one of an immanent, realizable telos of nature and history, is "essential to greatness" 664 and represents, in Stack's considered opinion,

the civilized and graceful person who retains the "steel" of nature beneath the aesthetics of refinement in precisely the one that Nietzsche projects in his vision of the gentleman who will be a "noble" and "affirmative type" in whom there is a synthesis of gentleness and strength, grace and power. 665

Hence, Nietzsche conceives redemption as the complicit relation to time (the past) and nature as being literally embodied by the beyond-human whose strength of will and character affords the capacity to create a new, affirmative meaning for all that was, is, and shall be. The high spirituality and strength, courage, grace, and fierce probity of nature's gentilhomme is, on this perspective, a unification of spirit and nature, creativity and reality, will and power. Zarathustra's vision of the most "exalted human" is illustrative:

I should like to see him as a white ox, snorting and bellowing as he goes before the plough: and his bellowing, too, should laud all earthly things! . . . . To be sure, I love in him the neck of the ox: but now I want to see the eye of the angel, too.

He must unlearn his heroic will, too: he should be an exalted human and not only a sublime one . . . . He has tamed monsters, he has solved riddles: but he should also redeem his monsters and riddles, he should transform them into heavenly children. 666

Redemption entails reconciling the problem of nature faced by humankind, the problem, which, in Nietzsche's estimation, has arisen out of the history of human civilization. In such respect, Walter Kaufmann sees Nietzsche emphasizing the future possibility of "the continuity of nature and culture." 667 What in the past has been but "fragment and riddle and dreadful chance" must now be consciously willed and cultivated in the form of a "more valuable" human than has ever existed. The solution, as Nietzsche sees it, calls for the cultivation of a newly enhanced type of human being who remains loyal to nature and the natural—who "lauds all earthly things!" The pedagogical problem, which is inherently political (action on the part of philosophy), is to create cultural conditions for the possibility of the cultivation of the "highest

663 Ibid.
664 Ibid.
666 TSZ II.13.
types" of such gentlehumans. Nietzsche's future, nature-complementing culture of overcoming, therefore, nourishes hopes for authentic redemption.

While it is true that there is no (or little) mention of the Übermensch in the books following Zarathustra, it is not because Nietzsche despairs of the goal of creating the overhuman, for he most assuredly holds to the hope for the world-redeeming, species-"enhanced" beyond-human. Strictly speaking, on this perspective, the "complementary human" supercedes the image of the Übermensch in Nietzsche's mature philosophy with respect to the affirmation or the perfection of nature. In the precise sense of nature-complementarity, the most authentic human is the "philosopher of the future." This "more valuable" type, which Nietzsche regards as capable of not only creating a new cultural order but also of—since it "complements nature"—"redeeming the earth," represents the evolutionary possibility of the species. Consider the following supplication, written near the end of Nietzsche's career, in 1888:

Grant me the sight, but one glance, of something perfect, wholly achieved, happy, mighty, triumphant, something still capable of arousing fear! Of a human who justifies humankind, of a complementary and redeeming lucky hit on the part of humankind for the sake of which one may still believe in the human.

What is this a prayer for, if it is not for the Übermensch? According to the core terms of Nietzsche's political education, such an "enhanced" caste of an "overhuman" species can only be "bred" from the strongest and healthiest of an elite of "great human beings" cultivated to their highest potential. These would be those people who alone are capable of preserving their physical and psychological health, vitality, and stamina, who are rich in an overabundance of energy and will, and are able to face and embrace nature, chance, and history with a world-affirming attitude. They are "human beings who are sure of their power and represent the attained strength of humanity with conscious pride." Once again, Stack's insight is helpful.

Nietzsche's Übermenschen are human beings who are subject to suffering, subject to the vicissitudes of life and to the antithetical forces of society and nature. They are vulnerable to disease, injury, accident, and death. They are able to endure life in a chaotic universe because they create meaning and carry a core of meaning.

See Emerson's essay, "Manners," for an elucidation of the term, one that surely had a lasting influence on Nietzsche: "The gentleman is a man of truth, lord of his own actions . . . expressing that lordship in his behavior, not in any manner dependent and servile, either on persons, or opinions, or possessions. Beyond this fact of truth and real force, the word denotes good nature or benevolence: manhood first, and then gentleness."


Cf. TI "Expeditions" § 44, 47 - 48. See also AC § 57.

Moreover, Nietzsche’s philosophers of the future must continuously overcome themselves and each other each and every moment without the noble type itself being overcome—the noble figure being a naturally occurring and historical, if now forgotten or ignored, type. This supreme order of humankind, the crowning achievement of culture as well as nature, is, for Nietzsche, the peak of the human species. The noble type of genius, notes Nietzsche, has existed before—a “lucky accident”—most notably during the Archaic or tragic Greek and later Roman periods. The focus on the political education and breeding of a new “species” of human from an elite human typology therefore reflects Nietzsche’s lifelong concern with the world-interpreting, value-creating role that the genuine philosopher plays in the project of true culture. In keeping with Nietzsche’s edifying plans, the highest types—the great human beings and the over- or complementary humans they might parent—should be seen as having also to strive to accelerate the demise that is intrinsic to this terminally decadent era. Only after waging war, prepared and strengthened by a Nietzschean political education, can the higher tasks of culture-building be undertaken.

A tremendous hope speaks out of this writing... That party of life which takes in hand the greatest of all task, the higher breeding of humanity, together with the remorseless destruction of all degenerate and parasitic elements, will again make possible on earth that superfluity of life out of which the dionysian must again proceed. I promise a tragic age: the supreme art in the affirmation of life, tragedy, will be reborn when humankind has behind it the consciousness of the harshest but most necessary wars without suffering from it...
CHAPTER FIVE

The Ecological Implications of a Nietzschean Political Education

Stay loyal to the earth, my brothers, with the power of your virtue!
May your bestowing love and your knowledge serve toward the meaning of the earth! Thus I beg and entreat you. . . . Lead, as I do, the flown-away virtue back to earth—yes, back to body and life: that it may give the earth its meaning . . . 678

Given the concern he shows for natural relations of dynamic interdependence and holism as they pertain to a healthy and flourishing view of and to life, Nietzsche’s political education is essentially ecological.679 For the goal of his political education is the institution of an environmetally responsible new cultural order grounded in a naturalized ethics.680 Based on the will to power ontology, Nietzsche’s attempt at the political reconstitution of culture and education fits with a conception of a regime centrally—and soley—concerned with the cultivation and practice of virtue that “remains true to the earth.” The leading norm for a such a culture would reflect the needs of a naturalized caste of human beings, whose “higher spirits and their tasks,”681 in Nietzsche’s words, “complements nature.”682

Modern politics and morality will, because they are no longer vital or functional and are, in fact, directly responsible for the destruction of nature and the “degeneration of the species,” be replaced with a new earth redeeming politics crowned by a new nobility. By both confronting the crisis in morality, politics, and society and affirming the interdependence of all living things, specifically including humans, with nature, Nietzsche promotes the idea that humankind can no longer afford to abuse the earth. Moreover, given that he makes “physiological demands for the preservation of a certain type of life,”683 Nietzsche redefines and enriches political education by penetrating beneath the simplistic (and often false) contrivances of the modern era. Sharply critical of the “earth-destroying” and “species-degenerating” consequences of the political economy of modern morality, Nietzsche is recommending a radical change of focus for his

678 TSZ I.22 § 2.
679 Graham Parkes attests that “[t]he ecological dimension to Nietzsche’s work has always been there: it has simply been largely ignored, for two reasons. Firstly, the context of his life has been widely neglected . . . . Secondly, there has been a failure to appreciate the extent to which his philosophy constitutes a radical departure from its antecedents in the Western tradition . . . . [H]is thinking about nature reveals facets that have escaped the notice of commentaries based solely in the Western traditions. And given Nietzsche’s insistence on the close connections between a philosophy and the philosopher’s life, a discerning assessment of his contributions to environmental philosophy also does well to take (auto)biographical circumstances into account” (2003, p. 2).
681 Cf. BGE § 218.
682 BGE § 207, 211. See also WP § 972 (1884).
683 BGE § 3.
species-enhancing, culture-building, and earth-redeeming enterprise.\textsuperscript{684}

In the disclosure of a complex ecological account of life, physiology, diet, climate, and environment construed in aristocratic cultural terms of a medical-aesthetic whole, he shows favor for those whose degree of spiritual strength accords with their ability to not only preserve but enhance their and the earth’s health. Thus, Nietzsche is advocating a comprehensive and closer to the biological-medical reality account of the “healthy” relationship or continuity of culture to nature. The declaration that the “time is coming when politics will have a different meaning” than it does today marks the decisive place of Nietzsche’s political education for the future of cultural ecology.\textsuperscript{685}

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Nietzsche’s critique of modern society and traditional morality attacks and unseats those modern socioeconomic arrangements legitimated by the secular-political religion (humanitarianism) which arose from the European Enlightenment and vies today to confer the imprimatur of universal authority on a set of prejudices inherited from Christianity.\textsuperscript{686} This political-religion, manifests, today to a much greater degree than it did when Nietzsche lived, in the form of liberal-democratic market-driven capitalism coupled with technological efficiency. The net result is unrelenting environmental rapacity in the service of a set of utilitarian assumptions and expectations.\textsuperscript{687} So, if ecology is a “subversive subject,” as Paul Sears suggests,\textsuperscript{688} what Nietzsche’s ecological philosophy subverts is the complacency of the anthropocentric-humanism central to the leading ideologies—moral, political, and economic—of the modern era.\textsuperscript{689}

I am dynamite. . . . The concept of politics has then become completely absorbed into a war of spirits . . . Only after me will there be grand politics

\textsuperscript{684} Cf. JS § 109 - 110.
\textsuperscript{685} Cf. WP § 960 (1885 - 1886).
\textsuperscript{686} Cf. JS § 377; BGE § 202.
\textsuperscript{687} See Bill Moyers’ recent essay in the New York Review of Books, “Welcome Doomsday,” (Vol. LII, no. 5, pp. 8 - 10) for a bracing account of the contemporary earth-destroying “political religion” that currently dominates American politics and society. In this essay, Moyers speaks of the global implications of the “coupling of ideology and theology” in the leading developed or developing nations of the West (and Asia) “that threatens our ability to meet the growing ecological crisis” (p. 8). He writes of a “political religion” [a morally corrupt fundamentalist Christian-democracy] that “presumes human beings have inherited the earth to be used as they see fit. . . . [who take their ‘God’ given ‘dominion’] . . . as the right to unlimited exploitation” (ibid.). (Vol. I.II, No. 5, pp. 8 - 10). Cf. Jared Diamond, Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed, 2005.
\textsuperscript{688} Cf. Deserts on the March, 1959.
\textsuperscript{689} Including both liberal capitalism and Marxism, which, for all their apparent differences, are premised on an instrumentalist hope/effort to free humankind from material deprivation by controlling and subjugating nature. Modern societies of all stripes generally overlook, if not deny, the fact that humans are an interdependent part of nature, and therefore bring on pandemic ecological crises.
“If Nietzsche is dynamite,” observes Daniel Conway, “then he is certainly the last weapon remaining in the plundered armory of late-modernity; the timing of his explosion must therefore be perfect.” Conway adds that the “explosion” which Nietzsche alludes to is “none other than the ‘revaluation of all values,’ which he understands as a precondition of the creation of new values in the tragic” and naturally-attuned age to come. Nietzsche’s ecology should, then, be sharply distinguished from postmodern variations, such as “social ecology” and, more particularly, “ecofeminism.” Unlike these characteristically hyper-egalitarian, hence human-centered, “ecological” perspectives, Nietzsche’s reading of nature informs a politically authoritative power ontology, the unambiguous implications of which challenge the received wisdom of this day and age. Nature, not some abstract principle of “social justice,” supplies the template for his pattern of elevation for culture and politics. Rather than shore up the conventional morality, as most contemporary environmental movements seem to do, Nietzsche educates “against the times” by shattering the existing table of values.

.. how right it is for those who do not feel themselves to be citizens of this time to harbour great hopes; for if they were citizens of this time they too would be helping to kill their time and so perish with it—while their desire is rather to awaken their time to life and so live on themselves in this awakened life.

Nietzsche’s political education represents an alternative to the various, though related, viewpoints that prevail in contemporary ecology, for his ecology provides the opportunity to see—to interpret and evaluate—the world anew. By rethinking the relationship of the human...
animal to nature, he refreshes ancient and timely educational questions. By “returning to nature,” and in virtue of the project of “translating the human back into nature,” Nietzsche introduces original pedagogical goals, comprehensive in scope, which tackle the problem nihilism with unrestrained probity.699 A philosophy such as Nietzsche’s, grounded in the will to power ontology, is, as Lampert sees it, not “antilife, [but] true to the earth, it [informs] an earthly religion and politics capable of reflecting the hierarchy of natural human experience from the most shared to the most rare; it divinizes human experience.”700

On this perspective, Nietzsche’s power ontology underwrites an account of being—a “new truth goal”701—that opens to the possibility of consecrating humankind to a new, pantheistic value for higher-life on earth. The affirmation of the interdependence of the highest exemplars of human species and their culture(s), with the divinity of the natural world, the ecological dimensions of his philosophy of life complement an otherwise subversive and counternihilistic project of cultural renaissance.702 The educational and political aspects of this enterprise indicate that what’s both “new” and perhaps best in Nietzsche is his reworking and advancing of a naturalism and aesthetics framed long before him.703 For he wants to recover and reconstitute the majesty of nature in ways reminiscent of the noble pantheistic cultures of antiquity.704

As discussed above, Nietzsche’s writings (early and mature) reflect a thoroughgoing promotion of ideas and activities that facilitate the acquisition of what the Greeks called Paideia—the combined fulfillment of culture, education, and knowledge—oriented to a new design for the best, most beautiful, and, not coincidentally, healthy, most “natural” life. He extols the Greeks precisely because they were honest and strong enough not to have denied the

699 The connection between Nietzsche’s thought, particularly his distinct brand of “Dionysian pantheism,” and the Romantics is evident here, in that his critique of modernity denotes, among other things, the immanent collapse of the sentimental Enlightenment cult of humanity as a viable political faith. The Romantic approach, as exemplified by the “nature-philosophy” of Hölderlin, Goethe and Schiller, to nature is fundamentally ecological (cf. Parkes,1998:167 - 188). This outlook is apparent also in the writings of some American thinkers, such as Thoreau, Emerson, Muir, and, more recently (in the 20th century), the poet Robinson Jeffers.


701 Richardson, 1996:280. Richardson argues that the will to power ontology “follows the classical correspondence model of microcosm mirroring a macrocosm, the part of the isomorphic whole” (Ibid.).

702 Cf. TSZ P § 3. See also Assorted Opinions and Maxims (1879) § 201.

703 Cf. Richardson, 1996: 5.

704 Cf. JS § 1 - 2; BGE § 230 - 231 & 253. See also FEI § 4.104: “Where then are we to look for the beginning of . . . culture[?] . . . [O]nly in connection with these exalted beings that true culture may be spoken of, how are institutions to be founded for the uncertain existence of such natures, how can we devise educational establishments which shall be of benefit only to these select few?”
cruel foundations from which the their culture blossomed. The complementary cultural and ecological terms of Nietzsche's political education correspond, therefore, with the metaphor of agriculture; such a comparison between education and agriculture in Nietzsche's thought echoes the edifying value of the comprehensive Greek cultural pedagogy—the perfecting of natural gifts through human will and reason. The inherently artistic and explicitly political conception of the Nietzschean ideal of the “genuine philosopher” is inextricable from the formative importance of the supreme educator: a “human being of the most comprehensive responsibility who has the conscience for the over-all development of the human being” as a guiding and organizing precept. The philosophical-educational task here denotes the understanding and arrangement or disposition of a particular type of naturally-occurring individual in relation to a larger whole of culture and nature.

This enterprise must, according to Nietzsche, take into careful account while also seeking to enhance the whole of nature. On that nature culture depends for its vitality, thinks Nietzsche; moreover, of that nature the human animal and culture are composed. The cultural or edifying relationship of the human animal and nature, instead of being problematic, is, on this perspective, ruled complementary. Such isomorphism is reflected by an ecological ethos which affirms that life needs the order of rank it has generated. Nietzsche’s political education to high culture is not a work against nature but a copy of nature “perfected”—or “enhanced.” Human and cultural perfection is codeterminous with earthly perfection. Thinking and learning, on this view, indicate a collaborative medical-aesthetic effort of body and life.

In Nietzsche’s scheme of human enhancement, the existence and flourishing of the “highest types” denotes the principal standard of healthy culture, rather like the healthy existence certain “keystone species” in the wilderness conduces to the vitality of ecosystems in the wild lands. Like those ecologists who recognize the singular value of certain “keystone

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76 Cf. Parkes, who notes that it “is a matter of daring to grant oneself the full range and richness of naturalness” since such naturalness is possible only after one has undergone protracted discipline in the form of tyranny by the “task” that has emerged from one’s nature—a regimen prescribed by nature itself, and one that can be fatal for unfortunate practitioners” (1998: 184).

76 These thoughts are complemented by the German word Bildung, which connotes the plastic power of human formation as relates to Kultur—understood as a breeding (Züchtung) ground for cultivation. Cf. SE § 1, 3; D § 560; JS § 4. See also Blondel, 1991:44.

77 BGE § 61. TI “Expeditions” § 47. Cf. BT § 3 - 5; EH * Clever” § 1, 2, 3, 8. See also BGE § 188 - 189; WP § 921 (181887 - 1888). 1003 (1888).

78 Cf. Ibid. § 257, 260, 262; AC § 57.

species" in the wilderness, Nietzsche grants "great human beings" an importance out of proportion to their small number. He places "the highest types"—the most spiritual and powerful human animals—to their natural place alongside other animals.

Bear in mind that the principal constituents of high or noble culture, according to Nietzsche, represent what he phrases in terms of a "unity of style," which denotes a univocal system of values expressive of a synthesis of drives to mastery, \(^{710}\) hierarchy, art, discipline, subordination, coordination, obedience, and, friendship. \(^{711}\) The sum total of intellectual, aesthetic, scientific and political formations constitute the "horizons of life" for a particular community "in the sense of a unity of style which characterizes all its life." \(^{712}\) These horizons for culture reflect stylistic unity principally as regards a binding, authoritative standard or definition of "greatness." High culture, accordingly, speaks to Nietzsche of what is great and unique, that is, noble. The figure of the "genius" or the human typology Nietzsche associates with "great human beings"—and the fruits of their activities—gives evidence of nobility. Moreover, the genius or "great" type, insofar as it prefigures the existence of other "higher" types of creative human possibility, manifests a particular and extraordinary concentration of will to power in a range of human forms. The very existence of such exceptional human beings is, for Nietzsche, the crowning achievement of "high culture," for their existence supplies both "justification" and meaning within the context of comprehensive cultural synthesis. That is, each type of person—slave, master, genius, even overman (Übermensch)—is an elemental part of a larger whole. The "highest types" are more likely to come about within high cultures—their relationship is mutually reinforcing, indeed encouraging. Nietzsche tends, therefore, to think that the standard metacriteria for the evaluation of society regards the symbiotic relationship between culture and the noble, master types—including other specific human typologies—they produce.

Given that Nietzsche's aristocratic educational politics is substantiated on the avowal that culture discloses itself most directly and positively in the redemptive creative acts and works of "great human beings," most especially the creative genius, education—taken in the most comprehensive spiritual, cultural, and political sense—takes the first and highest priority. \(^{713}\)

\(^{710}\) The level of a drive's activity, its strength, is measured or evaluated by how much it rules over others, according to Nietzsche. Mastery is the bringing together of another will into a subordinate role within one's own effort—thereby "incorporating" the other as a sort of organ or tool. Cf. BGE § 230. See also HH § 224; WP § 769 (1883); JS § 14.

\(^{711}\) Again, Nietzsche's "power ontology" is monistic, in that he means to fuse the physical (material) and intentional (ideal) as aspects of single unitary being or organism: each aspect is a structural feature of what he ultimately refers to as will top power. Cf. PTG § 1; TSZ II.10, 12; BGE § 36; WP § 1067 (1885); GM II § 12; EH "BT" § 4.

\(^{712}\) PTG § 2.

\(^{713}\) Cf. Plato, *The Republic* § .473d, .535a, .591 a - c, .618 b - c.
Moreover, since the most exceptional human type is the creative embodiment of the pathos, force, and content (the will to power) of culture, hence nature, Nietzsche propounds a most antiliberal cultural and political axiom: Society exists only for the benefit of a few. A few who create the “deepest significance” and “highest value” of life.714 These “highest types” of give “testament to the greatest and most wonderful intentions of nature.”715 The two—human greatness and healthy culture—are elucidated as isomorphs in Nietzsche’s pedagogical politics. Accordingly, the “problem of culture,” as Nietzsche calls it, bears on the question of what he considers to be the fastest diminishing category of human resource and biodiversity—indeed of human divinity.

The dearth of both genius and great human beings portends an atrophy or devolution of the species, in Nietzsche eyes. And this “degensation of the species,” as he calls it, has carried through for centuries, culminating in the modern era.716 If the epochal deprivation of genius, human greatness, and culture is the blight of a late-modern “dark age,”717 then no single human component is, according to Nietzsche, as important to the rebirth, health, and vitality of culture as the cultivation of genius—parent, as it were, of the beyond-human. Nothing, however, seems nearer to the point of complete extinction in today’s radically egalitarian world, thinks Nietzsche, than those fiercely powerful, indeed predatory “higher humans” that he seeks to rehabilitate to a “great health.”718 Radical measures must be taken, in Nietzsche’s estimation, if the human species is not just to maintain its health and biodiversity—most notably in the form of those keystone “highest types”—but also keep open the possibility for “true” culture to exist. Lampert observes in such regard that “both fruitful soil and fruitful chaos are in danger of growing barren because the last man sees himself as the culmination, hence the perfection of evolution.”719

Nietzsche, of course, disagrees with the notion that we moderns are the telos of history.720 He thinks that we are not a terminus, but something “on the way” to something

714 Cf. BGE § 126. See also FEI § 3.73 - 75.
715 SE § 1.
716 Cf. AC § 14.
717 He is saying that modern “culture” is counterfeit, in that Nietzsche forecasts the imminent collapse of Western civilization and the disintegration of the Judeo-Christian-Enlightenment paradigm of late-modern life. Cf. Harold Bloom, Genius: A Mosaic of One Hundred Exemplary Creative Minds (2002). Bloom views authentic genius as the premier cultural authority (or the “spirit of the age”). The cultural authority of greatness (of culture or genius), Bloom argues, “has vanished from Western culture” (p.2). See also Jacques Barzun, From Dawn to Decadence: 500 Years of Western Cultural Life (2001).
718 Cf. TSZ III.5 § 2.
720 Cf. KSA 2 [13]. Cf. BGE § 201, 206, 242, 262.
else;\footnote{721} if anything, he thinks that modern kind has devolved. On the historical, evolutionary perspective, persons in the form of a Plato, Jesus, Buddha, or, for that matter, a Nietzsche, are abnormal and these aberrant “higher types” have about as much in common (in evolutionary terms) with the multitudes as the otherwise nondescript average human does with a chimpanzee.\footnote{722} So, if the average human is a super-chimpanzee, as it were, then the “greater complexity” of true genius is one Nietzsche associates with certain paragons of superhuman excellence. And it is precisely this type of human being that is the most endangered. All humans creatures (great and small) are a part of nature, to be sure, but Nietzsche propounds that they occupy different stations in the rank-order of intelligence, strength, ingenuity, spirituality, and creativity.\footnote{723} The existence and flourishing of the “higher types” requires a configuration of forces that Nietzsche likens to the mastery of “chance” and “chaos.”\footnote{724}

> I say to you: one must still have chaos within if one is to give birth to a dancing star. I say to you: you still have chaos within. . . .
>
> Behold, I teach you the Übermensch: he is the lightning, he is the madness. . . .\footnote{725}

In radical contradistinction to the sway of “European ideas,” the idea is that the “higher types” deserve more serious and careful attention than the rest of humanity.\footnote{726} “A new species of philosophers is coming,” Nietzsche declares, thereby underscoring the idea that the principle

\footnote{721} This is the lesson illustrated by the Rope Dancer in the Prologue to Zarathustra. His example is expressive of the human instinct to traverse the destiny of human evolution—a fate which is contingent on the courageous will of the attempter. See TSZ P § 3 - 4: “Humankind is a rope, fastened between animal and overhuman—a rope over an abyss. A dangerous going-across, a dangerous wayfaring, a dangerous looking-back . . . What is great in human being is that the human is a bridge and not a goal; what can be loved in human being is that the human is a going-across and a down-going.” The rope dancer exemplifies Nietzsche vision of the one who attempts to excel, surpass, and overcome this dying, decadent age—while the crowd below (the Last Men) snicker and ridicule him. \footnote{722} Of course, all of humanity composes the species Homo sapiens. But as recently as 27,000 years ago there was at least one other species of the Hominidae—the Neanderthal people, for example. And the hominids are similar enough to chimpanzees, or bonobos, (both Pongidae) to almost be of the same genus as each other; they remain however different enough to not only constitute a distinct genus but also a separate family. So, according to the Linnaen system—the system of classification biologists use to span the categories of life—when Nietzsche speaks of “higher humans” he seems to refer to another phenotype, one as distinct from Homo sapiens mediocritus as the human animal, generally considered, may be from the ancestral man-apes (Australopithecus africanus). Cf. E. O. Wilson, The Future of Life 2002:12 -13.

\footnote{723} Cf. BGE § 42, 294; AC § 57. See also The Greek State and FEI § 4.

\footnote{724} Ibid. § 274. Cf. WB § 5: “A single great artist might be a chance event . . . but the appearance of a series of great artists such as the history of modern [philosophy] discloses—a series equaled only once before, in the age of the Greeks—makes one think it is not chance but necessity that rules here. This necessity is precisely the problem to which [I] furnish an answer.” See also EH “The Untimely Essays” § 1, 3.

\footnote{725} TSZ Prologue § 6.

\footnote{726} Cf. Ibid. § 42, 294.
means to effect the actualization of this "fundamental goal"—"assuming one thinks of a philosopher as a great educator"—that "new values must first be created" which make possible the cultivation of "new types." Indeed, there is, as David Cooper has suggested, "tactical value in speaking as if men fell into different species, since it is an antidote to the creeping egalitarianism which pretends there are no significant differences between them at all." In 1885, Nietzsche poses the problem thus: "How have the highest types hitherto (e.g., Greeks) been reared," by way of adding that "to will this type of ‘chance’ consciously" is precisely what entails in the "task" to create new values. Indeed, Nietzsche's archetype of the value-creator, Zarathustra, is heralded, in 1888 as the "highest species of all existing things."

Understanding natural reality as a chaos of multiple realities, Nietzsche's insight into the nature of the world as "chaos to all eternity"—an idea, which can be interpreted in terms of wildness and also serves as an analogue for his idiosyncratic reading of culture—points to the entwining of what are conventionally seen as opposites. More particularly, Nietzsche's recollection of the creative importance of a chaos vested in genius ("a dancing star") recalls the principle significance of the archaic Greek kosmos and chaos as distinctively aesthetic and ecological concepts—the world as a "monster of energy" and "self-creating forces." There one finds the sense of creative potency vested in Nietzsche's doctrine of will to power, which suggests the positive and regenerative aspect of chaos within the world. This reading of nature (physics, organic chemistry, and biology) yields not only the world of appearances, Nietzsche is saying, but also holds out the eternal promise of the potential for a cultural conversion that is

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727 Cf. HL § 9; SE § 6; AC § 1, 4.
728 WP § 980 (1885). Cf. BGE § 63.
730 Op cit. § 979 (1885). Cf. TSZ III.2 § 11, III.4; BGE § 274.
731 EH "TSZ" § 6.
732 Stanley Rosen remarks that Nietzsche "emphasizes the extremes of the genuinely philosophical nature . . . he compares his wisdom to a sail skimming across the sea, trembling to the wind of the spirit: 'my wild wisdom' [TSZ II.8]. In this way . . . [Nietzsche puts] emphasis on solitude, searching, and wildness, that is, on liberation from traditional restrictions. The wildness of [Nietzsche's] wisdom is initially radically dissimilar to the urbanity of its Socratic counterpart . . . The public expression of wildness is the epitome of the difference between ancients and moderns, but also between the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries" (1995: 153).
733 Cf. The Tao Te Ching § 42: "The movement of the Tao is by contraries, and that its weakness is the sure precursor of strength."
735 WP § 1067 (1885). Babich, again, notes that "to suggest this vision [of nature as art] . . . we may be able to explore this [ideal] of abundant happiness and Nietzsche's project of giving style to human character—thus re-creating the human in light of art or nature" (ibid.: 243). Cf. BT § 25; HH § 242.
environmentally responsible and responsive.

To be sure, Nietzsche’s idea is that nature has no “intentions” other than those
“created” by the noble or master-like interpretations of the culture-bearers themselves. 736
Nietzsche gives a privilege of place to genius (and higher humans in general), because he thinks
it a source of redemption and transfiguration of nature. Nietzsche’s “noble lie” in nature serves
to reshape culture to its highest potential, whereby such potential is interpreted in terms of an
end or goal. Here the telic component to his thinking is naturalistic such that it is nature which
ordains the ranking of different types of human beings as high and low, strong and weak,
beautiful and ugly, superior and mediocre, and whereby the “noble lie” suggests an order
where there is, in fact, only chaos. 737

† † †

Nietzsche’s pedagogical politics promise to nurture the “highest types” of humankind to
transformation and “great health” 738 as part of a “convalescent” evolutionary festival of
cultural ecology. 739 The aim is to restore the cultural and political authority of the “truth” of the
body and earth. For Nietzsche thinks that through a carefully coordinated enterprise of political
education—centered on a naturalistic pattern of disciplined training entailing equal parts
affirmation and destruction—culture might attain to the next evolutionary phase of human
species, the achievement of which would affirm the value of all life (not just human life) on
earth. These are the core terms of Nietzsche’s counternihilistic project.

Behold, I teach you the Übermensch.
The Übermensch is the meaning of the earth. Let your will
say: The Übermensch shall be the meaning of the earth!
I entreat you, my brothers, remain true to the earth,
and do
not believe those who speak to you of superterrestrial hopes!
They are poisoners, whether they know it or not... 740

Nietzschean high culture can be seen, then, to portray a flourishing natural

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736 Indeed Nietzsche says that nature is immensely wasteful and cruel in regards to the production of
genius, just as the works of genius are in excess of their effects on an otherwise “inane bulk” of
humankind.

737 Cf. BGE § 219, 39, 43; AC § 57. Rosen contends that Nietzsche’s esoteric teaching is this: “Since
what traditional philosophers call Being or nature is in fact chaos, there is no eternal impediment to
human creativity, or more bluntly put, to the will to power. Creativity is not properly human at all but
natural in the sense that it is the cosmological expression of chaos as lines of force” (1989:197).

738 See JS § 382, 346 - 47. The figure of Zarathustra—presage of the Übermensch— is the archetype
in Nietzsche’s writings.

739 Cf. WS § 188 - 189. Michael Zimmerman interprets these passages as “consistent with Nietzsche’s
overriding concern: promoting the self-overcoming of herd humanity for the sake of a higher type. . . .”

740 TSZ P § 3.
environment" that encourages the channeling of the instinctual energy of its highest beings into consciousness and action in ways which might make possible the next evolutionary step beyond toward the self-overcoming higher than highest human: the overhuman (Übermensch). A renaissance of high culture, on Nietzsche’s ecological view, constitutes an analogue of an ecosystem—“a junglelike growth and upward striving, kind of tropical tempo in competition to grow”—that manifests in a complex and “cruel” human project that “organizes the chaos” into a natural order of rank. This is a model for society in which the “strongest and the purest” thrive and rule. Nietzsche presupposes and endorses a politics of hierarchy and domination that mirrors natural systems that will “higher life”—and “more fruitful human beings”—into existence. With such guiding naturalistic precepts in mind, Nietzsche welcomes “all signs that a more virile, warlike ages is about to begin, which will restore honor to courage above all” and thereby allow for the return of “beasts of prey.”

To this end we now need many preparatory courageous human beings who cannot very well leap out of nothing, any more that out of sand and slime of present-day civilization and metropolitanism—more endangered human beings, more fruitful human beings, happier beings!

Indeed, the “preparatory human beings” Nietzsche summons cannot—since they are “endangered” by “present day” civilization—just “leap out of nothing.” This is the point where political education becomes operative. For these “preparatory human beings” need to be recognized by an intrepid vanguard of educators. Then, these few must be cultivated in ways altogether foreign to the democratic-egalitarian status-quo. Moreover, given that Nietzsche champions the noble and conquering peoples such as the Romans, the Arabians, the Germanic and Japanese nobility, the Homeric heroes, and the Scandinavian vikings, Nietzsche is calling for a reconstitution of culture led by a warrior caste. Indeed, the “preparatory courageous human beings” Nietzsche summons will complete the imminent destruction of the terminally

The leading trope of natural systems, and the continuity of culture and nature, goes back to the earliest writings and continues until the end. Cf. GS; SE § 1, 3; AC § 57.


BGE § 262. Cf. WP § 959 (1885 - 1886): “The jungle-growth ‘human’ always appears where the struggle for power has been waged the longest. Great humans. The Romans—jungle animals.” See also Eh “Good Books” § 4.

JS § 283; WP § 287 (1887). See also BGE § 257. Alphonso Lingis observes that the kind of consciousness that evolved in predators differs markedly from that of prey species (herbivores). For example, arousal in herbivores produces adrenaline, which is fear producing; whereas arousal in predators produces norepinephrine, which results in aggression. “The [consciousness] of a predator,” Lingis writes, “is searchingly aggressive, inner-directed . . . The [consciousness] of herbivores is one of general expectancy and anxiety instead of anticipating, a state of wariness rather than searching” (“Three Essays,” in Budhi, Vol. IV, nos. 2 - 3, 2000: 6). Cf. TSZ III.13; BGE § 42.

ibid.

Cf. GM I § 11 and II § 17.
decadent West while also, and more importantly, revitalizing the species human.\textsuperscript{747}

In another close entwining of seemingly opposed ideas, Nietzsche propounds one of his core ecological tenets: cruelty and creativity are as inextricable from each other in nature as in "true" culture.\textsuperscript{748} He teaches an order of rank in accord with nature and understands suffering and struggle as nature's inescapable means to high achievement, human and otherwise.\textsuperscript{749} The initial stages of the new cultural epoch should be expected, therefore, to parallel the rise and sustenance of all "great" cultures.\textsuperscript{750} For example, Nietzsche refers in such respects to the Italian principalities of the Renaissance which emerged against the blighted backdrop of the medieval Christian dark ages. So, too, might new aristocracies rise again from "the sand and slime of present-day civilization and metropolitanism." Anathema to timely "humanitarian illusions," the distinctive element to all of the positive historical examples that Nietzsche mentions throughout his career is the domination of a caste of aristocratic warrior-artists.\textsuperscript{751}

Viewed from the ecological standpoint, the higher, noble types are, precisely because their "nature is still natural," analogous to those predators and fauna that are distinctive to the definition of a wilderness area, since their very existence assures the health, virility, and internal self-renewal of a particular ecosystem.\textsuperscript{752}

To be sure, one should not yield to humanitarian illusions about the origins of an aristocratic society (and thus of the presuppositions of this enhancement of the type "human"): truth is hard. Let us admit to ourselves, without trying to be considerate, how every higher culture on earth so far has begun. Human beings whose nature is still natural, barbarians in every terrible sense of the word, men of prey who were still in possession of unbroken strength of will and lust for power, hurled themselves on weaker, more civilized, more peaceful races . . . upon mellow old cultures whose last vitality was even then flaring up in splendid fireworks of spirit and corruption. In the beginning, the noble caste was always the barbarian caste: their predominance did not lie mainly in physical strength but in strength of soul — they were more whole human beings (which also means, at every level, "more whole beasts").\textsuperscript{753}

If it stands to reason to maintain those fauna that distinguish an authentic wilderness area as such, then it is equally imperative and, therefore, also politically authoritative to admit for
the preservation and “breeding”\textsuperscript{754} of a caste of people in whom a higher culture’s richness is infused. The renewed health of the “highest types” of the human species serves as significant a role to culture in Nietzsche’s political education as fearsome predators do in the wild lands. Nietzsche, however, should be read not so much as inviting humankind back to its barbarian beginnings as he is reminding us of what is necessary to the “wholeness” of human nature. He is endorsing a “strength of soul” that, although “beastlike,” is indicative of the most refined authentic human health and “greatness.”\textsuperscript{755} As the “physician of culture,” Nietzsche therefore advocates an understanding of the “hard truths” about the origins of human health and power by concentrating on the wild, animal-driven instincts vested in the body. He is saying that natural energy and wisdom may come together again in mutual and reinforcing harmony in the form of a strength of soul and body, the achievement of which promises the return of “more whole human beings.”

It is here, at the point of human evolutionary possibility, that Nietzsche intimates the social-political values that modern liberal democrats will find so appalling and intolerable; for it is they (the domesticated herd) who are threatened by the predatory few who risk the attempt to attain to a level of instinctive power that allows them to become a part of the natural forces surrounding them. Their success would entail the destruction of the status quo, to put it mildly. Although Nietzsche means his pedagogical politics in ways that affirm the (re)naturalized ecological whole, he is exhorting those who consider themselves to be “true educators” (those one can only presume to be of a certain nature; those, that is, who have been favored themselves by nature\textsuperscript{756}) to think not just of themselves but rather of the environmental whole upon which their enhancement and that of the species depends. Those who find this kind of political and educational thinking repugnant, Nietzsche would argue, merely betray their own ineluctable instinctual corruption. A view to the negative, as it were, illuminates the positive ecological interests Nietzsche proposes. Nevertheless, aristocraticism and the high cultural ideal that goes with it entail \textit{good} (by which Nietzsche means life-affirming/enhancing) ecological reasons that need to be entertained more resolutely if Nietzsche is to be understood in the way he intends.\textsuperscript{757}

\textsuperscript{754} JS § 377.

\textsuperscript{755} Cf. Machiavelli’s advice to the prince that he is “obliged to know well how to act as a beast . . . [and] must imitate the fox and the lion” (The Prince, § 18).

\textsuperscript{756} Lampert: “Aiming to forge a new nobility, [Nietzsche] employs the charm of the dangerous and the different, writing like a pied piper for souls naturally predisposed to the noble . . . distinguished forbears to aristocratic individuals separated from the common by experiences based on suffering and looking toward the future for themselves and their like” (2001: 272).

\textsuperscript{757} Cf. BGE § 284; EH “Destiny” § 7 - 8. See also WP § 841 (1888). To be sure this cultural-ecological ideal has value for Nietzsche primarily because of its relation to the production, protection and enhancement of certain persons in whom he is principally interested.
The “great human being,” the figure of genius, and the spectrum of “higher human” typology are, as intimated above, “keystone species” in Nietzsche’s project of cultural renaissance. Rather like the eagle and grizzly bear, the wolf, tiger, jaguar, or white shark, the presence and vitality of certain species (typically and notably predators) in a particular place and time are the principal indices by which the “health” of that ecosystem can be measured. Again, the very presence and health of these keystone species indicates a true wild land or region as such. In Nietzschean high culture, as in wild nature, an elite group of certain species therefore exercises influence on vitality far beyond its numbers. Because higher humans give purpose and identity to their place and time, and high culture culminates in their existence and activities, they will enjoy the educational privileges and political authority otherwise denied the many. The greatest human beings are, Nietzsche declares, the “world-ruling spirit[s], a destiny.” They have, for Nietzsche, ontological as well as political dominion not over nature, but over other human beings. In this case a single person or elite few can be the meaning-giving hub on which an entire culture turns.

As shown, Nietzsche is promoting a culture-education complex that makes possible “beasts of prey,” a new “race” (or “caste”) that refuse their being domesticated by a democratic society desirous of taming—or destroying—their kind. Politically considered, they will not provide any concessions to the sick, small, or weak; they provide no consolation to the ruled. “Translated into Nietzsche’s language,” observes Laurence Lampert, “this says that philosophy no longer has the luxury of prudent compromise with stupidity; philosophy may no longer make concessions to the natural morality of the large majority.” Toward this end, Nietzsche clearly wants to rear predators in our midst. And he wants such beasts of prey to be nurtured until they become capable of overcoming anything and anyone that stands in the way of the great tasks of earth- and body-redemption. Nietzsche’s ambition, like those he prophesizes, is unbounded by the constraints of traditional stricture.

Thus, his political education forwards an argument for the most important characteristic of the most spiritual and powerful types of human: their natural keystone capacity for mastery.

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758 Cf. TSZ III. 12 § 22: “Thus shall they become finer beasts of prey, subtler, cleverer, more-human-like beasts of prey: for the human is the finest beasts of prey.”
762 1996: 77
creation, law-giving, and the regeneration of culture. The healthy, “whole” philosophical and political genius creates (“begets and gives birth”) the definition of meaning and value; so this type furnishes the world-interpretations that will determine the course of human history. Again, Nietzsche writes that culture depends upon the ways in which a people define and, moreover, physiologically embody what is “great.” Thus, high culture can be identified, accordingly, with particular reference to the sum total of intellectual and aesthetic formations that constitute the horizons for the meaning of life for a particular community. This concept of culture implies a “new and improved” sense of nature, expressive of a unifying set of values and goals: a “unanimity of living, thinking, seeming and willing,” a unity of style embodied in the next phase of human evolution—the Übermensch.

It is worth noting that such high culture is, for Nietzsche, impossible to conceive of apart from various, though kindred, political and institutional forms of mastery, domination, exploitation, and cruelty. Social hierarchy, indeed strictly stratified caste, including some form of slavery, is an essential precondition for cultural renaissance. Rank order, obedience, mastery, subjugation, subordination, and “pathos of distance” reflect, moreover, what Nietzsche refers to, in an ecologically-complementary way, as “the meaning of the earth.” The unique world-interpretating dispositional authority of higher humans (particularly geniuses), on Nietzsche’s perspective, furnishes an ecological foundation for his extremely elitist predilections and his special regard for an aristocratic conception of justice.

A nature-complementing typology of higher humankind is clearly at the vanguard of Nietzsche’s project of earth redemption. He puts his pedagogical and political faith in the relative, unrestrained, and exceptional ability of the most powerful and creative, noble and healthy, persons to impose or generate cultural unity upon a mass population of people and the entire epoch in which they exist. Although the few favored by nature shall “dominate,” Nietzsche doesn’t mean the domination and subjugation of nature—so characteristic of the vanity shown to nature as the direct result of the modern marriage of scientific knowledge,

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765 HL § 10.
768 Cf. Nietzsche’s proposition (WP § 987 [1884]): “the destiny of humanity depends upon the attainment of the highest type.” Education, culture and genius (later posited in rehabilitated terms of the Übermensch) are the integrated goal of humanity (and life: as will to power) and, as Nimrod Aloni (1989) observes, all “political, scientific, philosophical, and religious activities, should be regarded as instruments for the attainment of that one supreme end” (p. 303 - 04). See also: HL § 6.93 & 8.103; SE § 5, 6, & 7; TSZ Prologue & II. 12; BGE § 61 & 62; WP § 480, 493, 522, 534.
utilitarian values, and democratic-socialist politics. 769 He means the domination and subjugation of other human beings—principally the weaker ones. Nietzsche’s ecological ideas apply explicitly and exclusively to hierarchies among humans; not over nature. 770 The new nomos is an affirmation of phusis.

Here we must beware of superficiality and get to the bottom of the matter, resisting all sentimental weakness: life itself is essentially appropriation, injury, overpowering of what is alien and weaker . . . . ‘Exploitation’ does not belong to a corrupt or imperfect and primitive society: it belongs to the essence of what lives, as a basic organic function; it is a consequence of the will to power, which is after all the will to life. 771

Obviously, Nietzsche’s sense of good and healthy virtue derives from propensities that are considered “evil” or immoral according to the Judeo-Christian and democratic-egalitarian law tables. 772 Regarding the raw material of nature as the organizing principle for the renaissance of culture, Nietzsche teaches that embodied instinctive forces must be drawn out and enhanced if life and culture are to be enhanced. 773 His “immoralism” reflects disgust with traditional “moralities” of the modern world—the morality of “the herd,” the morality of “pity.” While not abandoning a life-affirming distinction between good and bad, Nietzsche seeks to go beyond the earth- and body-despising duality between good versus evil.

It is on the supreme perspective on the “enhancement of life,” according to Nietzsche, that the next phase of human and cultural evolution will have to be the consequence of a carefully orchestrated aristocratic cultural-educational pattern of “discipline and breeding.” 774 Furthermore, Nietzsche thinks that a respectable renaissance of culture can emerge only under the leadership of a “noble” people distinguished by wars and victories (psychological and physical; internal and external; literal and metaphorical) and by the highest development of discipline and intelligence, together which might shape and inspire the most gifted youth. 775 No “pacifist,” as most postmodernist readings of Nietzsche suggest, Nietzsche argues that a honorable future culture can emerge only under the guidance of “a people distinguished by

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769 Cf. GM III § 9.
772 Cf. TSZ III.10.
773 BGE § 23.
774 Ibid. § 257 - 261. See also § 274.
775 TSZ I.10; IV.3 § 2.
wars and victories and the the highest development of military order and intelligence. Thus does the next phase of human evolution suggest an incarnation of the standpoint of “will to power” at its most concentrated and strengthened intensity.

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It would, however, be a misconception to ascribe a radical, much less vulgar egocentrism to the new “master morality.” The Übermensch or beyond-human, paragon of the “new nobility,” is not only responsible to him or herself; he or she is a steward of the earth. The beyond-human is the “essence” of earthly perfection. There is nothing redolent of the contemporary small-egoism of anthropocentric “moral individualism” in Nietzsche’s new master morality of earthly virtue. Indeed, Nietzsche’s vision of the next phase of human evolution challenges the grammatical distinction between subject and object; active and passive; organic and inorganic; even life and death. More to the point, the “philosophers of the future,” “preparatory,” “complementary,” and “sovereign” humans alike—members of an “highest species,” the next phase of humankind—are incarnations of Nietzsche’s perspectival philosophy that remains true to the body and the earth. In these crucial respects for the care of nature, Nietzsche’s idea of the Übermensch represents, in the words of Graham Parkes, “the possibility of a radically new way of being human” and this is “profoundly relevant for ecological thinking.” Nietzsche is an ecocentrist; not an egocentrist.

The new “affirmative” master morality presages an ecology of body, culture and earth

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774 HH II § 284—this passage coming from Nietzsche’s so-called “cool” or “rationalist” period no less! Cf. JS § 283; TSZ I.10, IV. 3 § 2, IV. 12; BGE § 257, 260, 262; TI “Expeditions” § 43; AC § 53 - 54, 57; WP § 982 (1884). EH “Wise” § 7, “Destiny” § 2.; AC § 4. See also Homer, The Odyssey X.330: “All the survivors of war had reached their homes by now and so put the perils of battle and the sea behind them.”

775 Lampert avers that “Nietzsche’s analysis of modernity culminates in an expression of concern for modern youth: given the surfeit of history that cost us religion and art, youth will come to believe that the only worthy pursuit is serving one’s own interests. Modern individualism culminates in small ego egoism. Modest, self-interested pursuit of personal gratification follows necessarily from the myth that the actual as lived by modern humankind is the ideal: that there is nothing great or magnificent left to do. Further, the modern myth elevates the state as the instrument facilitating prudent egoism among equal citizens; it rereads the whole past as egoism, drawing moral distinctions between the foolish or ambitious egoisms of the past and the prudent egoism of moderns . . . . [These are] the debilitating lies told by our teachers [today]” (1993: 284 - 285). Cf. HL § 9.


777 Cf. EH “TSZ” § 6. See also WP § 958 (1884): “I write for a species of human that does not yet exist: for the masters of the earth.” Again, as discussed at the end of the previous chapter, the human relationship to nature that the “complementary” type assumes takes the place of the image of the Overhuman.

in ecocentric euphony. Educationally as well as politically considered, the reengagement with nature promoted here suggests the vital importance of the wild ("chaos") in the cultivation of human and cultural health and vitality. The best way to overcome the merely human in order to achieve a state of overhumanity, humankind must come to appreciate and emulate the world of wild nature. Moreover, accounting for the most capacious, expansive, and, therefore, ecological concept of the Übermensch (and its relevant cognates), Nietzsche is exhorting humankind to an ecological attunement and responsibility that amplifies beyond the fallacy of the atomistic "individual" in a pantheistic embrace of all life. For Nietzsche's "children of the future" there is no ontological distinction between self and world, body and earth, spirit and matter.

The Übermensch is the sense of the earth . . .
Behold, I teach you the Übermensch: he is this ocean . . .
Behold, I teach you the Übermensch: he is this lightning . . .
I love him who works and invents to build a house for the Übermensch and prepare for him earth and animal and plant . . .

The Übermensch exemplify a "proud awareness of the extraordinary privilege of responsibility, the consciousness of this rare freedom . . . [that has] penetrated to the profoundest depths and becomes instinct, the dominant instinct." Nietzsche wants to "create a new responsibility, that of a physician, . . . in which the highest interest of life, of ascending life" are protected. The exemplary "sovereign human being" who embodies such a responsibility sustains and celebrates a living kinship with all creatures and forces of the natural world. Nietzsche's "is not a responsibility before the law," Keith Ansell-Pearson attests, "but before life, and so requires a different kind of ethics and politics that has been advanced or cultivated so far." Ansell-Pearson argues further that "this presupposes a new conception of nature and thought, freed from the relentless and remorseless logic of survival and from the imperial law of self-preservation."

The "privilege of each," Nietzsche claims, "is determined by the nature of his being."
The world of power that suffuses the pantheistic conscience of the “overhumans” includes the air and sky, the earth, mountains, and oceans. There is no ontological divide between the newly divinized Über-human and the divinity of the natural non-human world; there is no meaningful distinction, moreover, between the mortal and the divine. Therefore, the concept of the “over human” not only overcomes the inherently destructive anthropocentric “humanism” of Western civilization but also sanctifies the natural rank-ordered ecological continuity among all things (human and not) with the fundamental or basic reality of all existence. And this ontology is the counternihilistic, if rather undemocratic, source of all value. The beyond-human “experiences itself as determining values; it does not need approval; it judges, ‘What is harmful to me [and the earth] is harmful in itself’; it knows itself to be that which first accords honor to things; it is value-creating.” Every thing in its nature—in all of nature—that the overhuman “knows as a part of itself it honors”: such is the morality of self- and natural-glorification that Nietzsche names the “bestowing virtue.”

As “incarnations of will to power,” the political and cultural authority of the Übermenschen is worthy of edification, thinks Nietzsche, in light of their embodying a refinement and strengthening of humankind’s spiritual and animal qualities—a synthesis of “high spirituality” and animality. The “overhuman” represents Nietzsche’s vision of more powerful, healthier, and creative human than any that has existed. As nature—“complementing” human beings, the Übermensch is conceived to be both a fulfillment of natural potentiality and a transcendence of even the highest ideals of humankind which have been as yet realized. Nietzsche’s “Roman Caesar with Christ’s soul” exemplifies a portrait of an “overhuman” who looks beyond his own individuality to what is “greater and necessary” because that which is greater (love of the earth) and necessary (cruelty and hardness toward other humans) remains his own at the level of embodiment.

This is an earth-centered pedagogy that focuses on the cultivation, training, and discipline of the “well trained body.” It denotes the concerted attempt to consecrate the attained human body (impaired though it is) to the as yet unattained evolutionary possibility, the maximization of a native propensity for excellence (health) that calls for the furthering or ascent

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786 BGE § 260.
787 Ibid. § 259.
788 Cf. TSS III.10; BGE § 230. Stanley Rosen argues that Nietzsche “discern[s] that the coming of the [overhuman] would in fact be the coming of the superbeast . . . . Evidently he [thinks] this to be a necessary component of the rejuvenation of the human spirit” (1995: 72). See also TII “Improvers” § 2.
789 WP § 983 (1884). Cf. TSS II.13: “To be sure, I love in him the neck of an ox: but now I want to see the eye of an angel, too.”
790 Cf. JS § 344, 366, re: “polytropoi” and the “polydextrous human.”
of the rarest and most valuable of human instincts and energies in accordance with the natural forces. According to this pedagogical model for high human evolution, Nietzsche proposes a “new meaning to earth and body” that is “stronger, more evil, and more profound . . . also more beautiful,” enlightened as it were by the “truth of the earth.” The ecological whole of earth—constituting both the animate and inanimate forces of nature—is affirmed not only as an integral aspect of the human body, but also as informing a new ethos for the political education of the exceptions, who, perchance, will become the new rulers. Their political education centers on original virtues of esteem, care, and stewardship of nature and the human body existing in cocreative cultural “health.”

Given that he wants to take responsibility for the process of evolutionary enhancement, ennoblement, and “naturalization” in education, to the fullest possible “enhancement of life,” Nietzsche seeks to counter and overcome the nature-destroying and “species-degenerating” forces of nihilism by affirming the political and moral authority of those who are the strongest and the healthiest among the human species. The “will to health” is the aspect of Nietzsche’s political education that is most relevant for contemporary ecology, in that the ecological perspectivism of Nietzsche’s political education casts his “radical aristocraticism” in a new, if perhaps also more compelling light. In other words, it is on the ecological perspective of Nietzsche’s thought, which calls particular attention to the “earth-despising” and “nature-destroying” tendencies and effects of Christianity and the political-economy of modern democratic-egalitarian morality, that his political philosophy can be seen in more compelling and deeply edifying ways.

Consider that a wilderness area is thought to be ailing or incomplete when there is an absence of particular indigenous plant and animal species—a lack of biodiversity. A lack (or absence) of higher humankind (especially the world-interpreting genius) interrupts, in a corresponding way, the delicate chains of dependency, balance, and rank order that Nietzsche thinks maintain the integrity of culture. Derangements of flora and fauna in nature lead to environmental degradation and destruction of wild lands. Accordingly, the loss of the “great

\[164\] Cf. Op cit. § 684 (1888).
\[165\] TSZ P § 2.
\[167\] Cf. JS § 377.
\[168\] Cf. WP § 287 (1883 - 1888): “My philosophy aims at an ordering of rank: not an individualistic morality. The leaders of the herd should rule the herd—but not reach out beyond it: the leaders of the herd require a fundamentally different valuation for their own actions, as do the independent, or the ‘beasts of prey,’ etc.” See also TI “Improvers” § 2.
human being” can be seen (in Nietzsche’s view of human history799) to undermine the norm of culture and education. Such an interpretation of cultural health accords the promotion of an ecological criteria for the (re)normation and (re)evaluation of society with respect for the crowning achievements of the creative nature-complementing human beings. Nietzsche draws a portrait of how healthy (or sick) a society of people may be, with particular accents on the ways society maintains and cultivates the “highest types” of human being.

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The ecological trope teaches that when wilderness predators are cleaned-out wilderness areas decay and die. Nietzsche teaches in a corresponding way that our radically egalitarian modern society—which he accurately forecast as the ascending and dominant social and political paradigm—effectively denudes the world of the “great human beings” and, as a direct result of the homogenization of humankind and the instinct-corrupting ideas of a “globalized” egalitarian civilization, of “higher,” much less “great,” humans. As those fecund possibilities for genius and true nobility to arise disappear, so too does culture decay into a society of homogenous and sterile spiritual dwarfs. Attributing the term “counternihilism” to Nietzsche indicates not only what he wants to avoid while but also propounds a justification for a political and educational project that ranks persons and perspectives in natural hierarchies. He places questions regarding human enhancement within a world suffused with new meaning and criteria for evaluation and adjudication—biologically, medically, ecologically, and aesthetically oriented—by treating the ideas, values and actions of either a person or an entire people as if intelligibility depends upon ecological reasons that can be observed and confirmed in action. How healthy are they? Nietzsche says “Yes!” to all that brings higher life into existence; and he is saying “No!” to all that inhibits or corrupts or destroys higher life. Nietzsche pays particular attention to actual possibilities, to the natural limits of the possible.800 His circumspection in such regard gives another indication as to why he refuses to take into serious account the interests and perspectives of the weak.

Thus, what one does is ethical and edifying or not (for Nietzsche) set against a background of dispositions, habits, practices, cultural expectations that require a complex, indeed ecological, understanding of human life (especially health) and the greater natural whole of which it is a part. Cultural health in this case depends, for Nietzsche, upon enhancing and sustaining its biodiversity, the measure of which is best exemplified by the instinctual vitality

799 Cf. BGE § 208, 257, 258. See also § 241.
800 Cf. WB § 3.
and vibrancy of a culture’s geniuses and higher human types. The Nietzschean ecological culture project thereby answers the question of why human beings exist, furnishing a “renaturalized” “advancement”\textsuperscript{801} of humankind.\textsuperscript{802} Laurence Lampert remarks that “Nietzsche’s perspective—cosmic, evolutionary, enlightened, combining philosophy with art—grounds a deep ecology and a new sense of the edifying for the human species.”\textsuperscript{803}

Mindful of the fact that Nietzsche’s thinking exclusively regards the enhancement of a tiny percentage of the overall human population, it’s clear enough that his political education has no—or very little—idea of social responsibility inhered in it. His philosophy is wholly ecological in import. Social responsibility, which perhaps finds its best expression in Aristotle’s notion of phronetic political rule, is foreign to the specific responsibility of the philosopher of the future, whose principal allegiance is to “remain true to the earth.” Thereby Nietzsche’s ecological perspectivism entreats the reader to entertain and understand “other points of view” in a manner consistent with probity about nature and natural systems of life. This exercise necessarily weakens the humanistic commitment to social justice. The implications for action that follow from Nietzsche’s philosophy demand a frontal assault on and eradication of those values which have hitherto defined the Occident. The inherent prejudices of the entire spectrum of existing morality and politics must be overcome.

O my brothers, am I then cruel? But I say: That which is falling should also be pushed!
Everything of today—it is falling, it is decaying: who would support it? But I want to push it too!
Do you know the delight that rolls stones into precipitous depths?
—These men of today: just see how they roll into my depths!
I am a prologue for better players, O my brothers! An example!
Follow my example!
And him you do not teach to fly, teach—to fall faster!\textsuperscript{805}

\textsuperscript{801} Cf. WP § 684 (1888), 687 (1887).
\textsuperscript{802} Cf. SE § 1.129, §3.146. See also BGE § 230.
\textsuperscript{804} GM I § 12.
\textsuperscript{805} TSZ III.12 § 20. Cf. TSZ l.21, III.5 § 3, III.7, 9.
Think here of pedagogical philosophy and politics of triage. To answer the question of Nietzsche’s call to political-aesthetic education, formulated ultimately in ecological terms of “translating the human back into nature,” means, then, to entertain a succession of experiments, dangers, and risks that accompany the making of discriminating judgments. It is necessary in such regard to consider (a) what is natural and, accordingly, “necessary”; (b) who or what can and needs to be protected, preserved, and enhanced; and (c) who or what can’t be helped or is otherwise “superfluous” and “incurable.” The implications that follow from the answers to these concerns clarify Nietzsche’s ecocentric perspective on life.

The workable distinctions and similarities of Nietzsche’s perspectivism can be elucidated by opening oneself to a “scientific-existential standpoint.” Nishitani Keiji writes in this regard that “[o]rdinarily, the existential and scientific attitudes are regarded as polar opposites, in that the latter is considered impersonal, non-individual, and objective. Nietzsche, however, calls for a union of the existential and the scientific such that what is scientific is scientific in virtue of being existential, and vice-versa.” On such basis does Nietzsche construe an ecological account of “Dionysian Pantheism,” which includes the retrieval of the idea of amor fati and the innovation of the doctrine Eternal Return—the “most scientific of all hypotheses.” Babette Babich notes that “[t]o conceive the world—from the inside’ as Nietzsche says—not from the assumption of our own interest but rather as the world might be seen according to its collective and varied interests, would, in effect, be to construct the object subjectively.” This is the ecological perspectivism that guides political education and the culture-building project in Nietzsche’s philosophy.

His is a “bestowing” love of higher life and this finite, mortal world of becoming. In virtue of his aim to restore a “meaning to the earth,” based upon an admittedly “cruel” and “hard” reorganization of society that permits only a few to enhance their own creative power, Nietzsche exudes confidence in the “innocence of becoming,” a passion for nature that sanctifies all that brings ascending life into existence. This ethic of care and responsibility as radically redefined by Nietzsche—relativised to a more comprehensive perspective on the ecosphere—is altogether indifferent to invitations to justify or rationalize the privileges of an

806 As discussed in the first chapter, Nietzsche, like Chiron, and later Asklepios—both archetypes of the educator as physician of culture, and teacher to the most extraordinary human beings and demi-gods—, seems to know, on the model of physiology, who to treat, when to treat, and when to stop; he knows that the smallest quantities are often the most effective.
808 WP 1041 (1888); cf. KSA 13:258. See also Tl “Expeditions” § 49.
809 Ibid. § 55 (1887).
elite with reasons agreeable or amenable to timely presuppositions as regard "human rights" and moral categorical imperatives.\footnote{Cf. BGE § 259.} Nietzsche's responsibility is to the task of self-perfection phrased in edifying terms of life-enhancement and life-justification; his is a pious and deeply moral obligation to the future of earthly life. He shows concern with the fate of (some of) our children's' children and the natural ecosystems which shall sustain them all. This philosophy of political education is parented by a cultural ecology that abides strict limits to action. Nietzsche, therefore, promotes a conception of human society that is not a "contract" but a medical-aesthetic experiment in the future of global culture.

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In light of current world events and escalating ecological crises, Nietzsche is accurate in thinking that the stakes are high at this decisive point in world history. His probity as regards unfamiliar ways of thinking and his embrace of "deadly truths" promotes what will surely be a difficult, though necessary, strategy of critical self-questioning. Nietzsche's sense of brutal life-affirming honesty, of integrity or authenticity, can be understood, then, as oriented to a comprehensive responsibility or commitment to what really matters here and now, on earth. His openness and loyalty to what serves the enhancement of life remains faithful to and grateful for all life, not just human life (or some abstract principle thereof). His truthfulness here attends a willingness to follow through with the strength and courage of what amounts to an ecological obligation to the future of life. Intimate knowledge of Nietzsche's benefactors—Life, Nature, the body, Earth—enables him to more properly direct his loyalties. Unlike the Platonic, Christian, and democratic traditions—which variously rely on transcendental, anthropocentric fictions that bear little relationship or affinity with nature—Nietzsche advocates the embrace of necessary truths, which can, moreover should, provide the grounding for educating a new generation of artist-warriors.

One way to approach Nietzsche's ecology or philosophy of life is to ask oneself the question: Is it true? Are Nietzsche's interpretations of nature and the human animal, specifically as regards the hypothesis of will to power, consistent with probity and science? This question can also be directed at contemporary assumptions, expectations, and practices, whether they issue from a Christian, democratic, or socialist standpoint. As regards most contemporary moral, political, and educational matters, it can, in any case, be shown in ways that are simply beyond dispute that late-modems remain, generally speaking, not just dishonest about human nature but indifferent and, in fact, hostile to the natural world that houses them. The contemporary moral
and political orthodoxy in the West—most acutely evident in the United States (but on the rise in the most populous developing or emerging nations such as China, India, and Brazil)—gives evidence of a universalist regime whose chief characteristics are, in the considered opinion of Bill Moyers, “ideological disdain for evidence and theological distrust of science.” Given the increasing multitudes of evangelical Christians in the Americas, Europe, and Asia that welcome the deterioration of the natural world and human life in it, the degradation of the world and species fits with the earth- and body-despising religious and metaphysical tenets Nietzsche attacks.

Truth or knowledge, understood medicinally, can be fatal. It also can serve to inoculate against the life-debilitating ideas and practices of the Occident that wreak havoc on the natural world. Nietzsche clearly wants to restore reverence for the authority of life, for higher life especially, and an obedience to the kinds of constraints—and privileges—such authority entails. This commitment to truthfulness is characteristic of a deep sincerity coupled with accuracy about things that matter, such as health, environmental preservation and enhancement, and high human creative achievement. Nietzsche thinks that a new nobility of humankind must come to view certain human acts and ways of thinking in relation to nature, in that he entreats us to recognize that the anthropocentric democratic, utilitarian, and Christian viewpoints are not simply deceptive but destructive and do violence against nature. Teaching that these now dominant worldviews violate nature in the worst ways, Nietzsche’s sense of probity is therefore crucial to understanding both his condemnation of decadent values and his exhortation to overcome nihilism. His ecological hermeneutic holds within it both the means of pedagogical nurture for the spiritual cultivation of a new type of human loyal to nature and the natural as well as the hope for the advancement of culture through the advancement of truthfulness—deadly truths for some, perhaps, about origins and ends that intimate the immanent possibility of recovering the virtue of being in the world.

In the discovery of what is of special, living significance through attunement to the truth of nature, Nietzsche aims to bind human beings to ways of structuring our concerns in education, in politics, and spiritually, so that humankind can participate (variously according to a steeply stratified hierarchy) in an expansive cultural framework. “The new values,” Nietzsche

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813 As I write, two of the leaders of the world’s most powerful nations (The United States and Great Britain) are outspoken “born again” Christians, who have explicitly linked their political doctrines and policy to their “faith.”
814 Cf. HL § 9.
815 Cf. D § 119; BGE § 36, 227; KSA :11 [211]. See also Lampert, 2001: 124.
heralds, writes Lampert, “complement nature by assigning limits to the conquest of nature; they
preserve natural difference by maintaining the order of rank both among things and among
human beings.” Nietzsche aims not for the “good life” but the best, indeed most
authentic—natural—possible way to sustain a range of specific ecological harmonies with
nature. The new relationship of the human animal and nature, instead of being problematic, is
thus ruled complementary by a master ethos which affirms that life needs the order of rank it
has generated. These leading ideas for political education and a new cultural ethos are guided
by a profoundly ecological hermeneutic of sufficiency and reverence that aims to live “lightly
upon the earth.”

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The search for a new nobility is, according to Nietzsche, rendered all the more urgent by the
threat of nihilism. Relevant here is the previously discussed ancient Askelpiatic principle of
homeopathy, which entails the introduction of poison to inoculate the convalescent. This medical
procedure is expressed in the famous saying of the oracle of Apollo: “The wounder heals.”
The “new values” that will coincide with the advent of a “new nobility” represent in this case a
pharmaceutical remedy to the exhausted and decadent moral and political language of modern
malaise. With his injunction to create a law table “beyond good and evil,” Nietzsche aims to
wound and thereby heal the body of culture. More specifically, he wants to “awaken”
exceptional humans of the most capacious dispositions to a renewed and vitalizing sense of care
and value. Seduced to the synthetic goal of care of self and world, an earth- and body-bound
value of life, Nietzsche’s educational program and culture-building project represents a refuge
of convalescence. This is a recuperative-redemptive passion appropriated from Hölderlin, who,
near the end of the eighteenth century, wrote:

..is not life recovering health more cherished than pure life that
has not yet known sickness? Not until youth has gone do we love
it, not until what has been lost returns does it rejoice all the depths

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816 1996: 93. “Based in nature, wholly natural, the complementary man is historical to the core; part of
the natural order fated to pass, he learns to love what passes and he learns to teach mortal beings love
of the mortal.”
817 Cf. TSZ IV.13 § 8; see also III.3.
818 Ibid. I.11.
819 Cf. TSZ III.13: “For convalescents should sing; let the healthy talk.” See also SE §4: “The
[contemporary] cultured man has degenerated to the greatest enemy of culture, for he wants lyingly to
deny the existence of the universal sickness and thus obstructs the physicians.” See also Plato, The
Republic § .377b - c, .382d, .395 d, especially § .407d - 410a and § .444d: “[T]he creation of health is
the institution of a natural order and government of one another in the parts of the body; and the
creation of disease is the production of a state of things at variance with this natural order [.]”

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of the soul.\textsuperscript{820}

Hölderlin's perspective secures a better grasp on the ecological dimensions of Nietzsche's political education, for it hearkens to the recuperative quality of Nietzsche's enterprise, such that it is formulated in terms of a recovery of health, vitality and value.\textsuperscript{821} If recuperation in medical, or physiological, terms suggests recovery, then in religious language it suggests "redemption." There is no small degree of ambiguity as regards the sense of historical redemption in Nietzsche's doctrine of Eternal Return, however. On the one hand, this seminal idea signals an overcoming of ressentiment and the small, petty reactive human from which it issues. The "rabble," on this reading, are overcome with the advent of the new nobility. That is, they (the nondescript masses) are historically redeemed—incorporated into the next high cultural stage of humankind. This is the contention of Gilles Deleuze, for example, who declares that "reactive forces do not return."\textsuperscript{822} On the other hand, Robert Pippin argues that the redemption expressed by the Übermensch does not indicate a "historical redemption" of the world from ressentiment, much less the eternal return of the "rabble."\textsuperscript{823} The doctrine of eternal return seems, on Pippin's reading, to caution higher humans against dreaming the impossible, but enchanting, dream—the eternal disappearance from the earth of the dirty, ressentiment-driven little human and all the egalitarian fantasies this reactive type brings with it.\textsuperscript{824}

Careful consideration of Zarathustra speeches shows that he speaks differently, not just in terms of style but also content, depending upon who the audience is.\textsuperscript{825} He can be read as saying different things to different people (or animals). Still, there is little question however in the writings about the place of the "rabble"—redeemed or not—in the rank order of society:

\begin{itemize}
  \item They will not directly participate in higher cultural activities, least of all "truly" educational ones.
  \item Hyperion, II. 116 (95). Lou Salomé writes of Nietzsche's philosophy: "health and pathology represent indeed a unique split of the self and a mutuality within one and the same intellectual life. . . . The mysterious interconnection between the healthy and pathological in Nietzsche brings us to the essential Nietzsche problem." She adds that "every recuperation becomes his own rebirth and with it all of life around him—and as always, the pain is ‘entwined in victory’" (Nietzsche 2001:24 & 13). Cf. I Corinthians 15:54. See also TSZ I.22.2, II. 1; JS § 382.
  \item Cf. EH “Wise” § 1 - 2.
  \item Nietzsche and Philosophy, 1983:71.
  \item “Irony and Affirmation in Nietzsche’s Thus Spoke Zarathustra.” in Nietzsche’s New Seas: Explorations in Philosophy, Aesthetics, and Politics, [eds. Gillespie & Strong], 1988:54.
  \item Aaron Ridley notes that it is in Zarathustra’s "capacity to affirm even the endless repetition of the Last Man that his nobility, finally, resides." Indeed, Ridley argues that the Last Man is the "catalyst of that overcoming of nausea which constitutes Zarathustra’s greatest moment" (1998: 151).
  \item Cf. TSZ II. 20; III. 2; III.13 § 2. See also BGE § 30, 43. Xenophon notes, for example, that Odysseus speaks differently to nobles than he does to commoners. "Whenever he found one that was a ‘king’ and a notable," Xenophon quotes from Homer, Odysseus “stood by his side and restrained him with gentle words.” However, when Odysseus encounters a commoner ("a man of the people"), he treats him with disdain—or worse. Cf. Memorabilia 1.2.58.
\end{itemize}
Nietzsche clearly intends to obtain and establish complete control over the masses in order to free higher humans from the disgust that threatens to drown them.\textsuperscript{826} In this sense, then, Nietzsche’s future culture of overcoming nourishes hopes for genuine redemption.\textsuperscript{827} Indeed, the “most spiritual man,” the “complementary” or “over human” is marked by a tragic and what might also be called an ecological certainty that the imperfection of even the lowliest and most degraded among human beings partakes of his own perfection and of the perfection of the world itself.\textsuperscript{828} This insight into inherent pathology of the “great health” affirms that “one does not merely have but also acquires continually, and must acquire” because of the weakness inherent to an “overrich” strength.\textsuperscript{829} In Michael Haar’s estimation, the perfection of the most spiritual human “consists [in] naming not ‘perfection’ but ‘divinity’ [as] an ‘absolute affirmation embracing imperfection itself.”\textsuperscript{830} This idea, distinctive of polytheistic cultures and mythologies, is emblematic of a faith in the return of the semi-divine noble human.

The metaphor of homecoming\textsuperscript{831}—another pervasive theme that comes from Hölderlin\textsuperscript{832}—is relevant in this respect. What is at once an inherently affirmative axiological trope, can be seen as an endeavor to surmount contemporary nihilistic forces inimical to healthy, flourishing culture while also declaring a pantheistic meaning for life on earth based upon “a strangely superstitious belief in the healing powers of many things.”\textsuperscript{833} More specifically stated, Nietzsche’s philosophy of education is a deeply autobiographical affirmation of the superior consciousness (“\textit{neuschmeckend}” — “new tasting”) of his genius,\textsuperscript{834} showing that he educated (i.e., healed) himself while averring to do the same for his adept readers. His works show a way—although not necessarily \textit{the} way\textsuperscript{835}—toward becoming the kind of philosopher, thinker, educator, and free spirit he himself became, providing his readership assistance in moving in

\textsuperscript{826} Cf. BGE § 208.
\textsuperscript{827} Cf. WP §229 (1888); TSZ II. 20. See also Blondel, 1991:187.
\textsuperscript{828} See AC § 57.
\textsuperscript{829} JS § 382.
\textsuperscript{831} Cf. Op cit. § 20.
\textsuperscript{832} And Heidegger, for whom the idea of homecoming evokes the joyous and serene return to an immanent spirit of being (\textit{Dasein}). See: Hölderlin’s poems: \textit{Homecoming} and \textit{Patmos} see also his novel \textit{Hyperion}. Cf. Martin Heidegger \textit{The Remembrance of the Poet} (1944), \textit{The Question Concerning Technology} (1954) and \textit{What Calls For Thinking}? (1954). Hölderlin’s unique poetic authority, like Homer’s, shows, according to Heidegger, that Hölderlin "knew being."
\textsuperscript{833} Hölderlin, \textit{Hyperion} I. I § 10 (35). Cf. TSZ I.22; EH Foreword (31). See also \textit{Nachlass} (1887): \textit{The Will To Power} §3, 55.
\textsuperscript{834} Cf. AC § 57. See also BGE § 6.
\textsuperscript{835} Nietzsche consistently emphasizes the singularity of his experience; so does Zarathustra proclaim: "This—is now \textit{my} way—where is yours? ... \textit{The} way—does not exist!" (TSZ III. 11 § 2).
similar directions.\textsuperscript{836} Moreover, as Lampert points out, Nietzsche's essentially self-referential philosophy—like all "great" philosophy—represents a "drive to rule the world through an interpretation of the world . . . displayed as the reasonable grounds for the affirmation of nature and humanity.\textsuperscript{837}

\[† † †\]

The genuine student of Nietzsche's political education must be prepared to confront ideas and practices—involving risks both physical and psychological—that challenge and indeed subvert most, if not all, modern conventions. He or she would also, if truly educated in the political sense, be prepared to act in accord with nature—by affirming in practice the natural order of rank. Profound questions of human life, which deal with the issue of human enhancement or natural perfection,\textsuperscript{838} truly define and illuminate the educational situation in the scheme of a pedagogical politics that promote the twin goals of the cultivation of a nature-complementing humankind and culture. It should go without saying that those who make the attempt to those ways of being more naturally-attuned should not want—nor should they expect—to escape the castigation or vilification from the various delegates of the status quo.\textsuperscript{839}

In the face of contemporary nihilism, Nietzsche undertakes the pedagogical challenge of renewing a pantheistic reverence for ascending life—principally evinced by his "faith in genius" and "greatness of soul."\textsuperscript{840} He aims to restore the possibility for an authoritative existential, scientific, and aesthetic ethics of how humanity \textit{ought} to live in community. Nietzsche's pedagogy is new, politically authoritative, and ecologically relevant, therefore, because it forwards a counternihilistic attempt to recover a binding, life-enhancing sense of earthly value grounded in the natural systems of life. This is a detranscendentalized formulation of the educational and political problem of restoring to culture a justification for existence. And this normative goal underpins a forward-looking political education that aims to ground a

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{836} Cf. "I have always written with my whole body and my whole life; I do not know what is meant by a purely intellectual problem" (quoted in Blondel 1991:73). See also: Richard Schacht, "A Nietzschean Education: Zarathustra/Zarathustra as Educator," in \textit{Philosophers on Education}, 1998:322.
\item \textsuperscript{837} 2001: 36-7.
\item \textsuperscript{838} Cf. JS \textsection 120, 382; TSZ IV \textsection 1.
\item \textsuperscript{839} Cf. TSZ P \textsection 4: "I love him who is ashamed when the dice fall in his favour and who then asks: Am I then a cheat?—for he wants to perish. I love him who throws golden words in advance of his deeds and always performs more than he promised: for he wills his own downfall . . . . Behold, I am a prophet of the lightning and a heavy drop from the cloud . . . ." See also JS \textsection 19; BGE \textsection 30, 230; WP \textsection 910 (1887).
\item \textsuperscript{840} Cf. AC \textsection 50. See JS \textsection 102: "—philology exists in order to fortify this faith again and again. It presupposes that there is no lack of those rare human beings (even if one does not see them) . . . . a noble faith—that for the sake of a very few human beings, who always 'will come' but are never there, a very large amount of fastidious and even dirty work needs to be done first: all of it is work [toward future royalty]." See also AC \textsection 4.
\end{itemize}
naturalistic way of life for a certain polity composed of certain kinds of people.

Nietzsche affirms in such respects that “there is something higher and purer to be found and attained on this earth than the life of [our] own time.” Lampert asks a pressing question in such regard: “Can a human community be built on a thoroughgoing naturalism or immanentism?” Thomas Heilke echoes and elucidates Lampert’s question: “Does Nietzsche’s political education manage to rise above the nihilism that motivates it, offering a persuasive vision of political legitimacy and authoritative political speech around which to form a new, postnihilistic community?” Nishitani Keiji’s interpretation intimates an answer to the enigma of Nietzsche’s political education:

True nihilism, which disrobes the masquerade, is the self-conscious will to negate and is the springboard to will to power. Here life, or will, consummates its self-affirmation by pressing its self-negation to the extreme through self-criticism and self-overcoming. Life, or will, thereby returns to its own original, its most elemental and natural mode of being. . . . True love of humanity [therefore] demands sacrifice of self in favor of the best of the human species; the human species can survive only through a love of humanity that demands self-sacrifice for the sake of the highest.

According to Nietzsche, this “most natural mode of being” is at once the “consequence of courage” and also of “contempt.” Thus, his political education mandates a severity toward oneself, of cleanliness toward oneself—Such an experimental philosophy as I live anticipates experimentally even the possibilities of the most fundamental nihilism; but this does not mean that it must be a negation, a No, a will to negation. It wants rather to cross over to the opposite of this—to a Dionysian affirmation of the world as it is, without subtraction, exception, or selection—it wants eternal circulation:—the same things, the same logic and illogic of entanglements. The highest state a philosopher can attain: to stand in a Dionysian relationship with existence—my formula for this is amor fati.

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841 1993:278.
842 1998: 5 (6 153). Cf. Blondel, 1991:63-4. See also SE §3: “The longing for a stronger nature, for a healthier and simpler humanity, . . . [to justify as such life], . . . was in his case a longing for himself; and when he had conquered his age in himself he beheld with astonished eyes the genius in himself. . . .[T]he realm of transfigured physis was disclosed.”
843 1990: 98, 40. Cf. SE § 1; TSZ l.16; BGE § 62.
844 WP §1041 (1888). Cf. JS §370; AC § 51. See also Plato, The Republic § 429c - 430a, re: the pedagogy of “political courage.” Allan Bloom notes that “political courage” is the “courage of a citizen, the courage necessary to a city. . . . It consists precisely in the willingness to question opinions, even the most authoritative ones” (1968: 456). Cf. Aristotle, The Nicomachean Ethics IV.1124a20 - 25a3.
Nietzsche’s philosophy generates political philosophy: action on behalf of the thoughts and feelings—"the highest spirituality"—of the wisest, most spiritual, courageous and "the most natural" human beings. These "great human beings" are the gentilhommes that Nietzsche seeks to recover from obscurity and cultivate to their highest natural potential, to become "philosophers of the future" who shall "rule the earth." Nietzschean political education thus shares a filial commitment with the earthly world of nature that informs and makes possible all human efforts—this is precisely the point where his pedagogical politics differ from contemporary politics and morality. For the mutual obligation to the cultivation of human excellence, sustenance of culture, and the natural environment springs from a concern not just for the survival of society or the good of culture but also, and not coincidentally, for the preservation and enhancement of the natural environment—the flourishing of which is central, on Nietzsche’s perspective, to the edification of culture and individual alike. The health of culture and nature are codeterminous, isomorphic goals. And the ecological trope of symbiosis highlights that Nietzsche’s political education is an evaluative and interpretive enterprise expressive of the relevant conditions governing the existence and health of human beings. The awareness of truth, hence the medical-aesthetic good of nature and culture—of the earth and body living in cocreative harmony—is, therefore, an action-guiding rubric according to which all human activity can and should be evaluated. This principal normative metacriterion for the adjudication of human conduct marks the distinctive ecological import of Nietzsche’s political education.

Thus you will . . . learn from me; only the doer learns.  

Conduct is what is ultimately at stake in Nietzsche’s political education. His philosophy constitutes a proactive ecological stance with respect to nature; certain specific cultural goals of education; and political exigencies, including methods of attaining them (tactics and strategies), that “complement” nature. Moreover, Nietzsche’s philosophical attitude urges

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[^645]: *Oeconomicus*, V.12. As to "those who can learn," they are, according to Xenophon, "men well-found in mind and in body, . . . gentlemen . . . that grand name . . . which implies ‘beautiful’ as well as ‘good’" (V.13, VI.14). Xenophon continues: "[F]or a gentleman the best occupation and the best science is husbandry [of the earth], from which men obtain what is necessary" (VI.8 - 9).


[^647]: Cf. ibid. II. 8; WP § 423 (1888), 458 (1888).
the one who adopts it to *do something*. On the ecological view, Nietzsche can be seen then as undertaking to cultivate an *action-guiding*, so political, sense of meaning and purpose that directs or compels people (some, again, more than others) to act intelligently and deliberately, responsibly and creatively in complementary ways that "redeem" natural life and those processes which bring them into existence. Nietzsche's complementary gentlemen are both creators and curators. The source of their authority and the meta-criteria for the evaluation of their actions can be phrased in naturalized terms of health and cleanliness, strength and power—concepts to be "taken more spiritually and *radically* than [they] have ever been taken."\(^{849}\)

Nietzsche's "philosophers of the future" will affirm this attitude in action. Their enhanced natural instincts will be brought to bear—through a disciplined enterprise of education and breeding—in consciousness and practice.\(^{850}\) The drives and motives of the "complementary human" manifest on the surface of awareness as reasons or justifications (for themselves, not others) for being actively disposed to the enhancement of natural life. Doing in accord with sensibility, a certain pathos, thereby reveals, extends, tests, and confirms certain instincts, qualities, and values in practice.\(^{851}\) Nietzsche's intrepid vanguard must, therefore, be willing to take risks—with themselves and others, and the whole of the theoretical, religious, and moral foundations of contemporary society.

If it is the case that all political action aims either at preservation of change, then all political philosophy implies political action. Political action is guided by some thought of better or worse. Philosophy, therefore, entails thinking about the good and then acting in accordance with such understanding and knowledge. An ethics must be established and then appropriate means be fashioned for its implementation through education.\(^{852}\) Philosophy and education, considered from the standpoint of political education remain worthy of pursuit, for Nietzsche, only in so far as society "perfects" itself by remaining true or loyal to nature. The successful attainment of "high culture" is reflected, isomorphically, in the "highest types" of human beings that it produces. According to Nietzsche, this is the good or norm of culture; it is a complete political good precisely because it fulfills and "transfigures nature."\(^{853}\)

If nature, wild uncorrupted nature, moreover, serves as the standard for the educational
\(^{848}\) Cf. *JS* § 349; *BGE* 230; *KSA* 9: 11 [211].
\(^{849}\) *EH* "BGE" § 2.
\(^{850}\) Cf. Op cit. § 11, 110.
\(^{851}\) Cf. *BGE* § 42 - 44.
\(^{852}\) Cf. Leo Strauss, "What is Political Philosophy?" (1954) p. 3
\(^{853}\) *SE* § 3, 6.
task of the “renaturalization” of humankind, then this normative criterion propounds the idea that culture and politics can be expected to dominate itself (its people) for the sake of greater health and vitality rather than subduing, exploiting, and destroying nature for the sake of securing the comfort and ease for a mass population. Nietzsche’s denial of traditional morality is not, however, a denial of morality in politics, any more than the impossibility of ethical criteria follows from the denial of ethical absolutes. Clearly, Nietzsche intends to replace the current table of value with a teaching on what should be understood in terms of healthy ecological virtue.

This new virtù “in the Renaissance style” entails not only complete political renewal but a transformation in ethical consciousness and activity. Philosophy and political education can be said then, on a reading of Nietzsche, to be a response to, indeed a responsibility for, the historical moment of ecological crises which humankind finds itself confronted with today. This interpretation suggests a philosophy of political education that is a proactive response—at once caring and “cruel”—to social and cultural, political and existential, moreover environmental, problems. Political education aims, from a Nietzschean standpoint, to answer the fundamental question: Why do we (humans) exist?854 or “What is existence worth as such?”855 in positive ecological terms.

Political education, for Nietzsche, is the active mode of keeping or creating conditions for authentic, natural, and vital society. Together, philosophy and education contribute to the “health” of culture. That desire or will to be good or healthy or “true to the earth” dictates action;856 insight confers responsibility. Fidelity to the earth accords the normative imperative to transform the most loyal and passionate, the wisest and strongest, those favored by nature in birth and training, into political actors. Nietzsche’s political education undertakes to cultivate an ecologically-responsive and action-guiding sense of meaning and purpose which directs or compels natural aristocrats, the nature-complementing gentilhommes whose perfection is isomorphic with the perfection of nature, to assert their place at the crown of the human rank-order.

Nietzsche’s iconoclastic philosophy of education remains both at the beginning and at the end political and moral at its foundation. The ethical dimension is evident in view of his new and counternihilistic teaching on earthly and human value.856 The desirability of a new “master”

854 SE § 3.4.
855 Cf. BGE § 9, 36; JS § 374; WP 1067 (1885). See also Blondel, 1990: 53 - 54.
856 Cf. JS P § 2. See also BGE § 212, 230.
ethos, such that privileges the exceptions over the "herd" suggests new categories of "good" and "bad." Thus does Nietzsche speak of a "higher morality" indicative of a "species of higher morality" that stands at the end of a "tremendous process" of education and breeding. The ecological ethics that infuses Nietzsche's aristocratic political education intimates a deeper understanding of the linkage of humanity to the greater environmental whole of which it is but an elemental part. His ethical ought can be interpreted, then, as isomorphic with a medical ought. The medical sense of ought promotes health, in that it invokes a corollary ethical sense of precisely what one (or some) should do in order to be healthy—which is good.

Truly, such a bestowing love must become a predator of all values; but I call such selfishness healthy and holy... It is power, this new virtue; it is a ruling idea, and around it a subtle soul: a golden sun, and around it the serpent of knowledge.

Healthy selfishness... issues from a mighty soul—from a mighty soul, to which pertains an exalted body, the beautiful, victorious, refreshing body, around which everything becomes a mirror... the self-rejoicing of such bodies and souls calls itself: "Virtue."

So, if one wants humankind to be as healthy, beautiful, and powerful as it might again be and live harmoniously in a healthy, naturalized world, one must recognize how the archaic and creative, indeed predatory, cruelty of Nietzsche's political project may be sublimated into ritual, practice, and institutions that together would sustain the perceptions and creations of the most capacious and exceptional "complementary" human beings. Advocating the cruel, "clean" truth about nature with a view to the virtue of enhancing the species, Nietzsche points to the educational and political mandate to initiate radical changes in the manner we think about human development. And by remaining "true" to body and earth in ways that honor nature and divinize or sanctify health and creative potency above all else, Nietzsche grounds a new

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687 Tl "Expeditions" § 44: "My conception of genius... the great human being...
688 Cf. Ibid. § 47: "... genius is the final result of the accumulatory labour of generations." See also BGE § 262.
690 TSZ I.22 § 1.
691 Ibid. III.10 § 2.
philosophical and pedagogical politics in an enchanted, quasi-religious, ecological ethics, which, incidentally, can now be verified and supported by the sciences of biology, physics, and psychology. Indeed, will to power is named with a clear, conscious respect for the totality of biology, physics, and psychology; it is, therefore, an inherently ecological concept. Moreover, the will to power ontology informs a new ethics which carries implications for the highest, healthiest beings. Crowned with a nobility that must be generated through education to serve and dignify it, Nietzsche’s philosophy of life and nature constitutes a new morals and politics for the future of culture.

Nietzsche’s political education is guided by the constructive pedagogical idea that new values—not “reconstructed” or “radically democratic” ones—will have to appear according to new ontological account of nature (will to power) in conjunction with an aristocratic politics of hierarchy and domination that together will permit for the enhancement, “advance and elevation” of humankind. The success of such cultural renaissance depends in no small part upon the creation of “[t]hose great forcing houses for strong human beings, for the strongest kind there has ever been, the aristocratic communities of the pattern of Rome and Venice."

Here advanced is a teaching of a “new nobility” not included within the spectrum of modern politics, which, according to Nietzsche, assumes (among other things) a false dichotomy between the extremes of tyranny and mass democracy. Again, the persistent predilection to ignore the historical success and potential future cultural value of a renewed aristocratic politics prevents deconstructive and postmodern thinkers, including most quarters of the Anglo-American philosophy of education, from acknowledging the possibility that past doctrines might

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662 Religion, Nietzsche contends, can be good for the edification of culture—knowing that certain types of human beings (the ruled majority) “can be placed under its spell and protection.” Nietzsche’s core esoteric message about religion: the end religion should serve is the philosopher’s end—religion is an instrument that masters need in order to rule (the ruled, however, should be kept from away from this knowledge if they are to remain as they are, essentially slaves). Religion, therefore, plays a vital role not only in promoting pantheistic reverence of nature, but also in the struggle against rebellion among subject populations. Cf. BGE § 62. See also Heilke 1998:155-56.

663 Cf. BT § 5.52.


665 Cf. TSZ l.22 § 1. See also WB § 4 (209).


667 TSZ III.12 § 11, 12. Cf. WP § 979 (1885).

668 Cf. BGE § 202.
be true or effective to the best political order. By trivializing or otherwise attempting to
domesticate Nietzsche's politics, advocates and defenders of political liberalism deny the
possibility of the form of government under which human beings can perhaps best flourish.
Even though such denial and self-deception is understandable ("All for us!")", contemporary
complacency and false assumptions, which underwrite the small-ego moral individualism of the
times, cannot be a trusted source for an authoritative account of political education blinded as it
is by an ineluctable, self-serving, and degenerate set of prejudices.869

Taken in this context, the anti-Christian and antidemocratic elements of Nietzsche's
thought are and should be taken as a full frontal assault on modern socioeconomic
arrangements legitimated by the "humanist" ethic that underwrites ecological rapaciousness.
Whether it be done under the banner of commerce or "human rights" or "social justice," the
humanitarian ethos does not regard an increase in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, much less
radically reduced biodiversity, as an "evil" or "wrong." Rather, the rape and murder of nature
and wild life is associated with the net effects of worldwide economic "prosperity" (on the
Right), and (on the Left)—if the poorer half of humanity gets its "fair share" of the
benefits—"social justice." These political, social, religious, moral, economic, and corporate
practices now have a hammerlock on the natural environment and lay unlimited, accelerating
waste to the earth and ecosphere. In the face of the earth-subduing dominion of the Last Man he
prophesized, who shows little real concern for the environment much less future generations of
humankind, Nietzsche is saying in the strongest and most positive terms that humankind must
change its behavior, attitudes, and institutions in order to limit further threats to the health of the
human species and the earth. On this perspective, the "overcoming" of anthropocentric modern
politics and morality has the salutary effect of bringing nature, to bear in the political and
educational enterprise of culture.

[T]he basic text of homo natura must again be recognized... To translate the human back into nature; to become master over the
many vain and fanatical interpretations and side-meanings that have
so far been scribbled on that eternal ground-text homo natura:... to make it that the human being henceforth stand before that other
nature, with fearless Oedipus-eyes and stopped-up Odysseus-ears, deaf
to the enticements of all the metaphysical bird-catchers who have been piping at him all too long. . . .870

Nietzsche's sense of aristocratic culture specifies a more natural way to be human. This political
goal—emblematic of the principal task of his entire philosophy—suggests a non utilitarian
869 Cf. Ibid. § 23. See also D § 494, 547.
870 Ibid. § 230.
regime in which the best, most spiritually and physically powerful, healthiest, and wisest rule with the confidence of a healthy conscience without having to make compromises with a mass population of degenerate human beings that show little interest in preserving the earth.\textsuperscript{871}

Culture, according to Nietzsche’s perspective on the highest of human possibility, needs to be fortified and taught restraint by the wisdom of a more natural philosophy of life, mediated to society through the rule of complementary humans who have been bred and educated according to the highest standards of earthly excellence.\textsuperscript{872} The unambiguous goal of such a regime is the cultivation of a new ecological virtue.

The significance of Nietzsche’s political philosophy is, therefore, wholly \textit{ecological}, not sociological or humanitarian, in import. The principal allegiance shown here is to “remain true to the earth.” Social justice, as construed today in demotic (i.e., universalistic, anthropocentric, and egalitarian) terms by both the Left or the Right has no place in either the educational or political project of Nietzsche’s decidedly ecocentric aristocratic radicalism. Nietzsche is concerned with \textit{natural} relations of dynamic interdependence and holism as pertain to a healthy and flourishing view to \textit{life}. The dimension of “great justice” Nietzsche adds to the political-educational enterprise of life-justification assumes a supra-human (and supranational) perspective which is primarily loyal to the earth.\textsuperscript{873}

Ecological responsibility is thus radically redefined by Nietzsche and relativized to a more comprehensive perspective on the ecosphere. Nietzsche’s physiodicy is, in other words, indifferent to invitations to justify or rationalize the privileges of an elite with reasons agreeable or amenable to a nondescript mass population, much less vulgar presuppositions as regard Enlightenment fictions such as human rights or categorical moral imperatives, which serve in any case to perpetuate, if not exacerbate, the degeneration and waste of the natural world. Nietzsche’s responsibility is to the task of self-perfection phrased in terms of life-enhancement and life-justification. His is a deeply moral obligation to the future of earthly life, for he expresses a concern for the fate of the species and the natural ecosystems which sustains it. This view to the future of life on earth grounds a political education parented by a ethics (a

\textsuperscript{871} See TSZ II.18. See also TSZ I.22 § 2. Here I must emphasize that capitalism and socialism alike place the earth at the unrestrained disposal of a mass population; late-modern regimes, in other words, have a demonstrated incapacity to defend the natural environment’s security from near total ecological disaster. Cf. HL § 6; HH § 262; BGE § 142; TI “Expeditions” § 36.

\textsuperscript{872} Cf. BGE § 251. See also Lampert, 2001: 253, 255 - 256.

"spiritual regimen" that abides strict limits to human and cultural action.\footnote{HH, WS § 188-189.}

Truly, the earth shall yet become a house of healing! And already a new odour floats about it, an odour that brings health—and new hope!\footnote{Cf. Op cit. § 42, 44, 210. See also Michael Zimmerman, 2003: 27.}

The process of a Nietzschean political education can here be characterized by a willingness to stand for something worth caring for, worth defending, and enhancing. We can, he thinks, live with nature in healthy harmony with the planet. There is the very real possibility, however, that even the best of intentions might not succeed—or even be recognized. The parlous quality of Nietzsche’s teaching for the preparation, protection, and cultivation of higher humans, high culture, and the future of the earth, flow from an insight into the nature of chance itself. This experiment in education and politics could, then, even on its own terms, fail. Nietzsche knows this.\footnote{Cf. BGE § 203.} But his rejoinder is clear enough. Since the absolute, earth-subduing dominion of the most mediocre and degenerate is so near, it is worth the risk(s) of endeavoring toward the healthy rehabilitation of “greatness” and “genius” into the beyond-human.\footnote{See TSZ P § 5, II.6, III.12 § 27.} In such regard, Nietzsche freely admits that the human species might destroy itself. But so what?\footnote{Cf. SE § 3: “The verdict of the philosophers of ancient Greece on the value of existence says so much more than a modern verdict does because they had life itself before and around them in luxuriant perfection and because, unlike us, their minds were not confused by the discord between the desire for freedom, beauty, abundance of life on the one hand and on the other the drive for truth, which asks only: what is existence worth as such?”} His answer, in effect, is that there is everything to gain, and nothing (of real value) to lose at this point in history.

\ldots the end is approaching fast \ldots everything [is] corrupted and corrupts \ldots nothing will stand for tomorrow, except one type of man, the incurably mediocre. The mediocre alone have a chance of continuing their type and propagating—they are the men of the future, the only survivors: “Be like them! Become mediocre!” is now the only morality that still makes sense, that still gets a hearing.\footnote{BGE § 262. Aaron Ridley asks a relevant, bracing question in such regard: “Given that we pretty well are Last Men, why should we heed the ravings of some bizarre malcontent who seems to think it better that the human race should die out altogether than that we should attempt to live as contentedly \ldots and as long as we can—something, moreover, that we’re getting better at doing?” (1997: 151.) Cf. GM I § 12, III § 14.}

The comprehensive scope of Nietzsche’s ecocentric perspective forces students of political
education, perhaps more than any other prominent modern Western philosopher, to entertain and try to understand "other points of view" in a manner consistent with probity about life and nature. A new science of life would, in this case, pass into the stewardship and guidance of a new philosophy of/for life. This unification of knowledge and wisdom under the care of a philosophy that promotes life has profound political implications which, of necessity, weaken the humanitarian commitment to social justice. The positive meaning one might derive from Nietzsche's ecocentric perspectivism indicates, moreover, a counternihilistic source for both existential and political life-justification. Nietzsche's educational plans hinge nevertheless on whether or not his political hopes for rank-ordered culture-building are realizable within our historical context of crises and confusion. Hence, Nietzsche's political educational task projects a political justification for the ranking of persons and perspectives into strict hierarchy, presuming that some are capable of an active caring for the world that is foreign—if not anathema—to the modern Western ethos. In light of the myriad ecological crises confronting humankind, which threaten the future of life (not just human) of life on earth, Nietzsche's political education is far from untimely. It is more relevant than most appear prepared to admit, for Nietzsche's philosophy argues that morality and politics ought to be assessed "in the perspective of life."

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My time has not yet come, some are born posthumously—One day institutions will be needed in which people live and teach as I understand living and teaching: perhaps even chairs for the interpretation of Zarathustra will be established. But it would be a complete contradiction of myself if I expected ears and hands for my truths already today: that I am not heard today, that no one today knows how to take from me, is not only comprehensible; it even seems to me right.

If one understands the political and educational challenges confronting future generations of humankind in terms that are both species- and ecologically relevant, such that transcend any one particular ethnocentric tradition or perspective, or set of personal biases, Nietzsche can and perhaps should be seen as the political educator par excellence for the transition from late-modernity to the next historical stage of human existence. For he promotes a life-enhancing alternative to the world- and body-exhausting theoretical, political, and moral foundations of the Occident, which now hold global sway. Total ecological disaster and further degeneration of the human species is not a distant or uncertain possibility; the devastation of the ecosphere and

882 EH "Good Books" § 1.
degeneration of the human species is upon us now. Nietzsche’s proposed project of cultural 
rennaissance is, therefore, rendered essential by the threat of a dark future. And his highest 
political and educational ambition to enhance the human species must, as Nietzsche clearly 
intended, be understood in such an ominous context.883 Thus, the political education of a new 
nobility is depicted by Nietzsche in terms of necessity.884

His political teaching can be phrased as follows. If a healthy high culture exists chiefly 
to cultivate opportunities for the exercise of a new and ecologically responsible virtue, then such 
a culture will seek to give fullest recognition and scope to the activity of those who demonstrate 
themselves to be most virtuous and full of life. The enterprise of Nietzsche’s political education 
lets the “privilege of each be determined by the nature of his [or her] being.”885 Nietzsche 
thinks, moreover, that “the ennoblement of humankind is enclosed within this supreme task to 
consecrate the individual human to something higher than himself”—to the future of healthy 
life on earth.886

Without such vital and vitalizing goals, given to culture by the “mightiest promoters of 
life,”887 humankind will, on Nietzsche’s perspective, be catapulted further into earth-, species-, 
and culture- destroying nihilism. The most comprehensive responsibility for the redemption of 
the earth and the enhancement of the human species falls to those most spiritual and courageous 
humans who Nietzsche addresses with the pedagogical appeal to overcome humanity as it 
presently exists. Accordingly, Nietzsche recommends the complete political and educational 
transformation of the human relationship to nature and the earth which houses, supports, and 
enhances all life. This project presupposes the consummation of the “hard, unwanted, 
inescapable task”888 of educating—enhancing, indeed breeding—humankind to the truth of 
human nature, a task requiring that the highest, healthiest types at the crown of the human order 
of rank be “translated” back into nature.

883 Cf. BGE § 208. See also § 251.
884 Cf. FEI § 1 - 4; SE § 5; BGE § 208.
885 AC § 57. This section continues: “Let us not underestimate the privilages of the mediocre. Life 
becomes harder and harder as it approaches the heights—the coldness increases, the responsibility 
increases.”
887 Whose “will to life” is impelled to action in large part “out of their own exhausted age they long for a 
culture, for a transfigured phusis . . .” (SE § 3).
888 BGE § 212.
Epilogue

The Contemporary Relevance of Nietzsche’s Political Education

Nietzsche’s hermeneutic of education and politics can generate discussion in ways both positive and edifying insofar as he challenges us to not only consider radical alternatives, but also reexamine the foundations of our own principles and beliefs. His proposition hinges on whether or not a future global culture can or should be founded upon a new ontology and nature-affirming, pantheistic philosophy of life. The idea of nature-complementarity accords Nietzsche’s vision of culture aware, in Laurence Lampert’s estimation, “of its place on earth among species that evolve and fall extinct, aware of its heritage as a spirited species bent on surpassing.” Moreover, Nietzsche’s philosophy, consistent with probity and science, both acknowledges and attempts to overcome the dominant tradition in Western civilization that expresses a “hatred of the human, and even more of the animal, and still more of the material.” On this interpretation of the history and future of philosophy, Nietzsche advances the idea that healthy, “well constituted” perspectives and arguments ought to prevail. Make no mistake, however: Nietzsche is also saying that unhealthy opinions and arguments should be suppressed.

Entertaining Nietzsche on his own philosophical terms challenges us to rethink and test our assumptions, expectations, and commitments in ways that could very well produce new, action-guiding, and life-enhancing understanding. Perhaps we might, as Nietzsche exhorts us, subject our moral and political inquiries to more disciplined scrutiny in such regard. We might also give serious thought to his effort to effect a renaissance of health and high human possibility through a unique form of political education. If nothing else, Nietzsche deserves to be considered more seriously as the philosopher of education, politics, and the natural environment he saw himself to be.

In such regard, it must be acknowledged that Nietzsche provides answers to the following questions or problems: (1) What is the aim or purpose of education; (2) Who is to be educated, and how or in what manner; (3) Who is qualified to be an educator—or what does the supremely qualified educator look like; (4) What is the precisely moral and political relationship of education to culture or society; and (5) What is the ontological relationship of culture or society to nature. Given that he undertakes these questions at the beginning as at the end of his career, and that he formulates comprehensive answers to them—based on a new ontology of life. 

Nietzsche and Modern Times: A Study of Bacon, Descartes, and Nietzsche, 1993: 446.

GM III § 28.

TI “Expeditions” § 33.
Nietzsche is a philosopher of education, and, indeed, a political educator in the definitive sense. The question Nietzsche puts before us is whether or not we can “extend [our] responsibility” with the “strength of will, hardness, [and] capacity for long-term decisions?”

His challenge is this: “Is greatness today—possible?” We can learn from Nietzsche, not necessarily by imitating or exalting him, but by exploring with him the first questions of philosophy, politics, and education: What do we hope ourselves to become? Where is the locus of the sacred or the divine? What is justice? What constitutes a good life? More precisely stated: What are the purposes and limits of education?

The problems Nietzsche wrestles with are inextricably linked to the politics and morality of our times; and education, he thinks, will play a decisive role, one way or the other, in how the generations to come will meet mounting future crises. Thus, Nietzsche’s challenge—political and recondite—takes on greater relevance and urgency within the context of a dark future looming on the horizon, for the problems he compels us to grapple with are not the stuff of academic or speculative parlor games, but truly political and educational in the highest and original sense of these terms: action on the part of philosophy. Moreover, Nietzsche states explicitly that he wants to take responsibility for such problems in education.

Notably, also, Nietzsche does not limit himself to just human affairs, in that he provides us the instruments, tactics, and strategies, as well as an educational template, to adopt the comprehensive ecological perspective of life. However, the comprehensive kind of transformation of consciousness and culture Nietzsche advocates is extremely unlikely to occur within the existing paradigm of the conflagration of late-modern democracy, evangelical or fundamentalist monotheistic theisms, moral individualism, and untrammeled capitalism. Nietzsche’s political education deserves, therefore, to be addressed on its own terms and not according to safely democratic or politically-correct preferences.

Given that Nietzsche’s challenge is both legitimate and original, the onus is on partisans of democracy and democratic education to formulate cogent reasons and arguments that can succeed in showing (1) Why we should dismiss or disregard Nietzsche’s philosophy of education, politics, and nature; and (2) Why, precisely, is liberalism superior to the aristocratic alternative that Nietzsche is proposing. Partisans of democracy—progressive or

BGE § 212.

Ibid. § 211. Cf. HH § 234.

Cf. Ibid. § 61 - 62, 211 - 212.
conservative—must be able to show that liberal democratic institutions are uniquely qualified
and indeed necessary to complete justice: the human and, we must admit, the natural (i.e., the
ecological/environmental) good. So far, liberal democrats—be they utilitarians, contractarians, or
rights theorists—have not done this.895 This state of affairs reflects a widespread tendency to
deny that there is such a thing as a definitive objective “natural” good to begin with. And this
predilection fits with the times; for it denies that there can be such a thing as a definitive and
politically authoritative standard of human excellence or virtue. Defenders and advocates of
democracy fail, in any case, to establish the fundamental thesis of all liberal political philosophy:
that democracy is the only form of government that can be sanctioned by reason and morality.896

Yet, in the spirit of democracy, we should openly debate political, moral, and educational
issues regardless of how uncomfortable or difficult they may be. More specifically, we should,
as Nietzsche proposes, reevaluate the moral and political bases of authority that have the heritage
of the Enlightenment—or, for that matter, the Christian—era.897 In such respect we might also
consider that, according to Leo Strauss, the best friends and defenders of democracy and liberal
education are its greatest critics.898 Similarly, Stanley Cavell suggests that perfectionism, which
he thinks should include Nietzsche’s radical aristocratic challenge to egalitarianism, can be
“understood as not only compatible with democracy, but its prize.” Cavell continues in this
vein:

The idea is that the mode of character formed under the invitation to the next self,

896 The question is this: What has democracy become when its own ideologists, such as Richard Rorty,
for example, have come to believe that a morally and rationally ungrounded preference for bourgeois
liberalism is a sufficient basis upon which to maintain a consensus among the intelligentsia in favor of
private property and political liberty? On Nietzsche’s view, this state of affairs gives evidence of an
advanced condition of terminal decadence. The radically disenchanted world of liberal irony is
incompatible with a genuine commitment to liberal democracy; evidently liberalism has lost its powers
of conviction. Allan Bloom argues that liberalism is ultimately doomed when professors in the modern
university lose conviction in moral truth: “When such conviction is lacking, institutions and laws have
lost their vitality and maintain themselves only by inertia; their replacement by new modes and orders is
only a matter of time” (Giants and Dwarfs, 1990). Leo Strauss adds: "As it seems to me, the cause of
this situation is that we have lost all simply authoritative traditions in which we could trust, the nomos
which gave us authoritative guidance, because our immediate teachers and teachers’ teachers
believed in the possibility of a simply rational society. Each of us here is compelled to find his bearings
by his own powers, however defective they may be’ (What is Liberal Education?, p. 318.)
897 Religious and ideological truths would, in this case, be replaced by the truths about religion and
ideology. Cf. BGE § 62, 256.
898 Liberal Education and Responsibility, pp. 343 - 344. Strauss continues: “What then are the
prospects for liberal education within mass democracy? What are the prospects for the liberally
educated to become again a power in democracy? We are not permitted to be flatterers of democracy
precisely because we are friends and allies of democracy,” Strauss concludes that “We must not
expect that liberal education can ever become universal education. It will always remain the obligation
and the privilege of a minority” (ibid.).
entering the next state of society, is one capable of withstanding the inevitable compromise of democracy without cynicism, and it is the way that reaffirms not only consent to a given society but reaffirms the idea of consent as responsiveness to society, an extension of the consent that founds it. . . . This . . . is a test of the goodness enough of its justice. 899

Granting for the possibility that contemporary society cannot pass this test of the “goodness of its justice,” Laurence Lampert suggests that the philosopher-warrior of the future is “defined by a task . . . requiring that the philosopher be the ‘bad conscience’ of his time . . . the bad conscience of the age of equality.”900 On this perspective, one sees that Nietzsche’s loving contempt of the human, all too human expresses an untimely aspiration to become a more complete, indeed complementary, human being. His pedagogical politics are as much a response to what has been lost and what might be recovered as they are a polemic against what he finds degraded and despicable.

Unlike every other major political or educational philosopher since the Enlightenment Nietzsche provides no cosmetics to conceal the atrophy, deformities, and blemishes of the contemporary human. He does not flatter, accommodate, or indulge the otherwise human, all too human; in that, Nietzsche challenges us to reexamine ourselves and the unavailing theoretical, political, and religious foundations of the late-modern world. Nietzsche’s teaching also represents a summons to what is further or higher; a temptation to endeavor toward the perfecting or enhancing of nature—not its denial or suppression. Here, again, is the edifying idea of the cultivation of a new mode of human being, of becoming a more natural being in the world. And this profound educational possibility of becoming healthy and whole is essential to understanding the positive implications and relevance of Nietzsche’s pursuit of a new definition of justice and, furthermore, his appeal to the highest types to join him in that quest.

900 2001: 201. Cf. Plato, The Republic, 487a -e. Socrates says, when pressed by Adeimantus on his claim that only the philosopher is fit to rule, that the people “rightly judge” the philosopher to be either useless or vicious.
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