

The Relation between Sovereignty and Guilt in Nietzsche's *Genealogy*

Gabriel Zamosc

Abstract: This paper interprets the relation between sovereignty and guilt in Nietzsche's *Genealogy*. I argue that, contrary to received opinion, Nietzsche was not opposed to the moral concept of guilt. I analyse Nietzsche's account of the emergence of the guilty conscience out of a pre-moral bad conscience. Drawing attention to Nietzsche's references to many different forms of conscience and analogizing to his account of punishment, I propose that we distinguish between the enduring and the fluid elements of a 'conscience', defining the enduring element as the practice of forming self-conceptions. I show that for Nietzsche, the moralization of the bad conscience results from mixing it with the material concepts of guilt and duty, a process effected by prehistoric religious institutions by way of the concept of god. This moralization furnishes a new conception of oneself as a responsible agent and holds the promise of sovereignty by giving us a freedom unknown to other creatures, but at the price of our becoming subject to moral guilt. According to Nietzsche, however, the very forces that made it possible have spoiled this promise and, under the pressures of the ascetic ideal, a harmful notion of responsibility understood in terms of sin now dominates our lives. Thus, to fully realize our sovereignty, we must liberate ourselves from this sinful conscience.

1. Introduction: The Puzzle

A strange puzzle confronts the reader of Nietzsche's second treatise of *On the Genealogy of Morals*. It is a puzzle that has to do with the relation between the discussion at the beginning of the treatise and the one that ensues shortly after. The treatise begins with a description of the *sovereign individual*, who represents the solution to the problem of making humans into animals that are *legitimately authorized* to make promises.¹ According to Nietzsche, nature has for the most part already achieved this: it has created sovereign, autonomous individuals that enjoy the *extraordinary privilege of responsibility* and call this privilege their *conscience* (GM II.2). But in Section 4 the treatise takes an unexpected turn. Nietzsche starts telling us the story of the emergence of that other 'somber thing' called the bad conscience (as consciousness of moral guilt), which becomes his focus of attention for the remainder of the treatise. The puzzle, then, is this: what is the relation between these two forms of conscience (sovereignty and guilt)? Has the history that Nietzsche is retracing yielded two distinct and opposing fruits embodied in different individual types? Or is it rather that the guilty

conscience constitutes a stage in the history of the evolution of the sovereign conscience? Then again, perhaps the guilty conscience is not a stage in the formation of the sovereign conscience, nor a distinct fruit produced by the same historical developments, but an aberration and deformation of that sovereign conscience. Pursuing a solution to these questions will lead me to conclusions that differ in significant ways from some important recent studies of the second treatise. Anticipating a bit, I will argue that contrary to what most interpreters think the moral feeling of guilt is part of the type of sovereignty Nietzsche advocates.

My argument will proceed in four stages. In Section 2, I will first identify some affinities between the sovereign and the guilty consciences, pointing out that for Nietzsche the morality of custom is a precondition for both, and that both seemingly rest on an understanding of oneself as author of one's own behaviour. Then, in Section 3, I discuss Nietzsche's account of the emergence of a pre-moral bad conscience out of which a moralized guilty form of conscience will later develop. According to Nietzsche, the moralization of this pre-moral bad conscience results from mixing it with the material concepts of guilt and duty. In Section 4, I provide an analysis of what this mixture involves and I argue that, contrary to what most interpreters claim, it is not carried out by Christian morality but rather by primitive religious institutions, by way of the concept of god operating in them. For Nietzsche, the moralization of conscience furnishes a new conception of oneself as a responsible agent; a conception that holds the promise of sovereignty by giving us a freedom or autonomy unknown to other creatures, but at the price of our becoming subject to moral guilt for our wrongdoings. Finally, in Section 5, I claim that the same moralizing forces that made it possible have spoiled this promise. Under the pressures of the ascetic ideal, a harmful notion of responsibility understood in terms of sin now dominates our lives. Thus, I will argue that, to fully realize the ideal of sovereignty and autonomy, we must liberate ourselves from this sinful conscience.

In order to proceed with the argument, however, a slight digression is in order here. Although I cannot fully delve into Nietzsche's idea of a genealogy and his criticism of traditional history,² I will use two important genealogical principles throughout my discussion. The first is Nietzsche's idea that the higher the degree of culture and civilization a community exhibits, the more abstract and complex is the conceptual apparatus it employs; and, conversely, the more one goes back towards primeval humanity, the more literal and concrete is the conceptual understanding one encounters.³ The other principle concerns Nietzsche's notion that historians should learn to distinguish the origin of a thing from its purpose. This idea derives from Nietzsche's conception of history as fundamentally the *activity* of a *will to power*, that is, of certain 'spontaneous, aggressive, expansive, *form-giving* forces that give new interpretations and directions' (GM II. 12; emphasis added).⁴ For Nietzsche, a thing results from the interplay of independent processes that come together rather haphazardly and whose causes need not be connected to each other (*ibid.*). This means that the original intention or

purpose that was expressed at the inception of the thing will be quite different from the one contained in it afterward.

Nietzsche illustrates this aspect of history in his discussion of punishment. He urges us to distinguish two different elements in the concept of punishment: a relatively enduring element, consisting on the act itself; and a much more fluid one, consisting on its purpose (GM II.13). For Nietzsche the enduring element comes before the actual use of the procedure for the purpose of punishing (*ibid.*). He scolds traditional historians of morality for missing this important point. Viewed strictly as an act, punishment consists simply in a set of operations intended to inflict harm on another creature (or under certain circumstances on oneself).⁵ Such a set of operations is enduring because no matter how varied, it has the same intended effect: it makes its target suffer. This means that *essentially* the procedure remains the same throughout all variations; something which is not true of the fluid element of punishment, since the act of inflicting harm on another can be used for purposes that are *essentially different* and even diametrically opposed to each other, e.g. for pedagogical aims or for revenge.⁶

2. Sovereign Conscience and Guilty Conscience: Some Affinities

This much must suffice with respect to Nietzsche's method of genealogy. Let us now go back to the issue that concerns us here. What history is the second treatise supposed to recount? As mentioned earlier, it is unclear whether the treatise is about sovereignty, guilt, or both. Yet at the very least Nietzsche suggests that there are historical connections between these two phenomena.⁷ In Section 2, he claims that the task of making the human creature into an animal capable of responsibility (i.e. sovereign), '*presupposes as a preparatory task that one first makes men to a certain degree necessary, uniform, like among like, regular and consequently calculable*' (GM II.2; emphasis added). This task, according to Nietzsche, is performed by the morality of custom, which constitutes the severe and tyrannical *prehistoric* labour of man upon himself. In order to follow customs humans must learn to remember. Nietzsche thinks this is very difficult because, like all animals, prehistoric humans lived in the grips of 'forgetfulness': an active force by means of which all lived experience is thoroughly digested and processed by the psyche of the animal organism (GM II.1). To counter this force, the prehistoric human being devised a dreadful social apparatus that operated on the principle that pain is the best aid to mnemonics (GM II.3). With its help human beings were finally made into regular creatures that reliably follow the rules of social life.

It is important to emphasize that Nietzsche thinks this is a *preparatory task* that is simply *not* equivalent to the task of breeding a sovereign animal. Many commentators miss this point.⁸ Brian Leiter, for instance, claims that the sovereign individual has the right to make promises 'because he can pull it off, i.e. his behavior is sufficiently regular and predictable so that he can be "answerable for

his own future" (GM II: 1)' (Leiter 2002: 228). Leiter conflates here the individual who is necessary and regular (the product of the morality of custom) with the sovereign individual. Part of his motivation is that he thinks Nietzsche is a naturalist of a particular sort, namely, someone who believes that human beings have no free will and that their actions are thoroughly determined by essential traits over which they have no control. This makes Nietzsche's description of the sovereign individual as 'autonomous' somewhat problematic for Leiter. But he is able to solve the problem by insisting that Nietzsche is using familiar words in an unfamiliar sense: autonomy in this case is simply equivalent to regularity and necessity of behaviour (Leiter 2002: 227–8).

Contrary to what Leiter asserts, I believe that Nietzsche's use of autonomy and sovereignty in the *Genealogy* is not so unfamiliar. In order to establish this point it is worth quoting extensively Nietzsche's description of the sovereign individual. He writes:

If we place ourselves at the end of this tremendous process, where the tree at last brings forth fruit, where society and the morality of custom at last reveal *what* they have simply been the means to: then we discover that the ripest fruit is the *sovereign individual*, like only to himself, liberated again from the morality of custom, autonomous and supramoral (for 'autonomous' and 'moral' are mutually exclusive), in short, the man who has his own independent, protracted will and the *right to make promises* . . . This emancipated individual, with the actual *right* to make promises, this master of a *free* will, this sovereign man—how should he not be aware of his superiority over all those who lack the right to make promises and stand as their own guarantors, of how much trust, how much fear, how much reverence he arouses—he '*deserves*' all three—and how his mastery over himself also necessarily gives him mastery over circumstances, over nature, and over all more short-willed and unreliable creatures? (GM II.2, emphasis in original)

Notice first that, at the onset of this passage, Nietzsche repeats the idea that the morality of custom is only preparatory: its results are necessary means for the production of the sovereign individual but they are not sufficient. The point is further supported by Nietzsche's claim that the autonomous individual is supramoral (*übersittliche*) because he has liberated himself from the morality of custom. (Nietzsche says that autonomous and moral are mutually exclusive. The German word *sittlich*, translated here as 'moral', can also mean 'ethical' and is operative in the notion *die Sittlichkeit der Sitte*, 'the morality of custom' or 'the ethics of custom'. Thus, what Nietzsche is saying is that to be autonomous and to be under the grip of the ethics of custom, are things that are mutually exclusive).

But, second, Nietzsche is describing the sovereign individual in terms that are quite familiar to the language of autonomy: this individual is a *master over himself* and as a *necessary* consequence of that he is also a master over his circumstances and over nature. In other words, the sovereign individual has *the right* to make

promises because he is in control of his life, not because he is necessary and calculable. This is made even more explicit by Nietzsche's later claim that sovereigns are people 'who give their word as something that can be relied on because they know themselves strong enough to maintain it in the face of accidents, even "in the face of fate"' (ibid.).⁹ Indeed, the language here resonates strongly with the Kantian notion of autonomy: sovereigns are people that will fulfil their promises even if in the future they should find themselves strongly inclined to break them (because fate or circumstances tempt them to do so); as Kant would put it, sovereign individuals act from duty, they do not act heteronomously or out of inclination.¹⁰

But let us return to the original point I intended to establish. If the prehistoric labour of the morality of custom serves a preparatory task for sovereignty, the same seems to be true with regard to its role in the emergence of the guilty conscience. According to Nietzsche, one of the earliest and most fundamental customs is that of incurring debts, of entering into the contractual relation between creditor and debtor (GM II.8). A memory is of course crucial for the success of this type of relationship. The debtor must come to regard his debt as an obligation binding him to act in some way in the future, which means that he not only has to conceive of himself as required to repay the debt he incurred, he must actually remember to repay it when the time comes.

Nietzsche singles out this type of prehistoric custom because he thinks that it played a crucial role in the formation of the guilty conscience. 'It was in *this* sphere', he tells us, 'the sphere of legal obligations, that the moral conceptual world of "guilt", "conscience", "duty", "sacredness of duty" had its origin' (GM II.6). Nietzsche is here partly following etymological clues and, in the spirit of his genealogical method, arguing that the principal moral concept of guilt (*Schuld*) had its origins in the material and unsymbolic juridical concept of having debts (*Schulden*); a concept that originally was not entangled with any moral significance whatsoever nor with any moral emotions. Only when this juridical notion gets co-opted by the forces that work in the interest of erecting a moral world, does the material concept of being indebted give rise to the moral concept of guilt proper. One of the most important of these forces is the instinct for freedom that has turned back on its possessor. I will discuss this element of Nietzsche's story later. Here it is important to note that his strategy introduces a slight difficulty for the reader, since it is not always immediately clear whether Nietzsche's use of *Schuld* in a given context refers to a moral concept ('guilt' proper) or to a proto-moral concept related to debts ('guilt' in the purely material sense of being at fault, of defaulting).

Although the domain of contractual obligations furnishes the conceptual materials that will be enlisted in the service of the guilty conscience, it is crucial to stress that Nietzsche does not claim that these legal associations and their punitive methods by themselves produce the moral concept of guilt or the morally guilty feeling. Nietzsche insists that the very procedures employed by the judicial and disciplinary apparatus prevented the criminal from considering his actions reprehensible *as such*, since he saw those same actions being used

systematically and with an untroubled conscience in the service of justice (GM II.14).¹¹ In the same vein, Nietzsche argues that repeated punishment did not produce the feeling of moral guilt in the criminal because neither he nor the judges and executors conceived the act as authored by a morally accountable person. The criminal was thought of simply as an instigator of harm, an irresponsible piece of fate with which it was necessary to deal; and the punishment that subsequently descended upon him, instead of triggering an inward pain, was simply felt as a dreadful natural event that could not be fought (*ibid.*). For Nietzsche, the effect of punishment consisted in the intensification of the person's intelligence, the lengthening of his memory, and the instilment of prudence and mistrust in his soul. The lesson for the criminal, then, was not that acted in a morally blameworthy way, but only that he was not as powerful as he thought he was and should have been more careful when defaulting (GM II.15). In order for the person to regard his act as something he should not have done he must first understand himself not only as an *effective* agent who as a matter of fact performs and is causally implicated with certain acts, but also as a *liable or morally responsible agent* who is the author of his own behaviour and, therefore, can be held morally accountable for it. According to Nietzsche, this change in self-understanding is an event for which the morality of custom is not directly responsible, though it is an event for which its methods and results are indeed essential.

I think this begins to suggest very close affinities between the sovereign and the guilty conscience. Not only do both forms of conscience possess a shared history, but Nietzsche also seems committed to the idea that they both require that the person come to know himself in a particular way, namely, as the responsible author of his own actions. In order to fully grasp this point we must discuss the emergence of the guilty conscience out of a more primitive form of the bad conscience.

3. A Special Type of Self-Conception: The Bad Conscience

In his important study of the *Genealogy*, Aaron Ridley suggests that Nietzsche's account of the emergence of the bad conscience is confused and contradictory.¹² I think many of the confusions Ridley identifies disappear once we bear in mind that there are a number of independent forces at work in the emergence of the phenomena Nietzsche discusses. This explains—for example—why Nietzsche sometimes does and at other times does not speak of the bad conscience as the feeling of guilt. The latter develops in stages and requires the coming together of several processes. In this respect I am in agreement with authors like Leiter and Mathias Risse who also emphasize the developmental element of Nietzsche's account of the guilty conscience.

But Ridley touches on an important aspect of the discussion in the *Genealogy* that often goes unnoticed. This consists in the fact that the *Genealogy* actually exhibits a somewhat bewildering proliferation of consciences. In the

second treatise, we have the sovereign conscience of the beginning sections, and then the bad conscience and the guilty conscience of the ensuing sections. But the attentive reader will find that there are other less noticeable consciences too: for instance, in Section 5 we read that, during the initial stages of the morality of custom, the debtor made a contract with the creditor in part to 'impress repayment as a duty, an obligation upon his own *conscience*' (GM II.5; my emphasis). Recall that these contractual relationships did not require the existence of a bad conscience nor did they give rise to it. This means that the type of conscience Nietzsche is accrediting to the debtor here must be something historically prior to, and hence different from, the three forms of conscience mentioned before (the bad, the guilty and the sovereign consciences). In the next section Nietzsche tells us that very primitive human beings 'posited "disinterested malice" . . . as a *normal* quality of man—and thus as something to which the conscience cordially *says Yes!*' (GM II.6). Once more we find here a claim that points to a prior (indeed, prehistoric) and different form of conscience than the one (or ones) whose history Nietzsche is trying to unravel.

Finally, to give a sense of just how widespread this proliferation of consciences is, let us mention another important case. In Section 11 of the first treatise, Nietzsche asserts that when noble men escape the confines of society to savour a freedom from all social constraints 'they go *back* to the innocent conscience of the beast of prey' (GM I.11).¹³ Ridley finds this claim problematic because he thinks that what distinguishes man from the beast is conscience, and he understands this to be the power to make promises. But, according to Nietzsche, this power is the result of the internalization of man that takes place when man starts to live under customs.¹⁴ So Ridley finds incoherent the suggestion that a prehistoric human beast living in the wilderness has a conscience. The nobles cannot really go back to such a form of conscience because prior to socialization there is simply no conscience to be had (Ridley 1998: 20).

I think Ridley misreads Nietzsche here because he is too focused on understanding conscience as a faculty of self-reflection that emerges with the internalization of man. This leads him to dismiss as incoherent the subtle proliferation of consciences I mentioned previously. I think that a more profitable approach would be to think of Nietzsche's treatment of conscience along the same lines as his treatment of punishment. Perhaps we should distinguish two different elements in the concept of conscience: a relatively enduring element and a more fluid one. We can then understand these different consciences as so many different expressions of the enduring element, as fluid forms that constitute appropriations of the enduring element into new uses. The question, then, is what is the relatively enduring element in all of these forms of conscience? Sticking to the analogy with punishment, I submit that it must be some *procedural aspect* that they all share in common, something that all forms of conscience *do* or are *essentially engaged in doing* despite their different ways of doing it. I suggest that this element consists in man's ability to produce a conception for himself of the type of creature he is.¹⁵

This would explain why, for Nietzsche, the human 'beast of prey' can indeed have a conscience that the nobles could go back to and, moreover, an *innocent* (*Unschuld*) conscience. The human 'beast of prey' does not conceive of itself as being under constraints. As Ridley correctly notes, it exists outside the morality of custom, hence it must think of itself as a creature that has no debts (*Schulden*) to repay and thus no obligations.¹⁶ This also explains why Nietzsche claims that the debtor, who initially does not conceive of himself as someone who is under constraints or obligations, has to *impress* the notion of repayment as a duty on his own conscience (or self-understanding) by means of a contract with the creditor.¹⁷

Let us now return to our problem. How does the bad conscience come into the world? Nietzsche's answer to this question begins in Section 16 where he asserts that the bad conscience was the illness man was bound to contract once he found himself enclosed within the walls of society and peace (GM II.16). Notice that Nietzsche does not claim that the bad conscience is created by this change. The claim instead is that the change generates the conditions under which man is bound to acquire a bad conscience. As we will see shortly, this explains why Nietzsche seems to both assert and deny a primary role to punishment in the explanation of the emergence of the bad conscience.

Nietzsche thinks this was a crucial transformation partly because it marked man's genuine detachment from animal nature.¹⁸ Unlike other creatures, the semi-animals that became incarcerated within society could no longer roam free and had to learn to adjust themselves to societal rules. Nietzsche claims that this had an awesome consequence: for the instinct for freedom of these creatures was left without an external outlet and was thus forced to turn back and discharge itself upon its possessor.¹⁹ Nietzsche calls this process the internalization of man and credits it for developing what was later called the 'soul' and, more importantly, for creating the bad conscience (*ibid.*).²⁰ As he puts it, 'this *instinct for freedom* forcibly made latent . . . pushed back and repressed, incarcerated within and finally able to discharge and vent itself only on itself: that, and that alone, is what the *bad conscience* is in its beginnings' (GM II.17). This explains why there is no inconsistency in Nietzsche's statement that punishment cannot generate the bad conscience and his insistence that the bad conscience originates when man is incarcerated by means of punishment. For the role assigned to punishment here is purely instrumental: punishment is the mechanism through which the instinct for freedom is forced to change orientation and is redirected inward toward its possessor. The actual creator of the bad conscience is this instinct for freedom itself.²¹

This becomes even clearer once we ask the question: what exactly has emerged here? What is a bad conscience? Following the principle I laid down before, the answer to this question must be: a new type of conception of oneself. What conception is that? Nietzsche's answer is contained in a passage that is worth quoting at length. He claims that the instinct for freedom at work here is:

The same active force that is at work on a grander scale in those artists of violence and organizers who build states, and that here, internally, on a smaller and pettier scale, directed backward . . . *creates for itself a bad conscience* . . . only here the material upon which the form-giving and ravishing nature of this force vents itself is man himself, his whole ancient animal self—and *not*, as in that greater and more obvious phenomenon, some *other* man, *other* men. This secret self-ravishment, this artists' cruelty, this delight in imposing a form upon oneself as a hard, recalcitrant, suffering material and in burning a will, a critique, a contradiction, a contempt, a No into it, this uncanny, dreadfully joyous labor of a soul voluntarily at odds with itself that makes itself suffer out of joy in making [itself] suffer—eventually this entire *active* 'bad conscience' . . . as the womb of all ideal and imaginative phenomena, also brought to light an abundance of strange new beauty and affirmation, and perhaps beauty itself.—After all, what would be 'beautiful' if the contradiction had not first become conscious of itself, if the ugly had not first said to itself: 'I am ugly'? (GM II.18; emphasis added)

The important point in this passage is the one that describes the type of labour that the instinct for freedom performs against its possessor.²² This labour consists in impressing in the person (and, as I am suggesting, more properly in his conception of himself) a critique, a contradiction, a contempt, a No. What this means is that the instinct for freedom instigates in the person a view of himself as contemptible in the sense of *abject, vulgar, ordinary* or *low*; it generates in the person a conception of himself as situated *below* what he could or should be.²³ In other words, the instinct for freedom brings to life a conscience that is *bad* very much in the sense initially introduced by Nietzsche in the first treatise: it produces a conception of a person that is imperfect or incomplete, a being that is unexceptional and therefore worthy of disapproval and dislike (GM I.4–5).²⁴ To be sure, echoing the arguments of the first treatise, the disapproval at stake here is not moral in nature; at least not until the bad conscience transforms into the guilty conscience.

I think this clarifies Nietzsche's somewhat strange claim that the bad conscience is the womb of all ideal and imaginative phenomena, that it provides the condition for ideals like beauty or even moral ideals like selflessness, self-denial, and self-sacrifice (GM II.18). An ideal is something either one adopts or one aspires to realize; it provides an image of what one could be or of what one could become. To have an ideal, then, one must have a conception of what one is not—at least not yet; that is, one must have a conception of oneself as incomplete or imperfect. But that just is the conception that the bad conscience affords. It is on the basis of such a conception that one can then see oneself as capable of changing, of being other than one is.²⁵ This further explains why Nietzsche claims that with the bad conscience the inner world of man, which was originally thin, spreads and grows in depth, breadth and height (GM II.16). For the instinct for freedom that has reverted upon itself, *by necessity*, makes its

possessor conceive of himself as a piece of matter to be shaped and transformed: his own inner world becomes for him a frontier to be explored, expanded, conquered and colonized by way of his self-conceptions. In turn, this means that the person will start to understand himself as something that stands over and above his possible and actual self-conceptions. Those conceptions, after all, are something that he must now regard as being subject to change and manipulation by him; which means that, in his mind, he himself must therefore be something distinct from them all. Hence Nietzsche's claim that the emergence of the bad conscience is intimately bound up with the development of the notion of a subject underlying all actions and events (i.e. the notion of a 'soul').²⁶

This further allows us to appreciate more clearly why Nietzsche does not think that this new conception is generated by punishment. At most, punishment can make a person reassess the perception he has of his own power; it can teach the person that he was not as strong as he thought he was. But this is not equivalent to making him think of himself as something that is incomplete or worthy of disapprobation, something that needs to be reshaped or changed. This type of self-loathing results only from an internal kind of rearrangement and self-configuration that is not imposed from the outside. It is possible only on the assumption that man is conceiving of himself as a target for his own creative activity, which is just the type of conception that the bad conscience inaugurates.

4. From the Bad Conscience to the Guilty Conscience and Beyond

We are now in a position to explore Nietzsche's account of how, with the aid of religion, the bad conscience transforms into a guilty conscience. In his essay on the second treatise of the *Genealogy*, Risse argues that Christianity plays a unique role in Nietzsche's account of this transformation.²⁷ He focuses mainly on Section 21 which he considers the pivotal section of the treatise. In that section Nietzsche asserts that the bad conscience as a feeling of guilt emerges as the result of the moralization of the material or proto-moral concepts of 'guilt' and 'duty'. According to Nietzsche, this moralization is brought about by pushing back these concepts into the conscience or—in his own words—'more precisely, [by] the involvement of the *bad* conscience with the concept of god' (GM II.21). Risse construes this last claim as indicating the entanglement of the primitive form of the bad conscience with the idea of the Christian God,²⁸ taking many of his cues from Nietzsche's rhetoric in the section, which focuses mostly on Christian concepts.²⁹ For Risse this means that the moralization of these concepts is something Nietzsche laments and that he, therefore, has nothing but disdain for the moral concept of guilt. Leiter agrees in this respect with Risse,³⁰ though for him what turns the bad conscience into guilt is not its connection to Christianity *per se*, but rather its attachment to the ascetic ideal: Christianity is the most notable exponent of this ideal, but the ideal itself is much broader in scope including other religions like Buddhism and sometimes even secular disciplines like modern science (Leiter 2002: 244).

I disagree with the assessment of these interpreters. In my judgement, they both miss important nuances in Nietzsche's discussion of moral guilt. In particular, they fail to notice the positive regard Nietzsche has for this concept, which goes as far as to assign to moral guilt a crucial role in the process of *ennoblement* of other things. In order to explore this point let me recount briefly the main arguments of Sections 20 and 21. These arguments take place against the background of a hypothesis about the origin of religion according to which the first gods emerged out of a modified interpretation of the relation between creditors and debtors: namely, the relation between the current generation and its ancestors. According to Nietzsche, in prehistoric times, the living generation felt indebted to the prior generation, and especially to the founders of the tribe. Since this feeling grew more acute and cumbersome the more prosperous and powerful the tribe became, Nietzsche suggests that the most successful tribes eventually ended up transfiguring their ancestors into gods (GM II.19). In Section 20, he claims that once this happened, for several millennia the feeling of having unpaid debts toward the divinity increased in the same measure as the concept of god grew on earth. This process reached its pinnacle with the arrival of the Christian God, which marked the advent of the greatest feeling of 'guilty indebtedness' ever felt. However, Nietzsche concludes the section expressing his hope that the progress and development of atheism will successfully counter the growth of mankind's ever increasing indebtedness toward its origin. But at the beginning of Section 21 we are told that this account has been one-sided: Nietzsche has neglected to mention the moralization of the material concepts of 'guilt' and 'duty'. He is interested in discussing this aspect of the story because he considers that the appearance of the moral concept of guilt threatens the possibility of redemption promised by atheism. This is why he focuses most of the discussion in Sections 21 and 22 on Christianity since, as he had announced previously, it is with the arrival of the Christian God that we reach the maximum feeling of indebtedness.

Told in this way, and contrary to what Risse claims, it seems clear that for Nietzsche the moralization of the material concepts of 'guilt' and 'duty' must have happened very early on in the course of the story he is recounting, especially if we consider that the prehistoric form of the bad conscience is an essential element in this transformation. Let me, then, offer my own interpretation of the admittedly strange claim that the moral concept of guilt emerges with the *pushing back* of the material concepts of 'guilt' and 'duty' into the conscience or, more accurately, with the entanglement of the *bad* conscience with the concept of god.

To begin with, note that by claiming that the concepts must be subjected to a 'pushing back' Nietzsche gives the impression that those concepts are to be shoved toward a location they formerly occupied. I interpret this as an indication that the concepts must be placed again in that space, but under a different guise. What Nietzsche is trying to say here is that the moralization of these material concepts occurs when they get *reinserted* into the conscience. What can that mean? As was argued earlier, the initial insertion of these concepts into the

conscience was carried out by the morality of custom. It was through its methods that the person learned to conceive of himself as a debtor, that is, as someone who has the *legal duty* to repay and can be *legally at fault* (*Schuld*) for not repaying a debt he incurred in the past. If the concepts of guilt and duty are now to be introduced back into the person's self-conception, then they must do so under a new meaning. Nietzsche himself gives us the key to unlock this new meaning by declaring that the pushing back consists more precisely in 'the involvement of the *bad* conscience with the concept of god', and by insisting that the moralization of the concepts in question is equivalent to 'their being pushed back into the *bad* conscience' (GM II.21).

Recall that the bad conscience is the conception the person has of himself as incomplete, ordinary or low. If the material concepts of guilt and duty are to be inserted into this conception of oneself, then the result must be a mixture of two self-conceptions and their corresponding feelings: the feeling of being at fault for not paying one's debt and the non-moral feeling of diminished self-worth and dislike for whom one is. What I take this mixture to involve is a new conception of oneself according to which one's legal guilt for an unpaid debt and one's legal duty to repay it, directly affect one's sense of self: adversely, should one indeed fail to repay the debt, or favourably, in case one fulfils one's duties and pays it. In other words, through the re-conceptualization of guilt and duty, through their insertion into the bad conscience, we get a new understanding of ourselves as self-responsible creatures, i.e. as beings entrusted with actions upon which hangs our own sense of self-worth. But this means that our failure to return the thing entrusted or lent, is now felt as contemptible in a moral sense, since it constitutes an act that threatens our integrity, our dignity and our worth as a person, and the resulting conscience can thus properly be called, no longer simply a bad conscience, but a morally guilty one.

I have just claimed that the contempt that the person feels is moral in nature. But, how did we get this moral sense of disapproval? After all, by my own account, the primitive form of the bad conscience involves a feeling of disapproval that is not moral. Why should the involvement of the material concepts of guilt and duty with the bad conscience yield a feeling of self-contempt that is moral in nature? To answer this question notice that what causes the feeling of diminished self-worth characteristic of the primitive form of the bad conscience is the instinct for freedom that has reverted against its possessor. Thus, the feeling of contempt at stake here is equivalent to the thought that one could or should be other than one currently is. This feeling is not moral in nature because it is not accompanied by the thought that one's character is reprehensible as such or that one's actions are those of a morally blameworthy person. Indeed, it is compatible with seeing oneself as someone worthy of disapprobation that one does not necessarily think that the fault lies in oneself, that it results from one's character or from one's actions and volitions. The bad conscience simply brands this self-contempt into the person and impels him to change so as to get rid of it, but it in no way specifies why it is present or connects its presence with the person's will, choices or dispositions. In the guilty conscience,

by contrast, what triggers the contempt the person feels for himself is his failure to fulfil certain 'contractual' obligations—obligations that the person understood himself as having taken upon himself or as being himself legally responsible for fulfilling. Because it is so directly linked to the person's actions and volitions, the resulting feeling of diminished self-worth is in this case equivalent to the thought that one ought to have been someone different (someone with more integrity) *by actually doing something other than what one ended up doing*, that is, that one could or should have done otherwise. This feeling is, therefore, moral in nature because it involves the sensation of polluting oneself as a result of one's own actions and volitions.³¹

This explains how the consciousness of moral guilt emerges from the insertion of the material concepts of guilt and duty into the bad conscience. The question I have not yet answered is how this happens? Why should all these things mix in the way Nietzsche suggests and I have described? After all, the mere coexistence of the material concepts of guilt and duty and the bad conscience within one psyche does not necessitate their entanglement. It is perhaps to address this problem that Nietzsche asserts that the moralization of the concepts of guilt and duty consists more precisely in the involvement of the bad conscience with the concept of god.

We know from our discussion earlier that it is very unlikely that the judicial sphere would produce the moralization we are looking for, since the procedures employed by the judiciary prevented the wrong doer from considering his acts reprehensible as such. Here we can add another consideration that makes this possibility improbable. This consists in the fact that Nietzsche believes that the history of justice essentially amounts to the struggle against the reactive feelings on the part of the active and aggressive powers that seek, through their strength, to limit the excesses of the reactive passions, to impose restraint, and to end the senseless raging of rancour and resentment (GM II.11).³² According to Nietzsche, the principal method for achieving all this is precisely the institution of the law, whose function is to remove its subjects from the injuries caused to them by others, by interpreting those injuries as offenses against the law itself and not as transgressions directed against particular individuals or groups of people. Historically, then, the essential thrust of the judicial institution, as Nietzsche understands it, is to train the conscience of its subjects to evaluate all wrong doings in an increasingly *impersonal* manner. It is no wonder that Nietzsche does not claim that the moralization of guilt and duty occurs when the bad conscience gets entangled with the concept of law. For the basic trend of justice is not to instigate feelings of remorse or of diminished self-worth in the violators of the law, but to redress in an impartial and objective manner the wrong perpetrated by them, reaching a mutual understanding or compelling those involved to accept a compromise (*ibid.*).³³

Where, then, can we find in prehistoric societies an institution that has a vested interest in mixing the bad conscience with the material concepts of guilt and duty? According to Nietzsche we can find this type of institution in primitive religious organizations.³⁴ As was argued earlier, because of its historical

origin the concept of god is already intertwined with the material concept of guilt (by way of the debt one has towards the divinity) and, by extension, with that of duty. Because those concepts have been incorporated into the religious institution from its inception, all that is needed to effect the moralization described previously is to mix the concept of god with the bad conscience. The normal result of this intertwining of concepts will be a guilty conscience in which feelings of diminished self-worth are triggered any time the person fails to live up to the standards and contractual obligations imposed by the divinity. Later, partly as a result of the natural progression of this new conscience, the feeling will encompass all transgressions not just religious ones, to the point of being likely to extend beyond the confines of moral actions altogether (today it is not uncommon for people to feel guilty for things for which they are not really at fault, as in the case of survivor's guilt).

Furthermore, according to Nietzsche, the primary function of all religious institutions consists in handling human suffering and human sickness in a very peculiar way, by interpreting the causes of all human maladies in psychological-moral terms and by prescribing cures of the same sort (GM III.17). This means that religions are, by their very nature, ideal breeding grounds for the sort of moralization process we are after. For this purpose they also count with the aid of one of the most cunning forces in Nietzsche's story: the priest.³⁵ Nietzsche consistently describes the priest as someone who is bent on domination, not only of those situated below him (the herd) but also of those he considers his equals, the noble warriors (GM III.15–16). One of the chief devices the priest uses to wield power is that of turning the reactive passions—the feelings of resentment and rancour—back against their possessors, thereby alleviating temporarily their suffering but also making them sicker and thus more dependent on the priest (GM III.15, 17, 20). Contrary to what happens in the judicial institution where the aim is to put an end to the violence of the reactive passions, in the case of religious institutions the aim is often to exploit those reactive passions and to give them full reign, albeit in controlled and modified directions. Thus, in the same way as the unhampered development of justice will foment consciences trained to appreciate actions in a progressively more *impersonal* manner, the development of religious institutions will tend to encourage their subjects to assess all actions in an increasingly *personal* way.

Indeed, in Section 20 of the third treatise, Nietzsche speaks in more detail about the particular form that the moralization process acquires when this priestly strategy of unleashing the reactive passions is allowed to develop in its most damaging and frightful manner. This new development in the moralization process consists in exploiting the feeling of moral guilt so as to transform the person into a sinner. As Nietzsche puts it, 'it was only in the hands of the priest, that artist in guilty feelings that [the feeling of guilt] achieved form—oh, what a form! "Sin"—for this is the priestly name for the animal's "bad conscience" (cruelty directed backward)—has been the greatest event so far in the history of the sick soul: we possess in it the most dangerous and fateful artifice of religious interpretation' (GM III.20).³⁶ The priest introduces the concept of sin to explain

the general sense of physical and emotional pain that is the natural result of having a bad conscience. This general feeling is probably made even more acute once the bad conscience is transformed into a guilty conscience, since the person can then experience all sorts of mental states like remorse, compunction, contrition and the like, that are bound to shake in profound ways his whole psychic structure and to leave it injured and weakened long after they have passed. Because it is so pervasive, the person that suffers from this kind of affliction finds in it no recognizable origin, and this uncertainty, Nietzsche tells us, makes him thirst for reasons and remedies. The priest has a solution for him: he should seek the cause of his suffering in himself, in his own nature. In this way the person learns to conceive of himself as a 'sinner', as someone who is essentially corrupt and who is 'guilty and reprehensible to a degree that can never be atoned for' (GM II.22).

For the most part, Nietzsche appears to clearly privilege Christianity as the unique inventor of this type of self-conception. However, he also suggests that something of this conception is found in other religions as well, most notably in Buddhism. In Nietzsche's view, these religions share with Christianity a general nihilistic longing for nothingness and a condemnatory appreciation of existence in general, and the self in particular (above all, in its capacity as free willing self).³⁷ This similarity notwithstanding, Nietzsche undoubtedly thinks that Christianity represents a pinnacle in the creative use of the moral concepts of guilt and sin, and that it is the most fateful exponent of the type of self-mortification of man that can be achieved by means of them. Moreover, he thinks that today we find ourselves under siege and that the sinful conscience with its fixation on guilt has spread throughout all the recesses of culture and society ruining everything that is worth something in life (GM III.20, 22, 23). The last sections of the third treatise make evident just how ubiquitous this sinful conscience is on Nietzsche's estimation. There he claims that the ascetic ideal—which lies at the bottom of the priest's moralizing efforts—infects even those who think themselves immune to it, like academic scholars and modern scientists (Nietzsche argues that science only combats the external form of the ascetic ideal, but in reality constitutes its latest manifestation and its strongest ally) (GM III.23–5).³⁸

In order to wrap up our discussion of the transformations of the bad conscience, I will now turn to a 'healthier' form of moralization that Nietzsche considers towards the end of the second treatise. He attributes it to the ancient Greeks who used their gods to ward off the bad conscience (GM II.23). Nietzsche had already announced this discussion in Section 19, referring to it as the process of 'aristocratization' and 'ennoblement' of the gods.

Throughout his analysis Nietzsche seems to suggest that whenever the moralization process is left largely in the hands of the ascetic priest, the development of the guilty conscience will move inexorably in the direction of sin or any of its nihilistic counterparts, and that as a rule no culture escapes this development (GM III.11). The ancient Greeks constitute one lucky exception. According to Nietzsche, however, this stroke of good fortune did not exempt the Greeks from going through a moralization process of their own, albeit one that

took on a different form. The originality of the Greeks consisted mainly in directing their moralizing efforts toward a conception of moral guilt that was understood in terms of 'foolishness' and not in terms of 'sinfulness'. Nietzsche invokes the authority of the Homeric Zeus of the *Odyssey* to support this interpretation. In the passage he cites, Zeus is marvelling at how the mortals blame the gods for the evils that befall them, when it is clear that they are the ones that bring those evils on themselves because of their 'folly' (GM II.23). After citing this passage, Nietzsche suggests that the ancient Greeks conceded that their 'foolishness' was the reason for much that was calamitous in their lives. Yet, he claims that this admission was not without difficulties. The text at this point is worth quoting extensively. Nietzsche writes:

Even this disturbance in the head, however, presented a problem: 'how is it possible? How could it actually have happened to heads such as *we* have, we men of aristocratic descent, of the best society, happy, well-constituted, noble, and virtuous?'—thus noble Greeks asked themselves for centuries *in the face of every incomprehensible atrocity or wantonness with which one of their kind had polluted himself*. 'He must have been deluded by a god', they concluded finally, shaking their heads . . . This expedient is *typical* of the Greeks . . . In this way the gods served in those days to justify man to a certain extent *even in his wickedness*, they served as the originators of evil—in those days they took upon themselves, not the punishment but, what is *nobler, the guilt*. (ibid., emphasis added)

I want to draw attention to two themes in this passage. The first is that the type of Greek Nietzsche is imagining here is not someone who is saddened by the thought that his acts have gone unexpectedly wrong or who believes that his acts are legally questionable. Instead, he is someone who thinks that his acts are such that he ought not to have done them, i.e. that his acts are reprehensible as such and not just legally or customarily so. This means that these Greeks had already moralized the material concept of 'guilt' and were, thus, in full possession of a moral concept.³⁹ They were conscious of being culpable of moral (not just legal) wrongdoing and of treading through very shaky moral grounds. The prospect of being consumed by their moral guilt was so overwhelming, that not even the manoeuvre of reinterpreting their immoral acts as being caused by their own foolishness seemed to suffice. A more decisive expedient was needed here. Fortunately for them, the Greeks managed to find a way out of this problem by laying the blame for their own 'foolishness' on their gods, which allowed them to keep their guilty feelings at arm's length. The internal struggle characteristic of the bad conscience (as consciousness of moral guilt) was thus diffused and poetically transfigured into a struggle against the gods.⁴⁰ The second theme I wish to highlight about the passage is that Nietzsche claims that there is something ennobling about this expedient of the Greeks: by taking upon themselves the moral guilt, instead of the punishment, the gods are depicted as doing what is more noble.⁴¹ The

suggestion that moral guilt can be used for what seem clearly positive aims provides an important clue for understanding the relation between the sovereign conscience and the guilty conscience.⁴²

5. Conclusion: What of the Puzzle?

I now seem to have lost track of the puzzle that instigated this whole discussion. The puzzle, recall, was this: what is the relation between the conscience of the sovereign individual and the conscience of the guilty person? For Nietzsche, as was argued, both forms of conscience require the same set of conditions in order to make them possible. But now hopefully we can clearly see that they both rest on the same conception of oneself as the *morally liable author* of one's actions. To have a guilty conscience, after all, is to be tormented by what one has done: it is to feel morally responsible and ashamed for one's wrongdoings. Similarly, but in a reverse fashion, to have a sovereign conscience is to be gratified by what one has done: it is to feel morally responsible and proud of one's accomplishments (right doings) and of one's power to bring them about. In this sense, the two forms of conscience are really two sides of a single conception of oneself as a responsible person.⁴³

One finds independent confirmation of this reading in *Ecce Homo*. Commenting on the new truth that each of the three inquires of the *Genealogy* reveals, Nietzsche writes: 'the *second* inquiry offers the psychology of the *conscience*—which is not, as people may believe, "the voice of God in man": it is the instinct of cruelty that turns back after it can no longer discharge itself externally' (EH III, *Genealogy*). The claim here seems to be that the second treatise is actually concerned with the history of what we ordinarily understand by a *conscience*: namely, that internal voice in a person that tells him what is right and wrong with respect to his actions and urges him to act on that knowledge. This claim may seem surprising given my analysis thus far and may appear to be at odds with its results, until one recalls the ending of GM II.2. There Nietzsche tells us that the proud awareness of the privilege of responsibility and the rare freedom it represents, has become a dominant instinct in the sovereign individual and that he calls it his '*conscience*' (GM II.2). I take this to mean that having a conscience (in the ordinary sense in which that word is understood today) is just what being sovereign amounts to.⁴⁴ Why is this so? The answer, I think, is that to be responsible is to be possessed of an internal voice that will stay one's hand when everything else is pushing one to deviate from one's commitments and resolutions. In the normal case, one identifies completely with this voice since it is, after all, the voice of one's own autonomy (the voice of one's ideal self). Of course, to speak to oneself in this voice is to be liable to its scorn and not just its praise. We can betray the responsibility that comes with our freedom. In doing so, we will come to feel the bite of our own conscience recriminating us and punishing us for not living up to it. The guilty conscience is thus just the other side of that phenomenon we call responsibility.⁴⁵

This result should make us reassess the way we understand Nietzsche's critique of morality. In the literature it is commonplace to make sense of Nietzsche's critique by distinguishing between two different conceptions of morality: one which Nietzsche rejects from the standpoint of the other which he is said to favour.⁴⁶ I have no qualms with this strategy, but I do have problems with what gets put in one category or the other. In particular, I take issue with the tendency of virtually all commentators, to assume that certain things like moral guilt cannot possibly belong to the morality Nietzsche favours.⁴⁷ To be sure, there are many things Nietzsche says in his writings that contribute to our falling prey to this tendency, not the least of which is his vitriolic attack on Christian morality (for many, the morality of guilt *par excellence*). However, if the interpretation I have offered here is correct, then we must conclude that moral guilt is not something Nietzsche rejects. For indeed, as has been argued, a moral concept of guilt and a guilty conscience are the sorts of things that a sovereign individual must bear as necessary costs to his being autonomous and free.

That Nietzsche's approach to moral guilt is more nuanced than is usually acknowledged allows us to begin to solve another puzzle that is contained in the opening remarks of the second treatise, but which I have not yet discussed. Nietzsche claims at the beginning of Section 1 that the problem of sovereignty 'has been solved *to a large extent*' (GM II.1; my emphasis). In saying this, he implies that the task is incomplete. How come? What has happened in the course of history to arrest this process? Nietzsche's answer is that the moralizing tendencies of the ascetic ideal and the cunning work of the ascetic priest has derailed the process and brought to life the sinful conscience.⁴⁸ Modern man cannot be completely sovereign because, for the most part, he is in the grips of an ill-conceived notion of responsibility: he thinks of it in terms of sin.

Earlier I claimed that for Nietzsche the sinful or nihilistic conscience is not confined to religion but spreads even to secular disciplines like modern science. What is characteristic of this form of self-understanding is that it incarnates the goal of the ascetic ideal, which Nietzsche describes as a 'will to nothingness'. Why does the sinful conscience incarnate such a will? Here I can only gesture at an answer to this question. One thing that is manifested by the will to nothingness is a disposition to treat nature and all of man's natural inclinations as something to be extirpated or transcended. In this sense, the will to nothingness is a will to a metaphysical realm of truth and happiness located outside of nature. This aspect fits well with the notion that religions are advocates of the ascetic ideal since they all posit the existence of such a transcendent world. But why would modern science be an ally of an ideal with such aspirations if it is precisely in the business of combating such metaphysical postulates? Nietzsche's answer is that all of science:

has at present the object of dissuading man from his former respect for himself, as if this had been nothing but a piece of bizarre conceit. One might even say that its own pride, its own austere form of stoical

ataraxy, consists in sustaining this hard-won *self-contempt* of man as his ultimate and most serious claim to self-respect. (GM III.25)

What makes science ascetic, then, is that it expresses, albeit more subtly, the same ascetic disposition to treat man as something loathsome. Part of the reason Nietzsche thinks science manifests this disposition is that it seeks to show that our faith in the dignity and uniqueness of man is mistaken. For science, man is nothing more than an animal, literally and without qualification (ibid.). But this means that it too will be against the proper development of the sovereign conscience since, for Nietzsche, the latter is the ultimate expression of self-affirmation: the sovereign person is proud of his freedom and thinks it makes him irreplaceable, for without it culture would be impossible to sustain and develop to ever new heights.

The will to nothingness is a flight from responsibility that manifests itself in different ways. In essence, it amounts to the belief that one is insignificant, that one is not in control of one's own life. Although this will has spoiled our sovereignty not all is lost. Nietzsche thinks we can rid ourselves of the sinful conscience that has come to dominate our self-understanding. To do this we require a new ideal that will truly oppose the ascetic ideal. In the *Genealogy* Nietzsche seems to suggest that such an alternative ideal can be found in his book *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. However, interestingly, he also claims that there are other things we could begin to do now in order to contribute to this liberating process. His proposed strategy requires that we 'wed the bad conscience to all the *unnatural* inclinations, all those aspirations to the beyond, to that which runs counter to sense, instinct, nature, animal, in short to all ideals hitherto, which are one and all hostile to life and ideals that slander the world' (GM II.24). I take it that the bad conscience Nietzsche speaks about here is not the primitive form of the bad conscience but its fully moralized guilty form. In other words, his suggestion is that we can use the apparatus of moral guilt that our conscience is now equipped with, in order to learn to feel moral outrage at our tendency to fall prey to the sorts of dispositions that the ascetic ideal promotes in us. Doing this does not require that we posit a new ideal in its stead, but it does require that we not think there is something wrong with feeling morally guilty.^{49,50}

Gabriel Zamosc
 Department of Philosophy
 University of Colorado Denver
 USA
 gabriel.zamosc@ucdenver.edu

NOTES

¹ Nietzsche himself stresses the expression in the text: *Ein Tier . . . das versprechen darf* (usually rendered: an animal *that has the right to make promises*) GM II.2. I believe this is meant to emphasize the distinction between the person who is merely capable of

promise-making and the person who actually has the authority to do so. However, it is important to note here that this rendering has been criticized in recent literature, most notably by Christa Davis Acampora (Acampora 2006). Acampora and others suggest that the traditional translation encourages readers to find more normative significance in the text than Nietzsche intends: it makes it sound as if promise-making is an entitlement of sorts. Readers are thus advised to make use of more accurate translations such as that of Maudemarie Clark and Alan J. Swensen, who render the phrase as 'an animal that is permitted to promise' (Clark and Swensen 1998). I do not want to ensnarl myself in a debate about translations, but I do want to point out that there may have been good reasons for traditional translators to render the text in the normatively laden way they did. In its most literal translation the German would read: 'an animal that *may make promises*'. However, this would make uncertain whether the task of nature is to breed an animal that has the possibility of making promises, and in that sense is merely capable of promise-making, or an animal that has the authority to do so, in which case he is entitled or licenced to make promises. Nietzsche's own stress in the original might be construed as an indication that he wants the reader to disambiguate the meaning in some specific direction. Contrary to Acampora and others, I think there is independent support for one of those readings. In the next section Nietzsche speaks of those who make promises without having the right or the authority to do so (*welche versprechen, ohne es zu dürfen*); he describes the sovereign individual as one who recognizes himself as endowed with the extraordinary privilege of *responsibility* (*das ausserordentliche Privilegium der Verantwortlichkeit*) and as having a power over himself and over fate (*[eine] Macht über sich und das Geschick*); see GM II.2. All this makes apparent that Nietzsche means to distinguish between a mere capacity to make promises and a legitimate exercise of that capacity. The latter is the *privilege* of the sovereign individual. All my citations from Nietzsche's texts use the standard abbreviations for their titles in English translation: i.e., GM for *On the Genealogy of Morals* (1967 [1887]), UM for *Untimely Meditations* (1997 [1887]), GS for *The Gay Science* (1974 [1882,1887]), A for *The Antichrist* (1954 [1895]), EH for *Ecce Homo* (1967 [1908]). The numbers following the abbreviation refer to section, chapter and/or part numbers. I use the Kaufmann and Hollingdale translations.

² Nietzsche's quarrel with and criticism of the historical method is patent from very early on in his career. See the Second Untimely Meditation: *On the Use and Abuse of History for Life*. For different accounts of Nietzsche's understanding of Genealogy see Foucault 1984; MacIntyre 1990; Geuss 2002; Leiter 2002.

³ In Section 6 of the first treatise Nietzsche writes: 'all the concepts of ancient man were rather at first incredibly uncouth, coarse, external, narrow, straightforward, and altogether *unsymbolical* in meaning to a degree that we can scarcely conceive' (GM I.6).

⁴ This touches on a very contentious and widely discussed element of Nietzsche's philosophy. I do not pretend to come to terms with the notion of a will to power, nor do I seek to contribute to that debate. Instead I will rely on Nietzsche's own characterization in the *Genealogy*. Presumably, the forces he speaks of here can be all sorts of things, from individuals, to institutions, to drives, to ideals, to instincts, and so on.

⁵ I thus disagree with Clark's interpretation of what Nietzsche calls the enduring element of punishment. For Clark, this element consists in 'the act of inflicting a harm or loss on a person based on a judgment that the person deserves this loss owing to something he or she has done' (Clark 1994: 21; my emphasis). Judgements of desert belong not to the enduring element, but to the fluid element, that is, to the sense or meaning that the practice has. In the beginning the procedures for inflicting harm on another need not have been understood as deserved. Of course, *our* modern understanding of punishment *does*

include the idea of perceived desert: we do not think that a person who is harming another is punishing him, *unless* that person believes, even if mistakenly, that his actions are somehow warranted by something the other person has done. But Nietzsche is precisely warning us against projecting such meanings back into the more primitive procedural notion of punishment. The procedure was not invented for the purpose of what nowadays we call punishing, just as the hand was not invented for the purpose of grasping (GM II.13). I must say, in fairness to Clark, that she recognizes the reading I am suggesting here as the one that is most reasonable given what the text actually says. She, nonetheless, opts for her own interpretation because she finds it difficult to understand why Nietzsche would say that the procedural element of punishment is more enduring than the purpose, since there are at least as many procedures for inflicting harm as there are purposes for punishing. I obviously do not share Clark's concern. As I suggest below, it makes sense for Nietzsche to say that the procedure is relatively enduring because no matter how varied the procedures may be, they all share something in common: they have the same effect, they make their target suffer. This means that the procedure remains *fundamentally the same* despite variations. The same is not true of the purposes since, as Nietzsche tells us, the same procedure can be used for *fundamentally different* purposes.

⁶ In Section 13 Nietzsche provides some examples of different senses that the act of punishment can serve and has served in the past. Among the things Nietzsche mentions in that section are the use of punishment as a way of instilling fear in another; as a way of isolating a disturbance and preventing its further spread; as a way of celebrating; and so on (GM II.13). None of these seem to me to require the idea of perceived desert in order to be exercised against someone.

⁷ The title of the treatise could also be construed as suggesting, albeit subtly, a strong connection here. The treatise is entitled '“Guilt”, “Bad Conscience”, and the Like'. The German word that gets translated as 'the Like' is *Verwandtes* which stems from the word for 'relative' (*Verwandte*), in the sense of family member. Since Nietzsche begins talking about the sovereign individual and then switches to the bad conscience, it is not too much of a stretch to think that the sovereign conscience is one of the 'family members' that are not mentioned directly in the title.

⁸ In what follows I discuss Leiter's interpretation, but see also Hatab 1995; Risse 2001; Acampora 2006; and Loeb 2006. Despite their differences, all these commentators seem to share the assumption that once the morality of custom has made man into a calculable, regular being, it has also ipso facto made him into a sovereign individual. In his book on the *Genealogy*, Daniel Conway correctly notes that the task of the morality of custom is preparatory and so appears not to be guilty of this conflation. However, he also claims that the morality of custom unexpectedly creates sovereign individuals and so seems to attribute to it—contrary to what Nietzsche asserts—more than just a preparatory function (see Conway 2008: 56). In the end, while he rightly acknowledges that the sovereign and the necessary (or regular) individual are distinct and, indeed, opposed to each other, Conway fails to recognize that, according to Nietzsche, the morality of custom does not really preside (either deliberately or unwittingly) over the production of sovereign animals.

⁹ In his perceptive study of the second treatise, Bernard Reginster tries to resist the conclusion that Nietzsche's description of the sovereign individual (the responsible agent) corresponds to that of the person with a free will, claiming that the sense of responsibility at stake here is not that of a person whose action is imputable to him, but rather that of a person whose word is reliable, i.e. secure and good (see Reginster, forthcoming). In my

view this rendering puts the sovereign individual in tension with the very language Nietzsche uses to describe him. After all, in the section under consideration Nietzsche goes as far as to claim (with emphasis) that this individual is 'master of the free will' (GM II.2). As I have tried to indicate, the main quality underlying Nietzsche's very long and detailed description of the sovereign individual seems to be this individual's control of his own life and behaviour, which of course would mean that his actions are imputable to him. I must also say that Reginster's interpretation here is in tension with other things he seems to let on in his essay. For instance, although he does not explicitly state it, it seems clear from his analysis that Reginster believes correctly that the morality of custom serves only a preparatory function for sovereignty. Yet, in claiming that the responsible person is simply someone whose word is secure and good, Reginster wavers and, in the manner of the authors mentioned above, appears to conflate the sovereign man with the man whose behaviour is calculable and necessary (the product of the morality of custom). In GM II.2, however, Nietzsche is at pains to convey to his readers that the reason why the sovereign individual's word is reliable *is not* that he is a regular and necessary individual whose word is good and secure, but rather that he is an individual who *knows himself to be strong enough to keep his word* in the face of pretty much anything that may come his way, even fate (i.e. even if it brings him death). Importantly, this does not mean that—absurdly—the sovereign individual has *absolute* control over fate or his environment. As if, as a matter of metaphysical necessity, we could be certain that he will *actually* keep his word come what may; that even in death he will somehow fulfil his promise. Nietzsche's account must make room for the possibility of tragic lives. Although the sovereign person knows himself to be strong enough to keep his word in the face of anything, in the end, actually the world may know more or may know better (Cf. Owen 2007: 99).

¹⁰ Other commentators have also noticed this connection. See, for example, White 1997.

¹¹ Nietzsche mentions things like entrapment, spying, bribery, deception, and in general the whole cunning art of the police and the prosecutors, together with torturing, robbing, violence, defamation, even murder, all practiced systematically and without the excuse of being the result of blind passion or any such emotion. All these actions were not condemned as such by the judicial system; they were only condemned when applied to other ends (ibid.).

¹² Ridley finds Nietzsche at times equating the bad conscience with the feeling of guilt (GM II.4); at times claiming that bad conscience in its beginnings is no more than the internalization of man (GM II.17); at times arguing that punishment does not produce the bad conscience (GM II.14); at times contradicting this very claim and suggesting that the bad conscience results from the repression of instincts by means of punishment (GM II.16); at times displaying a neutral attitude toward the bad conscience as something that can be either good or bad (GM II. 19), yet at other moments condemning it as definitely bad (GM II.11, GM II.22). See Ridley 1998, especially chapter 1.

¹³ Undoubtedly there is a touch of irony and humour in Nietzsche's characterization of the nobles as '[going] back to the innocent conscience of the beast of prey', but that does not curtail the possibility that there is also a touch of seriousness; in this connection one does well to remember Nietzsche's own dictum: *ridendo decire severum* (to say serious things laughing). One of the serious points Nietzsche is making here is that the beast of prey man is innocent (*Unschuld*) because he is 'free' in a very literal non-symbolic sense: he is incapable of acting in a faulty manner because he is under no constraints whatsoever, he is unbounded. I say a little bit more about this below. Something close to

the characterization offered in the first treatise is also found in the second. In Section 11, for instance, Nietzsche claims that 'the aggressive man, as the stronger, nobler, more courageous, has in fact also had in all times a *freer* eye, a *better* conscience on his side: conversely, one can see who has the invention of the 'bad conscience' on his conscience—the man of *ressentiment!*' (GM II.11).

¹⁴ In this respect I think Ridley is guilty of the same type of conflation I attributed earlier to Leiter and to other commentators.

¹⁵ It is important to point out that nowhere in the *Genealogy* does Nietzsche use the word *Selbstvorstellung* (self-conception) or *Selbstverständnis* (self-understanding) or even *Selbstbewusstsein* (self-consciousness). I have arrived at this characterization of the generic term 'conscience' because of the puzzle I have identified above: namely, the problem of what is it that makes all the very different occurrences of the word 'conscience' in the *Genealogy* fall under one general concept (or belong to the same family)? The answer I give to this question is not arbitrary or unsupported, however, since I take my cues from a similar strategy Nietzsche has employed to explain the history of another general concept, namely, 'punishment'. My solution is compatible with all the places Nietzsche uses the term 'conscience' in the *Genealogy*. In those places one can read self-conception or self-understanding without a loss in meaning. Moreover, my solution is broad enough to include even our ordinary use of the notion of a conscience. In our everyday usage a conscience refers to a kind of internal voice that tells us what is right or wrong in a given situation and that exhorts us to do what is right. This is compatible with the characterization of such a voice as a type of self-conception or self-understanding since, in effect, what a conscience does is produce for the person a conception of himself as standing under certain constraints and obligations that must be met whenever he acts. Finally, as shall become clear shortly, this solution has enormous explanatory power and allows us to make better sense of many of the strange claims Nietzsche makes in the course of his investigation.

¹⁶ Notice that this helps begin to solve another problem Ridley identifies: that of explaining how the beast of prey man initially could have originated customs, without being itself, in the first place, a creature that was subjected to customs and punishment (i.e. without being a creature whose instincts had been internalized already by the morality of custom); see Ridley 1998: 18–19. The creative act of founding the morality of custom is not problematically circular in part because prior to the establishment of societies, these beasts of prey were the possessors of self-conceptions, even if to a rudimentary degree. To be sure, the *Genealogy* does not offer an explanation of how these predators developed this capacity; it does not offer a story about the origin of what I have called the procedural element of the conscience. But, for that matter, neither does it offer a story about the origin of the enduring element of punishment (though this is less difficult to imagine, and so perhaps there is no need to offer such a story). To some extent this is to be expected, since such origins reach really deep into the ancient past of our species and speculating about them is harder than speculating about the origins of more recent, though still prehistoric, events, like the formation of the state (to be sure, in other books, like the *Gay Science*, Nietzsche does not shy away from such harder speculations). But I think this omission is also understandable in the light of the *Genealogy's* general orientation, which is to provide an account of the moral capacities that set us apart from other animals, and not to unearth the beginnings of the sophisticated cognitive capacities, such as language, self-consciousness, and the like, upon which our moral faculties rest. See also note 17. (I am grateful to the anonymous referee for prompting me to clarify my thoughts on this issue).

¹⁷ What all this means is that Nietzsche must be operating under the assumption that very primitive man, the man who is closest to the natural beast, was the possessor of concepts even if to a very rudimentary degree. This in turn means that he not only had a mind, but, more importantly, a conscious mind. This touches on a very contentious aspect of Nietzsche's philosophy, namely, that which deals with his views on consciousness. I cannot contribute to that debate here. For our purposes it suffices to note that, at least in certain places, Nietzsche thinks conscious thinking occurs in words and thus requires the employment of concepts (GS, 354). In the *Genealogy* Nietzsche presupposes that prehistoric man already comes equipped with this special power. For an interesting study on this issue see Katsafanas 2005.

¹⁸ It should be clear that this separation is something that is the result of natural processes. Thus, it does not signal any kind of metaphysical splitting up of humans and nature. Part of the task of the *Genealogy* is precisely to recover a true sense of pride for humans (this is especially true in the third treatise), one that does not require us to think of ourselves as descended from a divine order.

¹⁹ Nietzsche sometimes describes this instinct as a plural, and not a single, entity. I am thinking specially of Section 16 of the second treatise. Nietzsche speaks there of 'the old instincts of freedom' and describes these as the instincts of 'hostility, cruelty, joy in persecuting, in attacking, in change, in destruction' (GM II.16). However, for the most part throughout the *Genealogy* he drops the plural and speaks only of the one instinct for freedom, which he also equates with the will to power (e.g., in GM II.18). Nonetheless, it is worth keeping in mind that the term 'instinct for freedom' could be a placeholder for a host of different instincts that may all be implicated in Nietzsche's account of the formation of the bad conscience. I do not think this alters the story in any significant way, but we certainly should be aware of these potential nuances and complexities.

²⁰ As we learn in the first treatise, the concept of a 'soul' is intimately bound up with the notion of a 'subject' underlying all actions and events (GM I.13). The connection between the bad conscience and the idea of a subject will become clear in a moment, when I explain in greater detail the essential feature of this form of conscience.

²¹ There is a more direct way of solving this apparent contradiction. This consists in noting that what Nietzsche actually denies in the text is that punishment creates the bad conscience *understood as a feeling of guilt* and not that punishment creates the bad conscience simpliciter. If one adopts the view that the guilty conscience develops in stages, as others and I have suggested we should do, one can understand the apparently contradictory claims as applying to two different moments in the development of this conscience and hence as not being really contradictory. In other words, under this option punishment would be responsible for producing the bad conscience that is devoid of feelings of guilt, but it would not be responsible for producing a later form of the bad conscience that actually includes those feelings. However, I have chosen this approach instead because I think it is important to realize that Nietzsche never assigns to punishment the function of producing the bad conscience (plain or otherwise). This is a point that is often treated ambiguously and is left unexplained by those who adopt the developmental strategy. Risse, for example, claims that 'Nietzsche denies that punishment causes the bad conscience *as a feeling of guilt*. But punishment had its impact on the bad conscience *at an earlier stage*, when the latter was still detached from guilt' (Risse 2001: 58). This statement is unclear as to what kind of impact punishment is supposed to have had at the earlier stage. I think it should be evident from my analysis that this impact could not be that of originating the phenomenon (the bad conscience).

²² In their discussion of this passage, most commentators forget to emphasize the peculiar character of the type of labour performed by the instinct for freedom that Nietzsche is here at pains to describe. Take, for instance, Owen's depiction of the bad conscience as simply the 'will to mistreat the self' (Owen 2007: 106). This rendering fails to determine the sense in which the self is mistreated by itself. The point is not just that the person punishes himself; it is that he punishes himself in a peculiar way: as I say below, by producing a view of himself as something contemptible, i.e. by being critical of his self-image.

²³ One important question that is left unanswered here is why the instinct for freedom that has reverted upon itself would perform precisely this type of labour against the agent. The instinct could vent itself against its possessor in all sorts of different ways, e.g., in acts of self-flagellation. I think Nietzsche's account is not meant to exclude this type of discharges. On the contrary, it makes more sense to interpret Nietzsche as having a broad and all-inclusive picture of how this instinct for freedom expresses itself post repression. After all, presumably prior to its being repressed, this instinct manifested itself externally in all sorts of different ways—and I think Nietzsche suggests as much. Why would we expect it to manifest itself in only one way after it is forced to turn inward? Still, the important point to bear in mind here is that the repression of this instinct by itself will not yield a bad conscience, precisely because the instinct could vent itself against its possessor in a variety of different ways, none of which need impact the person's self-conception. We can begin to speak of a bad conscience only when the instinct turns against the agent in the peculiar way that I think Nietzsche is emphasizing in the passage I quoted. Again, although he does not provide an explanation for this, I think it is not unreasonable to expect the repressed instinct to, at some point, manifest itself in this peculiar way. The point of the repression of any instinct is precisely to channel it into increasingly more 'spiritual' avenues of expression. Among them one would certainly have to include the one that leads to the agent's own image of himself. Moreover, I think this makes a lot of psychological sense. We must remember that, before his incarceration, this person was no different from the other beasts of prey that roamed free in nature. This means that the spontaneous, self-affirming image of himself that his conscience was naturally producing for him, will be, after his incarceration, *downgraded* to the image of someone that is *incomplete* compared to what he was, or what he knew himself to be, before this momentous change happened to him. When this person looks again at himself in the mirror, it should come as no surprise that he will start to see himself as someone abject, vulgar, low, and so on, i.e. that he will manifest a bad conscience. (Thanks to Bernard Reginster and Ken Gemes for pressing me on this issue.)

²⁴ In this respect my account stands on the side of Ridley and opposed to Risse who tries to argue against such strong continuities between the three treatises.

²⁵ To be sure, it is compatible with our having a conception of ourselves as incomplete or imperfect that we think ourselves condemned to such a status. In that case, we would adopt a fatalistic attitude and need not think that we can change ourselves. However, as I try to stress below, Nietzsche's characterization of the instinct for freedom as an active, creative force and a harbinger of change and transformation, means that the person in whom this instinct has reverted must come to see himself not only as incomplete or imperfect, but, more importantly, as capable of changing (as a sort of canvas that can be painted over and transformed) and as capable of executing such a change himself (by way of the instinct for freedom operating in him). I think such a conception is the natural result of the instinct's own drive as Nietzsche has described it. If in the end the person

still ends up adopting a fatalistic attitude toward himself, then we must understand this as resulting from other psychic forces operating in him or as the result of a general weakening of his instinct for freedom.

²⁶ This raises some interesting issues about the origin of the concept of free will and Nietzsche's understanding of its connection to the slave revolt in morality. Most commentators assume that the idea of a free agent (a subject underlying events that can choose in one direction or another) originated with slave morality, and in particular, out of the slave's need to find targets of blame for his subjugation and suffering (see, for example, Williams 1994: 245; Janaway 2007: 113; Richardson 2009: 141; and, more recently, Pippin 2010: 70–1). But, if my account is correct, for Nietzsche the concept of free will is older than the revolt and does not have a genesis in any particular morality. Instead, it is one of the upshots of the production of a bad conscience and originates from the capacity to see oneself as standing over and above the possible conceptions one has of oneself. It is worth pointing out that in the famous passage in GM I.13 that commentators rely on to establish that the belief in free will originates with slave morality, what Nietzsche actually says is that the weak and resentful *exploit the belief in free will for their own ends* and that this should come as no surprise, since this belief allows the slave to hold the master accountable for being a master. His whole discussion in the passage presupposes that the belief is already there in place to be exploited and used in particular directions by the weak. Indeed, the only place in the *Genealogy* where Nietzsche directly mentions something about the origin of the concept of free will itself is on GM II.7, where he argues that the concept was invented by philosophers mostly out of a need to ensure that the interest of the gods in man would never exhaust itself. In this connection, the reader should bear in mind that, for the most part, the philosopher is seen as a noble and active force throughout the *Genealogy* (especially in the third treatise). Although I cannot pursue this suggestion here, I do want to highlight an important aspect of it for our discussion. Both the thread I have been following, in connection to the bad conscience and its relation to free will, and this last thread, concerning the philosopher and the gods, have this in common: they both suggest that the concept of 'free will' is not a slavish and reactive concept that was devised by the weak. Instead, it is a concept that for Nietzsche has its origins in aggressive, active and noble forces (the instinct for freedom and the philosopher), and that can be used in clearly positive ways. For the Nietzsche of the *Genealogy* at least, it seems that the concept of free will is not in itself problematic, what matters is its uses and effects (certainly not its truth). His concern is with its slavish uses, but he is quite open and receptive to its noble uses as well, most notably, as I will show later, in the figure of the sovereign individual that is the subject of our investigation.

²⁷ Janaway agrees with Risse's assessment. However, if I understand him correctly, for Janaway the moralization in question is distinct from the process whereby moral feelings of guilt are first produced. Thus, there can be moral feelings of guilt or non-material guilty feelings that are prior to the moralization of guilt Nietzsche mentions in Section 21. Under this interpretation, then, the moralization Nietzsche is speaking about in that section consists in placing the non-material guilty feelings associated with material transactions into a normative scheme possessed of a particular conception of the morally good, in effect turning those feelings into a virtue (Janaway 2007: 138, 141–2). Suggestive as this account may be, I find it somewhat in tension with Nietzsche's own characterization in the *Genealogy* particularly in the section in question. After all, there he claims that what gets moralized is not the feeling but the concept of guilt. Indeed, Nietzsche's whole account up to that point has established pretty clearly that prior to the moralization spoken of in Section 21 there are no moral feelings whatsoever associated with creditor-

debtor relations; so that even Janaway's suggestion that there is an ethically normative guilt (in effect a moral notion but not the moral notion of Christianity) operating in debtor-creditor relations seems to fly in the face of Nietzsche's own account. There are other commentators that also offer similar versions of this kind of hypothesis: see May 1999; Risse 2005; and Owen 2007, who follows May's version on this point. Conway also seems to assume that there is a moral or ethically normative sense of guilt around before the moralization spoken of in Section 21, although in my opinion he is somewhat frustratingly unclear on this point. In any case, he also mistakenly credits Christianity for the moralization in that section (Conway 2008: 88–92). For different reasons, these writers seem to have fallen prey to the need to moralize the concepts of guilt and duty prior to the section in which Nietzsche first speaks of their moralization. But as my account has shown, for Nietzsche even after the emergence of the primitive form of the bad conscience, agents acting in the world prior to the moralization mentioned in Section 21 could at best have material guilty feelings, equivalent to the feeling of sadness that accompanies the thought that something went unexpectedly wrong in the performance of their lawbreaking actions. According to Nietzsche, such actions, even if they were in the agent's mind legally questionable, were never ethically or morally so (they were never seen as reprehensible as such). In his essay, Reginster also argues that there is a moral conception of guilt that emerges prior to the one spoken of in Section 21, which he also understands to be distinctively Christian in nature (Reginster, forthcoming). His account, however, does offer a coherent and somewhat compelling—if, in my view, ultimately mistaken—rationale for thinking this. The account rests on an explanation of how the material sense of obligation involved in primitive contractual relations came to include guilty feelings of diminished self-worth in their participants. According to Reginster, the initial fear of pain (fear of punishment) for not fulfilling one's duties that served as prime motivator for the agent, was at some point replaced by the feeling of power that the agent experienced every time he managed to overcome the resistance of desires that conflicted with the fulfilment of his duties. If I understand correctly, that overcoming itself is at first the result of prudential calculations (i.e. the agent's fear of punishment), but eventually it becomes an end in itself; and, when it does, the agent no longer fulfils promises out of fear but out of his desire to experience his own feeling of power in fulfilling them. When coupled with the idea that the agent comes to feel pride in this feeling of power (as Nietzsche claims the sovereign individual does), Reginster is able to claim that the breaking of promises on its own will decrease the agent's self-worth in the way that is characteristic of ordinary moral guilt. The main difficulty I have with this line of interpretation is that of understanding how and why an agent, who initially does not want to resist (much less overcome) his desires, and who experiences this resistance as unpleasant and is then forced (by unpleasant means) to overcome it, would come to regard this overcoming itself as pleasant or good, and thus as something that on its own is worth his while pursuing. The mere fact of his being forced to repeatedly overcome those desires does not seem to me enough to warrant the agent's identification with the desire to overcome them, or even enough to elicit in him a feeling of his own power when he does overcome them. That would seem to require that the agent see the overcoming of resistances as resulting from *his own mastery* of them (*his own power* over them). Yet, the question is how he could come to regard it that way, when he is being constantly reminded that it is the power of the fearful bulwarks of society (an external power) that is responsible, not only for his having to oppose such resistances in the first place, but even for his eventual overcoming of them (out of fear), in case he does fulfil his promises. Notice that what is missing, and seems to be required, for the agent to experience the sort

of pride that Reginster claims he eventually develops (through repeated fulfilment of promises), is precisely a conception of himself as master over his desires and emotions, that is, as someone whose overcoming of such desires and emotions is imputable to him. But that would put the sovereign agent unsavourily close to the sort of autonomy Reginster wants to deny to him. This is, thus, another way in which I see Reginster's account as being somewhat in tension with itself. See note 9 above.

²⁸ Owen seems to agree with Risse in this respect as evidenced by his rendering of *Gottesbegriffe* as 'the concept of God' and by his claim that the 'conception of gods' (as exemplified by the ancient Greek religion) need not elevate mistreatment into an ideal in the way it does in moralized guilt. See Owen 2007: 109–10.

²⁹ However, it should be noted that Christianity is not the only force mentioned in that section; Nietzsche also speaks of a nihilistic withdrawal from existence in general, which he directly associates with Buddhism and the like religions (GM II.21).

³⁰ Leiter and Risse are not alone in sharing this view. Indeed there seems to be almost unanimous agreement among commentators that a substantial part of Nietzsche's attack on morality is focused on the moral notion of guilt, and that he is therefore completely opposed to this moral concept. A good example of this position is Williams 1993. For a nice and concise discussion of the view see also Clark 2001. Others include writers as varied as Deleuze 2006; May 1999; Allison 2001; Owen 2007; Pippin 2010; and Reginster, forthcoming. Not even those who defend positive Nietzschean notions of free will and responsibility, like Ken Gemes and Janaway, go as far as to question this assumption (see Gemes and Janaway 2006; also Janaway 2007: 124–42). In fairness to these authors, it should be said that they have (or at least some of them) a fairly narrow concept of moral guilt in mind, which they usually want to associate exclusively with Christian or slave morality. The problem with their approach is that it is in conflict with Nietzsche's text and forces them to claim that there is a moralized notion of guilt, of the garden variety sort, implicated in contractual relations prior to Nietzsche's first mention of it. These authors are thus compelled to provide an account of how such a feeling of guilt could have arisen that is missing from the text and, in my opinion, often ends up doing exegetical violence to it. Moreover, this strategy runs the risk of construing moral guilt so narrowly, loading it with all sorts of contrived metaphysical notions and ideas, that none but the most philosophically sophisticated Christians and advocates of slave morality could be said to adhere to it; something that would lessen the reach and ultimate impact of Nietzsche's views and criticisms. Importantly, and perhaps ironically, the possibly less abstruse ideas that, I have suggested above and will claim below, Nietzsche accepts and welcomes as part of moral guilt, like the notion that the agent could have done otherwise and that he is the liable author of his own actions, are ones that these commentators often weave into the narrowly construed guilt they claim Nietzsche is rejecting.

³¹ To be sure, the notion that one could have done otherwise need not apply only to moral guilt. It could attach to other morally neutral emotions like disappointment or regret. In this sense, one could describe the feeling of sadness felt by violators of the law living under the yoke of the morality of custom in prehistoric times, as also being equivalent to the thought that one could have done otherwise. However, it bears emphasizing that in this latter case, the thought is devoid of moral significance because it is not linked to the person's sense of diminished self-worth. The agent in this scenario is simply sad that his actions turned out contrary to his expectations and that he now must suffer because of it. We can say he wishes he had done something different but we cannot say that he feels he has polluted his self-image, or threatened his integrity, through his actions. What is missing to make this thought into a properly moral one is the

intertwining of the agent's material guilt and the bad conscience that, Nietzsche claims, is accomplished in the moralization process I have discussed. In that case, the thought that one could have done otherwise is directly linked to the person's sense of self-worth and is usually triggered by his failure to fulfil the obligations he understood himself as having taken upon himself. The link between these elements cuts both ways (this is what I take their intertwining to mean): the feeling of diminished self-worth can be cashed out in terms of the thought that one could have done otherwise, and this thought in turn can be cashed out in terms of the feeling; and insofar as the thought is cashed out in this way, it would be no longer exactly the same thought that accompanies the morally neutral feeling of sadness for what one has done, but now would be instead a morally laden version of it. (I am grateful to Bernard Reginster for pressing me on this point).

³² Nietzsche's main target in the section is Eugen Dühring who claims that justice arises from the sphere of the reactive feelings itself as an extension of the feeling of being aggrieved.

³³ I hope it is clear by now that Nietzsche need not be committed to the claim that modern judicial systems are necessarily closer to the realization of the goals contained in the basic historical trend of justice than prior forms of judicial organization. Supposing Nietzsche is correct about the basic historical orientation of justice, his understanding of historical processes still allows for the possibility of arresting the historical progress of judicial development. Though he does not discuss this directly, given his overall critical posture towards modernity, Nietzsche's own view might well have been that the modern judiciary constitutes an obstruction, perhaps even a regression, in the historical advancement of justice. If such were the case it would mean, according to his account, that the reactive powers have won (if perhaps only momentarily) the battle against the aggressive forces (the promoters of justice), and have gained control of the judiciary, reinterpreting it according to their own interests and mandates.

³⁴ Thus, according to my interpretation and contrary to what Conway suggests, for Nietzsche the moralization of the concepts of debt and duty is essential to the nature of the obligations of all primitive religious institutions; see Conway 2008: 95.

³⁵ Nietzsche is particularly interested in the Christian priest. But it is clear that throughout most of the sections in the three treatises of the *Genealogy* he is discussing the particular features, role, and character of the ascetic priest who, according to Nietzsche, appears everywhere in almost every age, emerges from all social classes, and does not belong to any one particular race (GM III.11).

³⁶ The reader should bear in mind that the ambiguity in Nietzsche's use of the word *Schuld* that was mentioned earlier is perhaps especially conspicuous in this section of the *Genealogy*. Nietzsche claims that the origin of the *Schuldgefühl* (moral feeling of guilt? or material guilty feeling of being indebted?) had been briefly suggested in the second treatise, as no more than a piece of animal psychology. This coupled with his parenthetical characterization of the bad conscience as cruelty directed backwards, could suggest that he is speaking of a feeling that is implicated with the bad conscience in its state *prior* to the moralization process discussed above. If that is so, then *Schuldgefühl* must be construed as a material 'guilty feeling of having debts' and not as moral 'feeling of guilt'. This is the interpretation that Risse favours; see Risse 2001: 77n23. However, in my judgement this raises the problem of explaining Nietzsche's claim that the priest is an artist in material guilty feelings of being indebted, or that he exploits such a feeling to give it the form of sin. If we construe *Schuldgefühl* as a moral feeling of guilt, these problems can be accounted for more easily. What Nietzsche is suggesting is that the priest takes advantage of the moralization of the concepts of 'guilt' and 'duty' that he had

already helped to bring about (this is why he claims that the priest is an artist in guilty feelings). The priest gives the moral feeling of guilt the form of sin, transforming the moral concept of guilt, which applies to the person's particular trespasses, into a concept that applies to the person as a whole. I think this reading not only makes more sense of the text, but is also supported by Nietzsche's use of *Schuld* throughout this section, where for the most part it seems clear that he means the moral concept of 'guilt' and not a material or proto-moral concept.

³⁷ Throughout the *Genealogy* Nietzsche establishes a very strong affinity between Buddhism and Christianity. In the preface, for example, he suggests that under the influence of the morality of pity (Christianity) the European culture is now on the verge of a new Buddhism, a Buddhism for Europeans (GM Preface, 5; see also GM III.27, where Nietzsche suggests that Christian morality follows an evolutionary process that parallels the one experienced much earlier in the East). In the *Antichrist*, written a year after the *Genealogy*, both religions are still described as belonging together, insofar as they are both nihilistic religions (religions of decadence), but Nietzsche now clearly states that the difference between them is considerable. In particular, he argues that Buddhism 'is a hundred times more realistic than Christianity' (A, 20). Unlike the latter, Nietzsche tells us, Buddhism respects reality because it speaks a language that has been purged of moral concepts. Thus, it does not fight against sin, but against suffering (ibid.; see also A, 22–3). Still, even here Nietzsche seems to adhere to the view that these religions follow a similar evolutionary process: what distinguishes Buddhism from Christianity is that the former comes at the end of this evolutionary process, it has already situated itself beyond good and evil, while Christianity, according to Nietzsche, is only now on the verge of such a transformation.

³⁸ For an example of the sort of thing Nietzsche might be getting at with this suggestion see note 42 below.

³⁹ This position, that I am interpreting Nietzsche to have held, is opposite to that of commentators like Risse 2001, Owen 2007 and Williams 1994, for whom the Greeks did not possess a moral concept of guilt.

⁴⁰ Greek literature is in great measure all about the struggle between the mortals and the gods. In the *Iliad*, for instance, the gods are constantly intervening in the battles in part because the mortals, by exercising their free will, very often threaten to disrupt their divine plans.

⁴¹ In *Ecce Homo* Nietzsche repeats this idea but gives it an interesting twist. He writes: 'If one is rich enough for this, it is even a good fortune to be in the wrong. A god who would come to earth must not *do* anything except wrong: not to take the punishment upon oneself but the *guilt* would be divine' (EH I.5). Thus, whereas in the *Genealogy* taking upon themselves the moral guilt makes the gods more like noble humans, in *Ecce Homo* it is suggested that adopting the same manoeuvre would make a human being more like a god.

⁴² The account of moral guilt that I have been pursuing in this whole section is somewhat at odds with the prevailing tendency in contemporary characterizations of this moral phenomenon. Guilt is often described as an emotion that primarily concerns one's failures towards others. Said failures trigger feelings of inadequacy, remorse, self-contempt and the like in oneself. These feelings are unleashed, so the story goes, because one has internalized a victim who has been harmed by one's actions, and now demands restoration or appeasement. Since we have internalized such a victim, we allow ourselves to be punished by ourselves on his behalf, precisely by venting the aforementioned feelings on ourselves, in an attempt to placate the victim's justifiable anger and make

amends. For different versions of this position, see Rawls 1971: 481–5; Gibbard 1990: 126–40; and Williams 1994: 89–90. I think Nietzsche would argue that this understanding of guilt is under the grip of a 'slavish' and 'reactive' perspective on the phenomenon, even if we, contemporary thinkers, are unaware of it (in this connection, the reader should recall that the *Genealogy* begins with the words 'We are unknown to ourselves'). We fail to realize that our concepts are shaped and transformed by forces that continue to operate in the shadows of our moral psyches. Part of the project, and the *raison d'être*, of a genealogical inquiry is to recover the history of those conceptual transformations and to help us recognize the sorts of forces that have shaped and continue to shape them. Nietzsche thinks we require this project of self-knowledge in order to engage in the critical enterprise of reformulating our moral concepts for the better (by in effect purging them of the negative influences and by recruiting more positive influences in their stead). We can see this at work in our current discussion on moral guilt. For Nietzsche the idea that we have internalized a victim is a late addition to the phenomenon. In original moral guilt, we have not internalized the victim, but the aggressor. It is our own instinct for freedom that does the work of punishing us for our actions, all the while making us feel we have no entitlement to complain or to be spared (partly, I take it, because it is our own self in a different capacity that is here punishing itself, and partly because this self presents (and represents) itself to us as an ideal self—the sovereign individual, as I shall claim in the next section—with which we identify and whose authority we thus accept). This aggressor (this master) that we ourselves are, places demands on ourselves, in particular, the demand that we fulfil the obligations we have taken upon ourselves (obligations that typically, though not necessarily, involve others). In this way, it demands that we be *responsible* for ourselves (and since *it* is simply us in a different capacity, this statement is equivalent to the claim that it is we, ourselves, that demand that we be responsible for ourselves). When we fail to heed this demand, we fail ourselves and let ourselves down. Again, in the typical case, we also thereby fail others as well. Thus, contrary to the characterization above, for Nietzsche we do not allow ourselves to be punished by ourselves on the victim's behalf, instead we actively punish ourselves on our own behalf for having failed our own selves by defaulting on our obligations (usually to others). This latter understanding of guilt is nobler than the former in part because it emphasizes what we may loosely call self-accountability over other-accountability, and because it highlights the active role of the individual in shaping his own emotions, as opposed to the passive mien that characterizes the accounts dominated by a slavish outlook. Of course, nothing I have said thus far speaks to the issue of what might be wrong with the contemporary 'slavish' outlook on moral guilt. Explaining what is dangerous about it requires explaining why for Nietzsche there is a nihilistic force at work in such outlooks, and why this force curtails human flourishing and splendour. This is a task that reaches beyond the scope of this paper, although I do say some things about it in the section below. Nonetheless, suppose we grant that there is something troubling about slavish worldviews; there is still an issue as to what our proper response should be. It is important to emphasize that from a Nietzschean perspective proper responses to this threat need not consist of brute excisions of slavish elements. Returning to our case, perhaps the reform that Nietzsche would recommend to us is that we simply restore the priority of self-accountability over that of other-accountability in our understanding of the moral concept of guilt. This does not require that we discard other-accountability or that we refrain from internalizing victims or the like, but that we simply displace those elements from the dominant role that they currently have in our moral concepts and self-understandings. I see Stephen Darwall's account of guilt as a modern development

in this Nietzschean direction; see Darwall 2006: 71–2, 79, and 112–14; also, for a more concise statement, Darwall 2010: 216–28 at 220 and 222. Darwall correctly notes that a person beset by moral guilt not only feels that someone else has the authority to hold him responsible (what I have called other-accountability), but also experiences the attitude of holding himself responsible by taking on a second-personal perspective toward himself (what I have called self-accountability). Darwall is not interested in discussing the issue of the conceptual ordering or priority of these different feelings and attitudes, partly—I take it—because he is not concerned with the Nietzschean problem of whether and how our moral concepts may betray nihilistic tendencies. However, from a Nietzschean point of view, his account takes us a step in the right direction because it more befittingly opens up the conceptual space by recognizing the two elements of accountability (to others and to self) involved in our notion of guilt, and thus allows us to raise the issue of their ‘healthy’ (non-nihilistic) ordering and configuration.

⁴³ In his recent study, Robert Pippin argues that Nietzsche seeks to replace our traditional notions of agency and responsibility by a model in which the agent must be understood as being wholly in his deed. Under such a model the reactions of regret for what one did, usually associated with responsibility and guilt, would have to be redefined. According to Pippin, Nietzsche turns to Spinoza in order to characterize the way in which these concepts and feelings may be newly understood. At this point, Pippin cites Section 15 of the second treatise where Nietzsche quotes Spinoza’s description in his *Ethics* of the bad conscience as merely a feeling of sadness that accompanies the recollection of an action that turned out contrary to the agent’s expectation (Pippin 2010: 82–3). Since in his work Pippin is not doing a close reading of the *Genealogy*, he understandably fails to realize that in Section 15 Nietzsche enlists Spinoza’s aid in order to describe the way in which wrong doers, overtaken by punishment, felt with regard to their offence during those millennia of the prehistoric labour of man upon himself, carried out by the social apparatus of the morality of custom. To be sure, Nietzsche thinks that for the most part contemporary criminals feel no different than they did back then, but the focus of the section is to describe the state of ‘innocence’ of the world as it was known to the prehistoric human beings that were closer to the animal in the period prior to the invention of the bad conscience and the moral feeling of guilt. It is true that in his writings Nietzsche admires the beast of prey man for its strength and health, but he also thinks that such brute animality is devoid of profundity and spirituality, and thereby more obtuse and uninteresting. And while Nietzsche does entreat us to realize a ‘second innocence’, it is highly doubtful that by this he means us to go back to such a flat and insipid prehistoric state. Perhaps adopting a Spinozistic conscience of the sort Pippin favours would mean going back to a ‘healthier’ and more whole understanding of ourselves, but it also means going back to a substantially less interesting and less profound one, and that seems to me contrary to what Nietzsche would want.

⁴⁴ This phrase may seem to problematically equate having a conscience with being sovereign. In this paper, I have defended the normative significance of sovereignty as an ideal of autonomy and freedom that Nietzsche exhorts us to realize. But if having a conscience were all that is needed to be sovereign, then every human being that is not a psychopath would count as having realized the ideal already (among them, many who are the targets of Nietzsche’s attacks for being precisely incarnations of the opposite ideal, like Christians and modern scientists). It would seem to make no sense, then, for Nietzsche to present sovereignty in the normative laden way he does (thanks to Ken Gemes for alerting me to this problem). In response to this worry, let me first say that, in a sense, there is something deeply right about this line of thinking. Among other

things, the *Genealogy* offers a naturalistic story of how we came to develop the moral capacities that set us apart from the rest of the animal kingdom. I have been arguing that for Nietzsche one of those capacities is the capacity to be responsible individuals who are in control of their lives. Unlike other animals, we are not pushed around by our instincts and desires, but can reflect on them and decide whether we want to be moved by them or not. This is part of the reason why we hold each other morally accountable for what we do. Incidentally, I am not necessarily arguing that this picture concerning the springs of non-human behaviour is correct. It may well be—and perhaps some cognitive studies done on animals, specially primates, are beginning to suggest as much—that some animals actually have sophisticated wills, and describing them as being wholly in the grip of their instinctual promptings is quite inaccurate. Today we are more prone to accept that there is much continuity between our cognitive lives and those of other animals. But such complex pictures of animal behaviour were certainly not prevalent among nineteenth-century thinkers, who for the most part always saw an enormous gap between human and animal conduct. And while Nietzsche in the *Genealogy* does try to bridge the gap somewhat by placing us back into the natural order of things and dissuading us from our divine aspirations, I think it is fair to say that he still very much had a somewhat flat view of animal life in general. Among the things that still set us apart (that make us into interesting animals) in his mind, is precisely the capacity to be sovereign individuals that has resulted from a long natural process of historical development. Of course, there are distinctions to be made here between merely having the capacity and exercising it; and, then, between merely exercising it, and doing so well, or correctly, or masterfully, or in any other host of normative senses. And it is here where, I think, it is not so strange for Nietzsche to challenge us to become sovereign. As I will argue below, Nietzsche's *Genealogy* is also the story of how we have ruined the capacity that nature has bred into us. For the most part we are constantly disavowing our sovereignty or manifesting it by in effect giving ourselves over to different forms of bondage, even if we are not aware of doing so. In the words of the young Nietzsche: 'we have declined from [the image of man] to the level of the animals or even of automata' (UM III, 4). We seem to be content with playing the part of cogs in machineries that forever exceed us; or with being mere valets of moralities, political parties, religions and so on; or simply with conceiving of ourselves as no more than causally necessitated organisms that are not in control of their actions. We are in despair and in constant fear of the very freedom that sets us apart from the rest of nature and it is in this sense, I think, that for Nietzsche there is still a task to be pursued and much to be done for us to fully realize our sovereignty.

⁴⁵ In this respect, my position agrees with that of Lawrence Hatab who correctly sees sovereignty as associated with morality and, in particular, with what he understands to be modern, liberal notions of moral responsibility, autonomy and freedom. See Hatab 1995; Cf. Acampora 2006; Loeb 2006. Unlike Hatab, however, I do not think that Nietzsche meant to radically dissociate himself from such enlightenment ideals, nor do I think it so difficult to join him to them, since he himself seems to defend and recommend them in his works, as is the case with sovereignty in the opening sections of the second treatise of the *Genealogy*. In my interpretation, Nietzsche can be seen as defending those ideals from the very forces that were instrumental in creating them in the first place, and are now threatening to drive them in nihilistic directions (see the discussion below). To be sure, by this I do not mean to suggest that Nietzsche was a wholesale advocate of liberal theory. After all, he does adopt a critical posture towards many enlightenment ideals like the overestimation of reason and the emphasis on egalitarianism. But we must remember, first, that to be critical of these ideals is not necessarily the same as rejecting or displacing

them, and, second, that the question of whether Nietzsche in the end does reject a purported ideal must be decided on the basis of careful analysis of the texts where discussion of that ideal occurs. In this case, I think that the analysis I have provided speaks in favour of seeing Nietzsche as appropriating, in his own idiosyncratic way, the enlightenment ideal of autonomy and sovereignty with its concurrent notion of moral responsibility.

⁴⁶ For example, for Clark: a narrow and a broad morality, for Leiter: morality in the pejorative and non-pejorative sense.

⁴⁷ See note 30.

⁴⁸ Compare Conway's answer to this question. For Conway, the task is incomplete because the human animal now labours under the crushing burden of a guilty conscience (Conway 2008: 54). I partly agree with Conway that Christian morality is responsible for arresting the development of sovereignty (we differ in that I think the ascetic ideal is the real culprit and Christianity just is its most notable exponent), but I disagree with the notion that Christian morality accomplishes this through the guilty conscience. On my reading moral guilt is not the problem; the real problem is the nihilistic or sinful conscience that Christianity (but also any other representative of the ascetic ideal) promotes. Although he does not offer a close reading of the second treatise, in his introductory article to reading the *Genealogy*, Keith Ansell Pearson accurately notices that Nietzsche's quarrel is with sin, not with moral guilt. He also observes rightly that the Christian moralization of guilt is just the summit of the historical process—began much earlier—of moralizing the material sense of obligation. See Ansell Pearson 2006: 31 and 35.

⁴⁹ The notion of moral guilt that I am appealing to here may seem too vague. Obviously, it is meant to exclude the 'sinful' interpretation of moral guilt that I have argued is the real target of Nietzsche's criticisms. But in its generality, this notion may give the reader no clear guidance as to what understanding of moral guilt is being invoked. In a way, I am being intentionally ambiguous here. For one thing, I do not want to preclude the possibility of finding many other interpretations of moral guilt that Nietzsche would deem equally harmful and deficient. As I have argued, part of his problem with the 'sinful' version of guilt has to do with its comprehensive scope (it is a notion that applies to the person as a whole, instead of applying only to his particular trespasses). But one could understand moral guilt within a more narrow scope and do so in a way that, from a Nietzschean point of view, is still problematic. I have tried to indicate what this might look like in note 42. I think Nietzsche would find fault with any understanding of our moral concepts that is in the grips of passive and reactive perspectives. This means that the positive notion of moral guilt I am appealing to here must eschew such perspectives, or at least displace them from their dominant roles. However, once again, I do not want to preclude the option of finding many different healthy Nietzschean ways of doing this. In my discussion of Nietzsche's account of the Greeks I presented one option he finds acceptable. However, since this notion relies on an understanding of ourselves as engaged in a struggle with supernatural forces, we, in the enlightened, secular and scientifically minded age, might not find this interpretation of guilt so palatable or, indeed, at all feasible. What I think we can learn from Nietzsche's example of the Greeks, though, is that any healthy understanding of moral guilt must include a pressure relief valve that allows us to cope with our moral failings in a way that is not debilitating and prevents them from becoming all consuming aspects of our self-understandings. In effect, this means that such healthy interpretations of guilt should incorporate elements that mitigate our blame somehow without completely relieving us

from all sense of responsibility. I believe they would also need to emphasize the sort of self-accountability I spoke of in the aforementioned note, as well as to give a preeminent and active role to the self in shaping his own emotions. (Thanks to the anonymous referee for giving me the opportunity to clarify my position here.)

⁵⁰ I would like to thank Stephen Darwall and Michelle Kosch for their helpful comments on a much earlier version of this paper. Also many thanks are due to Ken Gemes, Bernard Reginster and the anonymous referee for their illuminating feedback and for urging me to clarify my position on important issues. My work benefitted also from conversation with James Tappenden and James Porter, as well as from discussion with the participants of the Graduate Student Seminar in philosophy at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, in the years 2005 and 2006. I am grateful to all of them for their input. An earlier version of this paper was presented by invitation at the Department of Philosophy at the University of Memphis in April 2009, and was accepted for the 17th International Conference of the Friedrich Nietzsche Society of Great Britain and Ireland at the University of Oxford in September 2009. I thank attendants at both events for their questions and feedback.

REFERENCES

- Acampora, C. D. (2006), 'On Sovereignty and Overhumanity: Why it Matters How We Read Nietzsche's *Genealogy* II:2', in C. D. Acampora (ed.) *Nietzsche's On the Genealogy of Morals: Critical Essays*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Allison, D. B. (2001), *Reading the New Nietzsche*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Ansell Pearson, K. (2006), 'A "Dyonisian Drama on the 'Fate of the Soul' ": An Introduction to Reading *On the Genealogy of Morals*', in C. D. Acampora (ed.) *Nietzsche's On the Genealogy of Morals: Critical Essays*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Clark, M. (1994), 'Nietzsche's Immoralism and the Concept of Morality', in R. Schacht (ed.), *Nietzsche, Genealogy, Morality: Essays on Nietzsche's 'Genealogy of Morals'*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- (2001), 'On the Rejection of Morality: Bernard Williams' Debt to Nietzsche', in R. Schacht (ed.), *Nietzsche's Postmoralism: Essays on Nietzsche's Prelude to Philosophy's Future*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Clark, M. and Swensen, A. (1998), commented translation of *On the Genealogy of Morality*. Indianapolis: Hackett.
- Conway, D. (2008), *Nietzsche's On the Genealogy of Morals*. New York: Continuum.
- Darwall, S. (2006), *The Second-Person Standpoint: Respect, Morality, and Accountability*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- (2010), 'Precis: Second-Person Standpoint', *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 81: 216–28.
- Deleuze, G. (2006), *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. H. Tomlinson. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Foucault, M. (1984), 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History', reprinted in P. Rabinow (ed.), *The Foucault Reader*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Gemes, K. and Janaway, C. (2006), 'Nietzsche on Free Will, Autonomy and the Sovereign Individual', *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society Supplementary Volume*, 80: 321–57.
- Geuss, R. (2002), 'Genealogy as Critique', *European Journal of Philosophy*, 10: 209–15.
- Gibbard, A. (1990), *Wise Choices, Apt Feelings: A Theory of Normative Judgement*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Hatab, L. J. (1995), *A Nietzschean Defense of Democracy: An Experiment in Postmodern Politics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Janaway, C. (2007), *Beyond Selflessness: Reading Nietzsche's Genealogy*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Katsafanas, P. (2005), 'Nietzsche's Theory of Mind: Consciousness and Conceptualization', *European Journal of Philosophy*, 13: 1–31.
- Leiter, B. (2002), *Nietzsche on Morality*. London: Routledge.
- Loeb, P. (2006), 'Finding the Übermensch Nietzsche's Genealogy of Morality', in C. D. Acampora (ed.), *Nietzsche's On the Genealogy of Morals: Critical Essays*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- MacIntyre, A. (1990), *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopedia, Genealogy, and Tradition*. South Bend: Notre Dame University Press.
- May, S. (1999), *Nietzsche's Ethics and his War on 'Morality'*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich (1954 [1895]), *The Antichrist*, in *The Portable Nietzsche*, ed. and trans. W. Kaufmann. New York: Viking.
- (1967 [1887]), *On the Genealogy of Morals*, in *On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo*, trans. W. Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale. New York: Vintage.
- (1967 [1908]), *Ecce Homo: How One Becomes What One Is*, in *On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo*, trans. W. Kaufmann. New York: Vintage.
- (1974 [1882 and 1887 (Book V added)]), *The Gay Science: With a Prelude in German Rhymes and an Appendix of Songs*, trans. W. Kaufmann. New York: Vintage.
- (1997 [1874]), *Untimely Meditation III: Schopenhauer as Educator*, in *Untimely Meditations*, ed. Daniel Breazeale, trans. R. J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Owen, D. (2007), *Nietzsche's Genealogy of Morality*. Ithaca: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Pippin, R. (2010), *Nietzsche, Psychology, and First Philosophy*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Rawls, J. (1971), *A Theory of Justice*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Reginster, B. (forthcoming), 'The Genealogy of Guilt', in S. May (ed.), *Nietzsche's 'On the Genealogy of Morality': A Critical Guide*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Richardson, J. (2009), 'Nietzsche's Freedoms', in K. Gemes and S. May (eds), *Nietzsche on Freedom and Autonomy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ridley, A. (1998), *Nietzsche's Conscience: Six Character Studies from the 'Genealogy'*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Risse, M. (2001), 'The Second Treatise in *On the Genealogy of Morality*: Nietzsche on the Origin of the Bad Conscience', *European Journal of Philosophy*, 9: 55–81.
- (2005), 'On God and Guilt: A Reply to Aaron Ridley', in *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, 29: 46–53.
- White, R. J. (1997), *Nietzsche and the Problem of Sovereignty*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Williams, B. (1993), 'Nietzsche's Minimalist Moral Psychology', *European Journal of Philosophy*, 1: 4–14.
- (1994), *Shame and Necessity*. Berkeley: University of California Press.