

ON THE MORALS OF GENEALOGY

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The article describes how an intellectual community of those following French trends in the academy have, for the past forty years, been offering a mistaken reading of Friedrich Nietzsche's concept of genealogy. The essay shows how Nietzsche mocks moral psychologists by calling them genealogists, contrasts Nietzsche's work with that of genealogists, and then documents how subsequent academics, encouraged by the work of Gilles Deleuze and, in turn, Michel Foucault, created a revaluation of genealogy's meaning, thereby fetishizing their own scholarly authority.

Keywords: Friedrich Nietzsche; Michel Foucault; genealogy; cultural studies; Gilles Deleuze

What does the past mean to us? Why do we value it? How ought we to pursue our questions about the past? For the last few decades, Foucault has given us the answers, solutions that seem both obvious and difficult. The proliferation of works calling themselves “genealogical” and acknowledging their debt to Foucault suggests his lessons (e.g., Foucault [1969] 1972a, [1971] 1977a, [1976] 1980) have been taken to heart. While Foucault's insights took a while to gain acceptance, his many initiates now do genealogy instead of history. But then again, when we look at what has been learned, the matter seems unhappily unsettled, with genealogists far more anxious and defensive than one might expect among associates in a gay science. While the genealogical form remains fashionably that of a counter-narrative—withstanding the high status of its practitioners in various disciplines—the actual substance of this endeavor remains rather murky despite its adherents' efforts to elucidate. Consider the reams of paper devoted to distinguishing Foucauldian “genealogy” from his “archaeology,” amid the strong suspicion that the difference amounts only to a shift in vocabulary, not method.¹

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As a consequence of Foucault's influence, one can now list hundreds of books and articles whose authors pursue a "genealogy" and not a "history" of this or that.² So, we might now ask: What does a genealogy mean to us? What is the value of a genealogy? How ought we to pursue questions about genealogies? The quick answer first. We value genealogies for political resistance, aesthetic criticism, and rote professionalization. No serious student of cultural studies today would do a "history of X" and not its genealogy for her dissertation. The fad indicates nothing especially insidious about cultural studies or the linguistic turn in parts of the academy, but amounts to one more disciplining convention. Far less insistent or hegemonic than, say, the requirement of rational choice theory or behavioral studies in the social sciences, the prevalence of a Foucauldian lexicon in the humanities calls attention to itself precisely because of its advocates' general reluctance to impose orthodoxies. The problem with the success of Foucault's method is not its opacity or relativism, as conservative critics of Foucault carp, but rather that it holds forth its own specialized jargon that turns out to be belied by its own intellectual history, leading to strained readings and analyses that at times mirror the pointless, obsessive methodism in other fields.

Foucault ([1971] 1977a) claims to derive his devotion to genealogy from Nietzsche, yet Nietzsche himself mocked genealogists and their enterprise. Approaching Nietzsche through Deleuze ([1962] 1983), Foucault misreads the single text in which Nietzsche discusses the concept of genealogy (Nietzsche [1887] 1967b), and seems thereby to have led a herd of academics away from Nietzsche's own meaning of 'Genealogie' and into what by now may have become a revaluation of the word. For an elite circle of students, "genealogy" has come to mean something quite different from its ordinary use and etymology. After offering an old-fashioned intellectual history of Nietzsche's mocking use of 'Genealogie', I turn to how the term has come to be misused and perhaps even abused by Foucault and his disciples.

AN INTELLECTUAL HISTORY OF GENEALOGY

Would-be "genealogists" may be surprised to learn that they need to choose between their two fathers, as Nietzsche and Foucault have rather different views of the meaning of the enterprise. Despite an essay claiming otherwise (Foucault [1971] 1977a), Foucault's use of 'genealogy' and 'history' is not authorized by Nietzsche's use of 'Genealogie', 'Geschichte', and 'Historie'.³ Nietzsche's *On the Genealogy of Morals: A Polemic (Zur Genealogie der Moral: Eine Streitschrift)* demonstrates that the new "geneal-

ogists” are very bad historians and does not suggest “genealogy” as a superior alternative to history.

On the Genealogy does not criticize histories referring to origins, Foucault’s lament in his work, nor does Nietzsche, as Foucault does, criticize philology for etymological narratives that find the past concealed in the present (Foucault [1969] 1972a, 64, 142, 146). Rather, Nietzsche objects when history is used to proffer moralizing, self-righteous, functionalist justifications of the status quo (Nietzsche [1887] 1967b, preface §4, §7, II. §12), especially when this is done by the state and its apologists. He wishes to steer the “English author” discussed in the *On the Genealogy*’s preface, the Jewish-Pomeranian Paul Rée,⁴ derided by Nietzsche as a genealogist, in the “direction of an actual *history [Historie] of morality*,” based on the written documents recording the particularities of the past (Nietzsche [1887] 1988b, preface §7), and away from quasi-Darwinian tripe about moral psychology. This early proliferation of a certain kind of sociobiology is what Nietzsche opposes in Rée’s work, and before that in the thought of David Strauss, whom Nietzsche also chastises for being a genealogist.

DAVID STRAUSS, APE-GENEALOGIST

Following Nietzsche’s use of the concept of Genealogie chronologically requires reaching back to a few earlier texts by Nietzsche and his targets. Strauss is best known for his *Life of Jesus* ([1836] 1860), a book widely credited as the first systematic exploration of Jesus as a historical and not sacred person.⁵ While Nietzsche was familiar with this work and possibly influenced by it (Breazeale 1997, xii), he devoted an entire essay—“David Strauss, the Confessor and Writer” (Nietzsche [1873] 1997a)—to criticizing Strauss for his subsequent blockbuster *The Old Faith and the New (Der alte und neue Glaube)* (Strauss 1873).⁶ This book is a set of extrapolations from Darwin’s *Origin of Species* ([1859] 1964) and *The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex* (1974), with section headings such as “The Ape and Man. Darwin’s Theory concerning the Descent of Man from the Ape” (1873, vol. 2, §58), “Low Beginning of the Human Race. Sociability and Necessity. First Development of Moral Qualities” (1873, vol. 2, §67), and “The Basis of Morality. Morality and Religion” (1873, vol. 2, §70).

To understand why Nietzsche objected so vehemently to Strauss, and to anticipate the parallels Nietzsche saw in Rée’s work, consider the following selections from Strauss’s ([1872] 1873) Darwinian-inflected positivism and utilitarianism:

That knowledge of the natural sciences is indispensable to the philosopher, that familiarity with the latest discoveries in chemistry, physiology, etc., is absolutely requisite to him, is hardly now denied by anyone of philosophical pretensions. (§62)

From the dear and blood-purchased experience of what is noxious and what is useful, there arise gradually among the various races of mankind, first customs, then laws, at last a code of duties. (§67)

To the State we owe the firm basis of our existence, the security of life and property; and by means of the school our fitness for living in a human community: it is incumbent on every one of its members to do all which their position in society enables them, to ensure its stability and prosperity. (§70)

And, finally, quoting Moritz Wagner, “ ‘In this inherent aspiration of Nature after an unceasingly progressive improvement and refinement of her organic forms, consists also the real proof of her divinity’ ” (§71). The notion that natural science could make sense of psychological drives so as to bring order and perfection to the state characterizes a modern epistemology Nietzsche found both banal and abhorrent.

Nietzsche characterizes Strauss as someone who “covers himself in the hairy cloak of our ape-genealogists and praises Darwin as one of the greatest benefactors of mankind” (Nietzsche [1873] 1997a, 29). Disturbed by the fact that just as Germany is escaping the grasp of totalizing, essentializing, quasi-religious narratives of culture, such as those put forward by Hegel, intellectuals are popularizing equally reductive sociobiological tenets,⁷ Nietzsche ([1873] 1997a) writes:

“All moral behaviour” says Strauss, “is a self-determination of the individual according to the idea of the species.” Translated into comprehensible language, all this means is: Live as a man and not as an ape or a seal! Unfortunately, this imperative is altogether without force and useless, because the concept of man yokes together the most diverse and manifold things, for example the Patagonian and Master Strauss, and because no one will venture to demand: “Live as a Patagonian!” and at the same time “Live as Master Strauss!” (P. 30)⁸

Nietzsche points out that the diversity of what it means to “live as a man” is at odds with the homogeneity found in the species *homo sapien*. The Patagonian morality differs from that of Strauss as a European, and no amount of biological oversimplification can account for these crucial differences, though histories of Patagonia and of Europe might be useful.⁹ There are many such passages in Nietzsche’s essay on Strauss, presciently criticizing the sociobiology that continues to haunt now three century marks of our increasingly debased and debasing self-image.

DR. RÉE

Echoing the approach of Strauss four years later, Rée claimed that Darwin's evolutionary theory applied to more than the physical origins of species. According to Rée's crude reading of Darwin and reform-minded utilitarians, evolutionary theory, supplemented by the work of J. S. Mill and others, provided a model of the origin of morality as well. The title of Rée's (1877) work, *The Origin of Moral Sentiments (Ursprung der Moralischen Empfindungen)*, suggests homage to Adam Smith and other eighteenth-century moral philosophers, as well as Darwin. Rée is in dialogue with English moral philosophy and social contract thought that seek to ground political theories in human nature. Rée essentially provides the Anglophone inquiries into morality and human nature with an equally English answer. Rée takes the problems of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, David Hume, and Adam Smith, including the infamous "war of all against all" (pp. 14-15), and hands them back to Darwin.¹⁰ According to Rée, not conscious decisions calculated to yield personal advantage but the internalization of a moral disposition selected for in the transition from nature to culture results in cooperation and peace (p. 15).

"Now," Rée (1877) writes, "since the work of La Marck and Darwin, moral phenomena can be just as easily traced to natural causes as physical phenomena: moral being is no closer to the intelligible world than physical being." He continues:

This natural(ist) explanation is based primarily on the principle: the higher animals have evolved from the lower, and the humans from the apes, by means of natural selection.

I offer no justification of this principle. For I regard it as already having been proved by the writings of Darwin, and, in part, La Marck. Those who think otherwise are welcome to leave this book unread as well: in that the work's presuppositions are denied, the conclusions cannot be admitted. (P. viii, translated by Don Reneau)

Rée's first chapter is entitled "The Origin of the Concepts of Good and Evil," and its opening sentence reads: "In each human two instincts are unified, namely the egoistic and the unegoistic," and he enumerates three selfish impulses that follow "for everyone": "1) his survival; 2) satisfying his sex drive (*Geschlechtstriebes*); 3) satisfying his personal vanity" (p. 1).

Rather than the Christian world, in which a spiritual universe designates certain motives and actions inherently good or evil, Rée (1877) says our moral vocabulary follows from evolutionary adaptations: what leads to the survival of the species is called good, and those deeds tending towards its destruction are called evil. Morality really consists of consequences that are

useful or harmful; hence our moral vocabulary of character or intentions is fuzzy-headed and out of step. We cling onto it out of habit, with no clear knowledge of how we even came to attribute values to any particular disposition such as cruelty or pity (p. 135, translated by Don Reneau).

That Nietzsche is offering a full-scale reevaluation of Rée's approach is clear from the chapter headings Nietzsche appropriates. Rée's (1877) first chapter is "The Origin of the Concepts of Good and Evil" ("Der Ursprung der Begriffe gut und böse"), concepts at the heart of much of Nietzsche's oeuvre, and especially highlighted in *Beyond Good and Evil* (*Jenseits von Gut und Böse*) (Nietzsche [1886] 1966a) and *On the Genealogy of Morals* (Nietzsche [1887] 1967b).

While Rée's open acceptance of selfish motives seems to echo and foreshadow similar themes in Nietzsche, Nietzsche displays an ambivalent scorn toward Rée's positivist relation to language and history. Rée thinks that he can objectively reclassify the meaning of things by bringing words into a more accurate relation to the objects they supposedly designate, while Nietzsche sees language as itself a creative force in making new realities. Rée thinks he is more precisely labeling human behavior, but Nietzsche thinks Rée, through this new vocabulary, is himself participating in the creation of a new human. More than Rée's errors in setting the record straight, Nietzsche takes exception with Rée's lack of self-awareness about his own pseudo-objective scientific discourse. Rée's own writings, more than what "actually" happened, need to be implicated in the production of reality, Nietzsche believes, while Rée (1877) saw language as a tool for ostensive tasks, as when he writes:

It is possible to say in general: whenever someone associates the designation good (or bad) with an object, the point is that this object is the cause of good (or bad) results. . . . Likewise, the egoist, e.g., a person who is cruel, even if he is called bad by others because he harms them, is not a bad person as such, but a person of a specific nature. To term cruelty as such bad would make no sense. . . . Although cruelty and other similar actions were originally called bad because they were bad for others, later generations lost the knowledge of how the designation arose, and retained it only out of habit. . . . A further investigation, into where this characterization of that form of behavior came from originally, comes upon distant stages in the development of culture in which such behaviors were designated bad, not because they were bad in themselves, but because they are bad for others. (Pp. 59, 63, translated by Don Reneau)

Rée is documenting here what amounts to a genealogy of morals: locating the origin of a concept in its previously misunderstood prehistory and pointing out the designation's continued use in contexts that may be quite different from those in which it emerged. To be clear, this is not to say that Rée admires

the prevailing morality; he is simply pointing out the previously unknown facts underlying its emergence.

NIETZSCHE'S REVALUATION OF DR. RÉE

Closely paraphrasing but rebuking Rée, Nietzsche ([1882] 1974) writes in *The Gay Science*:

Nowadays there is a profoundly erroneous moral doctrine that is celebrated especially in England: this holds that judgments of "good" and "evil" sum up experiences of what is "expedient" and "inexpedient." One holds that what is called good preserves the species, while what is called evil harms the species. In truth, however, the evil instincts are expedient, species-preserving, and indispensable to as high a degree as the good ones; their function is merely different. (I. §4)

Whereas Rée claims that the expediency for the species lies at the base of standards for good and evil, Nietzsche perversely points out that evil, too, benefits humanity, or at least can be shown to do so by evolutionary theorists' same unimaginative functionalist logic.

Instead of the flattening scientific psychological observations for which Rée was known, and which Nietzsche calls 'Genealogie', Nietzsche advocates ([1882] 1974) history ('Geschichte' or 'Historie'):

Anyone who now wishes to make a study of moral matters opens himself to an immense field for work. All kinds of individual passions have to be thought through and pursued through different ages, peoples, and great and small individuals; all their reason and all their evaluations and perspectives on things have to be brought into the light. So far, all that has given color to existence still lacks a history (Geschichte). Where could you find a history of love, of avarice, of envy, of conscience, of pious respect for tradition, or of cruelty? (I. §7)

Rée claims to have written such an account, but Nietzsche refuses to honor such Darwinian speculation as a history.¹¹

In the beginning of the second book of *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche ([1882] 1974) explains his disdain for Rée's "Rééalism"—a pun Nietzsche uses repeatedly to indict Rée as a positivist:

To the realists—You sober people who feel well armed against passion and fantasies and would like to turn your emptiness into a matter of pride and ornament: You call yourselves realists and hint that the world really is the way it appears to you. (§57)

Instead of realists, Nietzsche wants artists, improvisers, those who get the world right by becoming its inventors:

Only as creators!—This has given me greatest trouble and still does: to realize what things *are called* is incomparably more important than what they are. The reputation, money, and appearance, the usual measure and weight of a thing, what it counts for . . . all this grows from generation unto generation, merely because people believe in it, until it gradually grows to be part of the thing and turns into its very body. (§58)

Here is another example of Nietzsche's intolerance of any approach that would simplistically find concepts as the products of instincts, rather than the key to understanding the efficacy of language:

What at first was appearance becomes in the end, almost invariably, the essence and is effective as such. How foolish it would be to suppose that one only needs to point out this origin and this misty shroud of delusion in order to *destroy* the world that counts for real, so-called "*reality*." We can destroy only as creators.—But let us not forget this either: it is enough to create new names and estimations and probabilities in order to create in the long run new "things." (§58)

For Nietzsche, Rée's virtue of being right is as much besides the point as the insistence on the virtue of being good that Rée ridicules as overly sentimental. The moralists as well as Rée claim a view of moral discourse that does not respect the force of language itself. Later, in a section written for the second edition of *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche asks:

Why is it then that I have never yet encountered anybody, not even in books, who . . . knew morality as a problem? . . . I see nobody who ventured a *critique* of moral valuations. . . . I have scarcely detected a few meager preliminary efforts to explore the *history of the origins* (Entstehungsgeschichte) of these feelings and valuations (which is something quite different from a critique and again different from a history of ethical systems). In one particular case I have done everything to encourage a sympathy and talent for this kind of history—in vain it seems to me today. ([1887] 1974; [1882] 1988a, §345)

Walter Kaufmann (Nietzsche [1882] 1974, n. to §345) and Rudolph Binion (1968, 137) both suggest that Rée is the person referenced here, a claim consistent with evidence internal to Nietzsche's oeuvre as well as with biographical details on the intellectual relation between Rée and Nietzsche reported by Lou Andreas Salomé, discussed below. Note that Nietzsche is calling not for a Genealogy but an Entstehungsgeschichte or "*history*" of origins. A "*genealogy*" of morals reports origins but in a reductive, static, univocal manner unworthy of being called a history.

Nietzsche used evolutionary discourse, but to play a little joke at the expense of modernity by brilliantly using evolutionary models and language to thwart evolutionary psychologists' substantive conclusions. Nietzsche saw his contemporaries as stupid, hollow creatures who compared badly with those who preceded them, especially the Greeks. If this is what evolution brought about, Darwinians had nothing to brag about. Salomé ([1894] 1988) writes that Rée, contrariwise, acknowledged a version of progress in the shift in "value judgment toward benevolent and egalitarian impulses as a natural and gradual transition toward more highly developed societal forms: the original glorification of animal rapaciousness and selfishness yielded increasingly to the introduction of milder customs and laws" (p. 110). While Strauss, Rée, and Nietzsche agreed that values change over time, Nietzsche insisted this is a process of decline rather than of higher development.

Rée's work was a poke in the eye not only for Christians but also those utilitarians who wanted to infer that past moral discourses justified current intuitions about good and evil. Salomé ([1894] 1988) says that "in his personal assessment of the moral phenomenon, Rée meanwhile was far from putting himself on the side of the English utilitarians, though he was closest to them in his scientific views," while for Nietzsche, the "historically-given differentiation between the two valuations of what 'good' meant sharpened into two irreconcilable contrasts: a battle between master morality and slave morality, which remains unabated into our own time" (p. 110). Salomé has the tension between the two authors just right: Rée had a functionalist view of morality, even as he condemned the general moral climate of his day, which frowned, for instance, on his free-spirited cavorting among other intellectuals, especially Salomé, instead of becoming a respectable burgher. As opposed to others who might identify the status quo with the moral good, Rée held simply that moral development is adaptive. Evolutionary psychologists used their scientific method to justify the status quo; Nietzsche used the status quo to indict the evolutionary psychology; and Rée was a good scientist, ostensibly separating the facts about what was in the interests of the species from his own moral preferences.

It was precisely to escape the pseudo-objective portraits of morality painted by the positivists, including Rée, that Nietzsche advocated a new approach to knowledge, one that understood the mutually constitutive relation between narrator and audience, author and progeny, Darwin and the nineteenth-century European, Nietzsche and the overhuman. And then, after *Zarathustra* (Nietzsche [1883-85, 1892] 1966b), in *Beyond Good and Evil* (Nietzsche [1886] 1966a), Nietzsche establishes a systematic alternative that would become the prelude to his next work, *On the Genealogy of Morals* (Nietzsche [1887] 1967b), by taking on the entire positivist industry, with its

assumptions about appearances and reality, truth and falsity, language and things.

After characterizing Plato as a “great ironic”—writing as though the forms and truth are outside convention and therefore creating this framework—Nietzsche explains that positivists fail to realize that they are only pretending to discover truth, while actually they are making it. And while Foucault would eschew analyzing origins for contemporary explanations, Nietzsche ([1886] 1966a) here advocates just this approach:

Whoever has traced the history of an individual science finds a clue in its development for understanding the most ancient and common processes of all “knowledge and cognition.” . . . We make up the major part of the experience and can scarcely be forced *not* to contemplate some event as its “inventors.” All this means: basically and from time immemorial we are—*accustomed to lying*. Or to put it more virtuously and hypocritically, in short, more pleasantly: one is much more of an artist than one knows. (§191, 192)

Whereas Foucault uses the past to demonstrate discontinuity in events leading to the present, Nietzsche sees the past as the objects that any historian arranges for his story’s opening scene. The difference between Rée and his colleagues, on the one hand, and Nietzsche, on the other, is that the former do not admit to their inventions but, through a curious mix of hubris and modesty, offer their observations as neutral. Is Nietzsche simply “making things up” or advocating fictional science? Not at all, but rather, he grasps the artistry of his representations, the way that his own arrangements make use of existing materials rather than simply render an accurate portrait of something out there.

NIETZSCHE’S REVALUATION OF RÉE

The intimacies of Nietzsche’s relation to both Rée and Salomé warrant mention, because without the erotic triangle among them, Nietzsche probably would not have bothered spending such considerable intellectual energy—positive and negative—on Rée’s behalf.¹² In brief, Nietzsche met Rée in 1873, while Rée was a graduate student. Rée became an acolyte, and one senses a certain narcissism in Nietzsche’s early affection for him. Their regular companionship and correspondence commenced in 1876 and was steady and intense. According to Salomé, Nietzsche substituted his friendship with Rée for that with Wagner, from whom Nietzsche broke off relations during that same period (1876), when he substituted his admiration for the systematic logical efforts of Rée the empirical scientist for the Dionysian qualities celebrated by Wagner the artist (Salomé [1894] 1988, 60, 73).¹³ In

1882 Rée introduced Salomé to Nietzsche, and instantly Salomé incited him and Rée to agree to joining her in a year of living together under circumstances they knew would be perceived as a scandalous *ménage à trois* (Binion 1968, 54). Salomé had longed for the salon-life and sought, quite successfully, to establish a circle of this sort around herself.¹⁴ The three referred to themselves as the “Trinity,” a name that other acquaintances applied to them as well.

From 1876 to early in 1882, Nietzsche writes largely kind things about Rée and often, though not always, his work (Salomé [1894] 1988, 61-63; Nietzsche [1878] 1986; Binion 1968, 43-48). This is worth note because intellectually the two had little in common, with the exception of Rée’s anti-theological stance, and in fact much, especially Rée’s scientism, that would seem to separate them. The similarities between Rée’s (1877) *Origins of Moral Sentiments* and Nietzsche’s ([1878] 1986) *Human All Too Human* are striking, and the two acknowledged mutual debts in their respective works published during this period. For instance, Nietzsche writes that “mankind cannot be spared the horrible sight of the psychological operating table, with its knives and forceps. For now that science rules which asks after the origin and history of moral feelings,” and Nietzsche commends to scientists his friend Rée’s *On the Origin of Moral Sentiments* (§37). Rée inscribes on his gift of *Ursprung* to Nietzsche: “To the father of this work from its mother, most gratefully” (quoted in Binion 1968, 43). A year later, Nietzsche adopts the metaphor but reverses the roles, accompanying his gift of *Human All Too Human* to Rée with a note reading:

It belongs to you. . . . To the others it is sent as a gift. . . . All my friends are now of one opinion that my book was written by you and originated with you: Therefore, I congratulate you on your new paternity! (Salomé [1894] 1988, 73, citing a letter from Nietzsche to Rée, April 24, 1878)

Nietzsche is offering a backhanded compliment, as Nietzsche’s friends disliked the book and thought it unworthy of Nietzsche, blaming Rée for its deficiencies. (I agree with Nietzsche’s friends.) Propounding a largely positivist, evolutionary outlook (more LaMarckian than Darwinian), the work differs in emphasis from virtually everything else Nietzsche wrote, but still Nietzsche does not advocate or even mention Genealogie. And even here Nietzsche voices disagreements with Rée’s work.

Nietzsche himself eventually feels compelled to discount his apparent endorsement of Rée in *Human All Too Human*, and does so repeatedly in his works after 1878 as well as later, in *Ecce Homo*, where he writes of how the passage on Rée in *Human All Too Human* quoted above (Nietzsche [1878]

1986, §37) was misunderstood. In *Ecce Homo* Nietzsche ([1889] 1967a) says he never really advocated Rée's method but was just being a good friend. Nietzsche points out how he avoided "the little word 'I' once again and bathed in world-historical glory—not Schopenhauer or Wagner this time but one of my friends, the excellent Dr. Rée" (§6). The allusion to two previously rejected intellectual allies—Schopenhauer as a literary companion and Wagner as a historical one—suggests Nietzsche saw himself as directing the spotlight of world history—already seeking out scientists—onto his friend Rée, while Nietzsche himself was not interested in being a protagonist. This sounds like a post hoc self-vindication and perhaps it is, though there are enough passages in *Human All Too Human* showing substantial differences from Rée that I believe Nietzsche. When he liked Rée he wanted to help him out, just as he did Wagner, and when he fell out with both of them, then he attacked their respective ideas (and characters) intemperately.

Nietzsche's subsequent disparagement of Rée and his work was precipitated by a combination of personal and intellectual antagonisms (Salomé [1894] 1988, 70), the most important being their inability to sublimate their rivalry for the romantic attention of Salomé. There is no way to condense the complicated and painful intricacies of this relationship;¹⁵ of note for purposes of this essay is that Nietzsche was deeply wounded by Rée and used Rée's treatment of him as an indictment of Rée's scholarship about conscience. "One should talk only about what one knows firsthand," he wrote his old friend Heinrich Stein (Binion 1968, 132, citing original letter),¹⁶ and it is with more than a little *ressentiment* that Nietzsche titles his 1886 work *Beyond Good and Evil*, which, in light of Rée's (1877) book on moral sentiments and chapter headings on the origins of good and evil, is another way of saying "beyond Paul Rée."

Various passages of *Beyond Good and Evil* reveal Rée's features in Nietzsche's image of "the scientist," just as Wagner's profile appears Nietzsche when sketches romanticism. "A solid man of science *may* feel that he is of a better type and descent," Nietzsche ([1886] 1966a) writes, using a double-entendre to suggest the evolutionary-minded moral psychologist not only writes on but fancies himself a specimen of humanity's improvement. He continues: "It is especially the sight of those hodgepodge philosophers who call themselves 'philosophers of reality' or 'positivists,' similar to their descendants in today's behavioralists and evolutionary psychologists,

that is capable of injecting a dangerous mistrust into the soul of an ambitious young scholar. . . . They are all losers who have been *brought back* under the hegemony of science, after having desired *more* of themselves at some time without having had the right to this "more" and its responsibilities and who now represent, in word and deed, honor-

ably, resentfully, vengefully, the *unbelief* in the masterly task and masterfulness of philosophy. (§204)

Rée and others who are trying to use science—in the sense of systematic, unbiased observation about bodies, events, behaviors, and beliefs—and call this philosophy betray a lack of faith in themselves and hence a renunciation of their own power, dishonoring both philosophy and themselves. One must go beyond the search for an ultimate source of morality by considering the quest itself as a symptom, as a problem, and as discourse that (mis)shapes us.

ON THE GENEALOGY OF MORALS: EINE STREITSCHRIFT

On the Genealogy of Morals takes issue with genealogy as a method unfortunately lifted from zoology in the service of bad histories. Nietzsche sees Darwin as Hegel's descendant, with the English heir's authority bolstered in an era of scientific and technological determinism Nietzsche found every bit as stultifying as the religiously inflected nationalism that preceded. Nietzsche's genealogists trace biological descent, a project appropriate for describing a purely biological species, not for human history. Nietzsche does not celebrate genealogy as an alternative to history but deploys the term to mock sociobiological pseudohistorians.

The 'zur' in Nietzsche's title indicates that Nietzsche is writing *on* the sociobiological method and calling it "genealogical" in order to make vivid its unsavory qualities. Walter Kaufmann (1968) explains that 'zur' in *Zur Genealogie* could mean either 'toward' or 'on', but here "'on' is the only possible meaning" (introduction, §2). Kaufmann describes Nietzsche's *Zur Genealogie* as a polemic *on* the method he finds so irritating, rather than an earnest effort to lead students *toward* a 'Genealogie' of morals.¹⁷ Of course any topic on which one writes, one writes 'on', and yet 'zur' appears in no other book title by Nietzsche, suggesting that Nietzsche is formally indicating his distance from a particular academic enterprise pursued by others, on which Nietzsche will comment, as he does in other contexts such as section titles using 'zur', Kaufmann explains (introduction, §2).

If Nietzsche were attempting to encourage historians to start doing genealogies and stop doing history, then we would expect him to criticize historians, but instead, *On the Genealogy of Morals* criticizes 'Genealogie', not 'Historie' or 'Geschichte'. The former is Rée's and his English counterparts' specifically impoverished form of charting humanity's development. In a Genealogie one's presence appears only through the uncreative, illiterate

notations outlining the utility functions that made one possible. Historie can and should be far more subtle, more concerned with the ways in which humans are not merely animals. Specifically, history needs to be attentive to language, something that Rée's natural scientific bluster ignored.

Consider the few places in this text where Nietzsche uses 'Genealogie' and its cognates. In the first, Nietzsche says he was first inspired to write about the origin of morality by a "clear, tidy, and shrewd—also precocious—little book" written by Dr. Rée. Here Nietzsche ([1887] 1967b) encounters an "upside-down and perverse species [Art] of genealogical hypothesis, the genuinely *English* type [Art]" (preface, §4). The passage might be saying Nietzsche was inspired to provide an alternative genealogical approach, but the context of this and other references suggests Nietzsche is inviting those whose work seems reductive and genealogical to do something else, namely, history.

Darwin's ([1859] 1964) *Origin of Species* was translated as *Die Entstehung der Arten*. By referring to Rée's findings also as 'Arten', Nietzsche conflates the two. By characterizing Rée's work as 'genealogisch'—a term of art for evolutionary biologists and those tracing their family trees¹⁸—and not as 'historisch' or 'geschichtlich', Nietzsche situates Rée's work in a biological or racialized domestic context, as opposed to a philosophical milieu. 'Genealogie' does not appear in the Grimm brothers' ([1854] 1984) *Deutsches Wörterbuch*, and the entry for 'Genealog' in an 1876 dictionary reads: "Der sich mit Genealogie beschäftigt. Stammbaum, Stammtafel, Geschlechtsregister; die Wissenschaft, die sich damit befasst; ein Wert darüber . . . auf Genealogie bezüglich" (Sanders 1876).¹⁹ Rée himself does not use 'Genealogie', again suggesting that when Nietzsche superimposes this characterization on Rée it is to make fun of him.

The second time the word 'genealogy' appears in Kaufmann's translation of *zur Genealogie* is in a passage expressing Nietzsche's wish to correct Rée's account, to "replace the improbable with the more probable, possibly one error with another. It was then, as I have said, that I advanced for the first time those genealogical hypotheses to which this treatise is devoted" (Nietzsche [1887] 1967b, preface, §4). However, the original German passage does not contain 'Genealogie' or any of its cognates. It reads: "Damals brachte ich, wie gesagt, zum ersten Male jene Herkunfts-Hypothesen an's Tageslicht" (Nietzsche [1887] 1988b, Vorrede §4). Nietzsche is not proposing any genealogical hypotheses but restating the mission of genealogists in a rather sarcastic way, as having prompted him to offer his own competing theory of origins.

In introducing the second passage that actually uses 'Genealogie', Nietzsche ([1887] 1967b) writes:

If I considered in this connection the above-mentioned Dr. Rée, among others, it was because I had no doubt that the very nature of his inquiries would compel him to adopt a better method for reaching answers. Have I deceived myself in this? My desire, at any rate, was to point out to so sharp and disinterested an eye as his a better direction in which to look, in the direction of an actual *history* [*Historie*] of morality, and to warn him in time against gazing around haphazardly in the blue after the English fashion. (preface, §7)

Nietzsche, again in a rather sarcastic tone, tells his friend that it was for his insight that Nietzsche considered his texts and then instructs him that he should be doing a history of morality, and not pondering the blue sky and seas. Nietzsche continues:

For it must be obvious which color is a hundred times more vital for a genealogist of morals than blue: namely *gray*, that is, what is documented, what can actually be confirmed and has actually existed, in short the entire long hieroglyphic record, so hard to decipher, of the moral past of mankind! (preface, §7)

Nietzsche's idea of a real or actual history permeated with humanity's experiences preserved in documents contrasts with the stark notations of a moral psychologist using Darwinian methods.

Subsequent uses of 'Genealogie' in *On the Genealogy* also suggest that Nietzsche associates genealogies with bad research, not a new style of inquiry historians should emulate. After asking how bad conscience emerges he writes:

And at this point we return to our genealogists of morals. To say it again—or haven't I said it yet?—they are worthless. A brief span of experience that is merely one's own, merely "modern"; without knowledge, without will to knowledge of the past; even less of an historical [historischer] instinct, of that "second vision" [Gesicht] needed here above all—and yet they undertake a history [Geschichte] of morality. (Nietzsche [1887] 1967b, II, §4)

These people who offer a history of morals by focusing on our instincts mistake the modern preoccupation with Darwin for a timeless method and, Nietzsche jokes, themselves lack a historical instinct. In the name of history they write genealogies. Nietzsche asks, "Until now have these genealogists of morals had even the remotest suspicion that, for example, the major moral concept 'guilt' [Schuld] has its origin in the very material concept 'Schulden' [debts]" (Nietzsche [1887] 1967b, II, §4)?²⁰ By pointing out the materiality of a social practice and linking the concept of debt with the moral sensibility of 'guilt' Nietzsche reverses Rée's causal universe. Abstract instincts do not determine moral concepts, but historical material conditions, such as debt, give rise to and then alter concepts, giving them different meanings at differ-

ent times. When punishment first arose, it was not directed against the aberrant will but was simply a means of controlling behavior. Over time, Nietzsche argues, the behavior called “punishment” gave rise to a new vocabulary of an internalized morality (Nietzsche [1887] 1967b; [1887] 1988b, II. §4). Far from praising genealogy or invoking it as a new model, Nietzsche condemns the enterprise, but articulating an alternative viewpoint is not easy.

Insofar as the narrative creates the author, as Nietzsche ([1883-85] 1966b) has already made clear in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, then, Nietzsche wonders, what sort of author does the sociobiological tale dramatize? Concerned with style and showing his understanding of the relation between form and content Nietzsche wouldn’t stoop to simple denotation of Rée’s persona but offers us a narrative of the noble race and the slave mentality to help us see Rée as the type of author Rée’s own evolutionary story creates. Nietzsche attempts to destabilize Darwinian hegemony through the dangerous and ultimately unsuccessful use of hyperbole and parody. Taking note of Nietzsche’s rejection of Darwinian sociobiology, as well as the challenges facing self-authorship and improvisation, helps us contextualize the sarcasm inflecting Nietzsche’s ironic descriptions of blonde beasts and the herd, the lambs and the beasts of prey (Nietzsche [1887] 1967b, I. §13). Observing that lambs are tasty and that they argue self-interestedly for morality does not justify brutality and violence but should prompt us to laugh at Rée’s equations between biological imperatives and language. If Rée is going to represent force as a matter of animal urges, then this logically implies a human being entirely lacking the linguistic tools and agency necessary to consider actions in a moral register—for either the beasts of prey or the lambs.²¹

Another way to state Nietzsche’s point, bearing in mind his interest in philology and etymology (Nietzsche [1887] 1988b, I. §4), is that there is an inherent tension in how Rée and other sociobiologists use the word ‘morality’. Morality, Rée (1877, 59) claims, consists of labels for behaviors that are inherently useful, a view of language Nietzsche ([1887] 1974) scorns because such a representation ignores how language and people materialize their appearances:

What is required [to live] is to stop courageously at the surface, the fold, the skin, to adore appearance, to believe in forms, tones, words. . . . And is not this precisely what we are again coming back to, we daredevils of the spirit who have climbed the highest and most dangerous peak of present thought and looked around from up there—we who have looked *down* from there? Are we not, precisely in this respect, Greeks? Adorers of forms, of tones, of words? And therefore—*artists*? (P. 38)

The passage is somewhat confusing because Nietzsche seems to be collapsing the Dionysian Greeks of passion and artistry with the Platonic ones who

adored forms, and then eliding the difference between the Platonists' appreciation of forms but their disdain for appearances—but the underlying point seems to be that the meaning of the word 'good', for instance, creates behaviors rather than correlates with how they develop, and the same for 'evil'. Moreover, the utility of a concept will change, depending on who is in power. "Who among us finds a moral value of *use*?" Nietzsche is asking, whereas Rée assumes a homogeneous species that as a mass univocally imposes its values for its generic improvement.

Nietzsche recognizes that if humans were ontologically just one more animal species the discourse of 'gut' and 'böse' would not exist. People would perish and survive without a language of values. Is 'Moralität' a mere word masking the truth of deeds and instincts? Or is this claim about morality itself a symptom of how words matter for humans as they do not for animals? Nietzsche's experiment demonstrates the oxymoron of a word-interested animal.²² Using paradox and irony, Nietzsche's philological investigation places language on its rightful pedestal, outside the taxidermist's case of ahistorical creatures where one finds Rée's specimens.²³

The penultimate reference to genealogists in the Kaufmann translation most directly supports the inference that Nietzsche is entering the fray as a new kind of genealogist, rather than just educating unfortunate students of that pathetic subfield:

Yet a word on the origin and the purpose of punishment—two problems that are separate, or ought to be separate: unfortunately they are usually confounded. How have previous genealogists of morals set about solving these problems? Naïvely, as has always been their way. (Nietzsche [1887] 1967b, II. §12)

In the original German, after the sentence quoted above, Nietzsche ([1887] 1988b) writes: "Wie treiben es doch die bisherigen Moral-Genealogen in diesem Fall?" ("Yet how have moral-genealogists bishierigan.") 'Bishierigan' can be translated as "previous" but also can be translated as "hitherto," which Kaufmann himself does on several occasions elsewhere in the text. "Previous genealogists" differs in a subtle but significant way from "genealogists until now" because the former connotes more strongly the possibility that until Nietzsche genealogy was one thing and after that genealogy should do something else, as opposed to a sense that until now genealogists have pursued a certain path. Observing the mistakes genealogists have made through the present, Nietzsche does not suggest that a new type of genealogist must emerge so much as, in keeping with his distaste for the enterprise, he implies genealogists should learn from what Nietzsche is telling them. The latter

translation does not preclude the Foucauldian reading of this passage, but it does less to require this than does Kaufmann's rendering.

The final appearance of the word 'genealogy' is critical rather than laudatory of the method. Alluding to Rée's discussion of punishment (Rée 1877, 14) Nietzsche ([1887] 1967b) writes:

The case is not as has hitherto been assumed by our naïve genealogists of law and morals, who have one and all thought of the procedure as invented for the purpose of punishing, just as one formerly thought of the hand as invented for the purpose of grasping. (II. §13)

These genealogists are doing something clunky, old-fashioned, reductive, and Nietzsche treats them with ridicule in the same tone he uses in his earlier essay on Strauss and in his subsequent texts, including the book appearing just before *On the Genealogy, Beyond Good and Evil*, where Nietzsche ([1886] 1966a) mentions Darwin in a list of "mediocre Englishmen" and attacks Darwinism for its "narrowness, aridity, and industrious diligence" that is causing an "over-all depression of the European spirit" (§253). In his aphorisms in *Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche ([1889] 1990) writes, "I sought great human beings, I never found anything but the *apes* of their ideal" (I. §39). Finally, *Ecce Homo* also affirms his attack on Strauss (Nietzsche [1889] 1967a, §232), and "Why I Write Such Good Books" charges those who "suspected me of Darwinism" with being "scholarly oxen" (Nietzsche [1889] 1967a, §1). To be clear, Nietzsche's point is not to celebrate the ontological humanist subject over the sociobiological one but to instruct us on the possibilities of overcoming positivists' colonization of humanity.

DR. DELEUZE AND DR. FOUCAULT

So if Nietzsche advocates some approaches to history while genealogies *per se* upset him, why are those who seem sympathetic to Nietzsche's intellectual project so enamored of genealogies? The turning point appears to be Gilles Deleuze ([1962] 1983), *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, though I have no idea why he chose this way of reading Nietzsche. Paying disproportionate attention to *On the Genealogy of Morals, Nietzsche and Philosophy's* first heading in the first chapter is "The Concept of Genealogy," and the first sentence says: "Nietzsche creates the new concept of genealogy. The philosopher is a genealogist rather than a Kantian tribunal judge or a utilitarian mechanic" (p. 2). Rather than attribute Nietzsche's critique of Rée to Nietzsche's understanding of 'Historie' and 'Geschichte' or mention that Nietz-

sche's "new concept of genealogy" is discussed in only one book, Deleuze begins a long paragraph on the genealogical method by saying that "Genealogy means both the value of origin and the origin of values" (p. 2) but never references any Nietzschean passages on genealogy.²⁴

While Deleuze ([1962] 1983) is the first author I have encountered who reads Nietzsche as advocating a "true genealogy" (p. 56)—most of the mainstream Nietzsche scholarship, including Kaufmann, does not do this—were it not for Foucault bringing this approach into his own work, the Deleuzian definition of genealogy might have remained just that, at best one interpretation of Nietzsche and nothing more. Once, however, Foucault ([1971] 1977a) followed up on this with his own essay "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," the impact of the new use would extend far beyond the French academy.²⁵ The editor's note to the English translation states:

Along with "Réponse au cercle d'épistémologie," which became the introductory chapter of *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, this essay represents Foucault's attempt to explain his relationship to those sources which are fundamental to his development. Its importance, in terms of understanding Foucault's objectives, cannot be exaggerated. (P. 139)

"Genealogy," Foucault's essay begins, "is gray, meticulous, patiently documentary. It operates on a field of entangled and confused parchments, on documents that have been scratched over and recopied many times" (p. 139). Immediately Foucault goes astray, mistaking Nietzsche's far-reaching appeal to the "entire long hieroglyphic record . . . of the moral past of mankind" (Nietzsche [1887] 1967b, preface, §7) for what a genealogist would do. Foucault seems to read Nietzsche as saying that tracing evolutionary descent is complicated, that Rée's analogy of genealogy to evolutionary theory has overlooked the subtlety of this inquiry. But we have seen that even though the "actual *history of morality*" that Nietzsche says he wants to teach Rée would indeed aspire to review the record of humanity's moral hieroglyphics, this is *not* genealogy.

The passage Foucault cites contrasts genealogies wrought through evolutionary theory to a better sort of history. Foucault infers from this that the right way to think about the past is a genealogy. At most Nietzsche could be read as saying that genealogy has been one thing and should be something else. Foucault makes of this the claim that genealogy is an inherently superior method for research into the past. Foucault's admonitions include some of the points Nietzsche makes in criticizing genealogists, but Foucault distorts or simply changes others.

Offering an example of Nietzsche as "truly a genealogist," Foucault says that Nietzsche's "genealogical analysis shows that the concept of liberty is an

'invention of the ruling classes,' " but the passage he cites does not mention 'Genealogie' (Foucault [1971] 1977a, 142, citing Nietzsche 1880, §9). At the beginning of the *Archaeology* Foucault ([1969] 1972a) refers to the "decentering operated by the Nietzschean genealogy" (p. 13), although Nietzsche himself never claimed to have done a genealogy of anything. Foucault ([1971] 1977a) also introduces the "new historian, the genealogist" (p. 160), as someone created by Nietzsche who, we are told, has overthrown monumental history: "Genealogy is history in the form of a concerted carnival" (p. 161), but "The Uses and Disadvantages of History" Foucault references here never mentions 'Genealogie', though 'Historie' and 'Geschichte' are discussed extensively. Foucault writes also that the "purpose of history, guided by genealogy, is not to discover the roots of our identity but to commit itself to its dissipation" (p. 162). And he says, "In a sense, genealogy returns to the three modalities of history that Nietzsche recognized in 1874" (p. 164), but the same essay is silent on genealogy. In a separate essay Foucault ([1970] 1977b) writes admiringly of "Deleuze, with the patience of a Nietzschean genealogist" (p. 181), who rejects monumental histories. Indeed *none* of the Nietzsche passages Foucault cites in his arguments about genealogy, other than those in *Zur Genealogie*, reviewed above, mention 'Genealogie'. And to the best of my knowledge, no other works Nietzsche prepared for publication, including *Beyond Good and Evil* (Nietzsche [1886] 1966a), mention Genealogie (other than the derogatory reference to Strauss as an "ape-genealogist") (Nietzsche [1873] 1997a), nor is the word indexed in *The Will to Power* (Nietzsche 1968). While arguably one or two passages of *On the Genealogy* are, taken alone, vague on whether genealogies need to be improved or replaced, others state genealogies are done by unimaginative people, and the overall context makes it clear that history has become objectionable genealogy. Neither the general context of *On the Genealogy* much less his entire oeuvre suggests the Deleuzean and Foucauldian preoccupation with elevating a true genealogist over other historians. Genealogy simply is not the important conceptual conceit for Nietzsche later scholars claim it to be. 'Genealogie' is deployed in *On the Genealogy* as a stylistic rebuke specific to Nietzsche's dismissal of Rée and Darwinism, and nothing more.

THE MORALS OF GENEALOGY

What provokes one to look at all philosophers half suspiciously, half mockingly, is not that one discovers again and again how innocent they are—how often and how easily they make mistakes and go astray; in short, their childishness and childlikeness—but that they are not honest enough in their work, although they all make a lot of virtuous noise when the problem of truthfulness is touched even remotely. They all pose as if they had

discovered and reached their real opinions through the self development of a cold, pure, divinely unconcerned dialectic. (Nietzsche [1886] 1966a, §5)

Assuming that Foucault has misstated Nietzsche's genealogical concerns, does the form of this error reveal anything significant about the substance of Foucault's views on historical investigations? Foucault misinterprets the meaning of Nietzsche's "genealogy," but Foucault's avowed methods do echo prominent Nietzschean themes. Foucault's insistence on the constitutive role of discourse broadly resembles Nietzsche's own beliefs, and it would be fair to say that much of what Nietzsche calls history, Foucault and his followers call genealogy—notwithstanding some crucial differences between Nietzsche and Foucault.²⁶

Noticing a stated methodological affinity—and again, Foucault resembles but is not a close copy of Nietzsche—should not preclude discussing the crucial differences in their aesthetics and the political implications entailed therein. The error in Foucault's interpretation of Nietzsche and the widespread acceptance of Foucault's interpretation reveal disturbing symptoms in the modern academy. The first lesson is that, regardless of the methodological politics of a field, its professionalization requires that a reevaluation should be effected without self-consciousness or discussion, just as was done by the positivists and, after that, through rote citation of the master. Even a lesson as apparently iconoclastic as "question authority" can be transmitted through scholarly media that may assume and invite reader passivity.

It is not Foucault's fault, and indeed it is much to his credit, that he could anticipate eager students and prestigious awards, while Nietzsche wrote largely in an obscurity he alternatively relished and cursed. Whereas Nietzsche had to leave his post because of a constitutional inability to be a professor, Foucault and the academy developed a symbiotic relation (Halperin 1995, 157-58). Contrast Nietzsche's first-person Zarathustra ambivalent about followers with the Foucault of countless interviews seeking to make his point more clear, a practice taken up immediately upon his death by those attempting to preserve his legacy. Regardless of whether the attending cult of "St. Foucault" (Halperin 1995) is a symptom of Foucault's texts for which he himself bears responsibility, or a quirk of the sociology of knowledge, the fact remains that his oeuvre has been mainstreamed for academics in a manner that, for better or worse, simply never occurred for Nietzsche.²⁷ *Using Foucault's Methods*, a Sage Publications book in a series on qualitative methods, offers, under the subject heading *Genealogy*, a gray box with the following (the bullets are theirs):

- Describes statements but with an emphasis on power;
- Introduces power through a “history of the present,” concerned with “disreputable origins and unpalatable functions,” making the older guests at the dinner table of intellectual analysis feel decidedly uncomfortable by pointing out things about their origins and functions that they would rather remain hidden;
- Describes statements as an ongoing process, rather than as a snapshot of the web of discourse;
- Concentrates on the strategic use of archaeology to answer problems about the present. (Kendall and Wickham 1999, 34)

ARE YOU TAKING NOTES?

The Foucauldian tutor strives to break down the genealogical method into steps so that the good student might reproduce its virtues. Of course, like many textbooks, the above rules are illogical, misleading paraphrases that teach the student her inadequacy and Foucault’s authority. Such a habit of thought necessarily forecloses the imaginative energy necessary for creating and for being a different kind of human, instead of just studying difference. Is there something hypocritical about this observation, coming at the end of a dry exegesis of ‘genealogy’? Indeed. Consider the source—an itinerant academic publishing in a scholarly journal—though the form and content of the argument may also suggest a paradox of polemic. Regardless of what is being questioned, one needs persuasive evidence. Whereas Nietzsche says truth is a veiled woman and it is indecent to uncover her, perhaps the clothing that really calls for inspection drapes the bodies of those who apprise her: the scientist’s white lab coat, the postfoundationalist’s black turtleneck, the social scientist’s gray suit. Academic garb of all sorts lends credibility to observations by those who don it. The problem isn’t truth or distortion *per se* but an unearned sense of epistemological certainty.

Nietzsche poses a challenge to the substantive and methodological orthodoxies among some Foucauldians, who apparently do not feel the slightest bit silly about being so serious in their discussions of Nietzsche’s invitations to play with history, to treat it as a muse and not a God, to stand up to it with irreverence as well as authority. Whatever is provocative and instructive in Nietzsche’s aphoristic tantrums on and as philosophy is not that these-rules-and-not-those must be used, that an inquiry must be “genealogical” or the scholar is hopelessly old-fashioned. Worth learning from in Nietzsche is his commitment to the self-aware production of representations in a milieu of power relations knowledge sustains, produces, and challenges.

Nietzsche's artist is far more threatening to all established institutions and dispositions than the Foucauldian critic. The artist, or at least the Nietzschean one, can change us, while the critic will just leave us annoyed. This is because a critic can survive as a parasite, her talents all the more revealed in the face of adversity. But Nietzsche wanted more than space to be a maverick—and this is what saves him from being a liberal: he wanted friends. He desired a community of people who “got” what he did and who would make him feel understood in a way that the modern herd mentality precluded. He knew that the conversations he craved could not be gained through individual self-improvement, or even reaching out to a few like-minded people, but required a new habit of thought, a new age. Nietzsche's Zarathustra attempted to create a world in which he would have liked to live; he sought to teach his companions, not just himself. Nietzsche thought himself “untimely” and, as Zarathustra, wanted to change his time. Nietzsche's self-aggrandizing, patronizing style proved a poor way of cultivating the intellectual companionship he so badly wanted, even as he established, against his best intentions, a world historic philosophy.

Of course herein lies the paradox that Nietzsche himself anticipated: after toppling the status quo the alternative becomes another rule or model. A perfect example is what his and Foucault's followers did after they absorbed the concept of genealogy and established it as an orthodoxy, the right method instead of history. The rule is a pointless use of authority, unworthy of being offered or followed by the Nietzschean overhuman. Even had Foucault analyzed correctly Nietzsche's concept of genealogy, creativity and artistry would not be enhanced. Nietzsche did not improvise a new philosophy but nurtured a philosophy of improvisation. Foucault had a method.

The preoccupation with method before language suggests the second aspect of modernity that Foucauldians perform even as they strive to be postmodern. The metaphysician's notion that words can exist in an arbitrary relation to things they name is implicit in the casual reassignment of meaning Foucault effects. The German ‘Genealogie’, the French ‘généalogie’, and the English ‘genealogy’ all suggest a family tree, a chart recording the mix of choices and events that line up ancestors in a necessary relation to the next generation, telling an implicit causal story about how strata are connected and, ideally, tracing one's history as far back as possible, the presumption being that these origins carry forth a secret essence manifest in the present. Even when mistaken, as they often are, genealogies offer the hope of founding truths about, at minimum, one's race, ethnicity, or nationality. But, as we have seen above, Foucault inverts these meanings and offers a new definition, albeit in the guise of a Nietzschean, older one. This passage quite clearly reveals Foucault's reversal of the meaning of ‘genealogy’:

Genealogy does not pretend to go back in time to restore an unbroken continuity that operates beyond the dispersion of forgotten things; its duty is not to demonstrate that the past actively exists in the present, that it continues secretly to animate the present, having imposed a predetermined form to all its vicissitudes. Genealogy does not resemble the evolution of a species and does not map the destiny of a people. On the contrary, to follow the complex course of descent is to maintain passing events in their proper dispersion; it is to identify the accidents, the minute deviations—or conversely, the complete reversals—the errors, the false appraisals, and the faulty calculations that gave birth to those things that continue to exist and have value for us; it is to discover that truth or being do not lie at the root of what we know and what we are, but the exteriority of accidents. (Foucault [1971] 1977a, 146, citing Nietzsche [1887] 1967b, III. §17)

But of course what Foucault says genealogies are not is precisely what they are: genealogies are written and rewritten, resemble the evolution of a species, map the destiny of a people, are read and amended by those who firmly believe that “truth or being” *does* “lie at the root of what we know and what we are.” One traces out a present connection to ancestors because one thinks that this reveals something essential about who one is now, that this past has a value, and that there is something about one’s being now that can be ascertained by knowing one’s origins. Of course one’s actual relation to any ancestor is accidental, but that is irrelevant to the fact that such contingencies strike us as existing at the “root of what we know” about who we are.

Perhaps one should credit Foucault with making a bold move himself, by evacuating ‘généalogie’ of its old meanings and redefining it as something else. But there is a difference between standing up to tradition and tinkering with language, even if the latter efforts are strategic, which Foucault provides no reason for believing. Instead of improvisation, we only notice the musician cannot keep a beat and is playing something that hurts our ears. Only by turning away from language could one decide that a ‘genealogy’ would be a form of inquiry that would *not* see the present as directly tied to a continual past. Reversing this very obvious meaning of a ‘genealogy’ is a symptom of modern decadence—in Nietzsche’s sense of the word to refer to the weakness, self-indulgence, decline, self-congratulations of the hegemonic intellectual—on the part of Foucault, as well as among certain other prominent critics feted in today’s academy. Language can be a handy weapon, the perfect tool for rematerializing the social organism, but not if the community of letters cannot tell the difference between a new riff and a cat scampering across the keyboard. Again, the problem is not that they fail to recognize any classical allusions to, say, Schoenberg but that they are too nervous to say that something just sounds bad. Here I invoke the tradition of Nietzsche, but even if this went unspoken, a genealogy still would not mean what Foucault says it does.

“The modern spirit’s lack of discipline, dressed up in all sorts of moral fashions,” Nietzsche writes in his notebooks of 1887, slops around in language so as to protect against seeming judgmental, subjective, and confused. “The showy words,” Nietzsche (1968) continues, are

tolerance (for “the incapacity for Yes and No”) . . . being “scientific” (the “*document humain*”: in other words, the novel of colportage and addition in place of composition) . . . “depth” meaning confusion, the profuse chaos of symbols. (§79)

To these we might add today “genealogy,” meaning a search for a pedigree in France.

NOTES

1. In his *Archaeology* Foucault ([1969] 1972a) cannot be introducing historians to a new method, as that would violate what he had written about concept formation and discourse. It would take a great Hegelian man of history to make such demands. Rather than tell historians how to write about the past, Foucault points to those approaches he endorses and claims a new approach already has replaced what he calls “history in its traditional form” (p. 7)—linear, progressive, objective. This new historiography stresses discontinuity, epistemic breaks, the centering of the humanist subject framing the research agenda, and reading the present in the past: “My aim,” the *Archaeology* says, “is to uncover the principles and consequences of autochthonous transformation that is taking place in the field of historical knowledge” (p. 15). His effort is to use “the results already obtained to define a method of analysis purged of all anthropologism. The ground on which it rests is one that it has itself discovered” (p. 16). Aware of Nietzsche’s writings, Foucault has not developed a paradigm that rejects the vocabulary of genealogy. Rather, Foucault illustrates this new archaeological method of history by highlighting the “decentering operated by the Nietzschean genealogy” (p. 13). Two years later, Foucault develops his account of history through an explicit invocation of Nietzsche’s “Genealogie,” though the archaeological imagery persists (Foucault [1971] 1977a). Non-English words are not italicized to avoid emphasis on their phenomenology as foreign. Double quotation marks bracket emphasis on concepts, and single quotation marks a focus on words, so that “genealogy” indicates the general connotations of the word as a concept and ‘genealogy’ attends to the phenomenology of the word. Toward that end, punctuation for words in single quotation marks appears outside the quotation marks.

2. After conducting a FirstSearch inquiry locating over one hundred article titles and abstracts using “genealogy” for purposes unrelated to family trees, I stopped counting. As discussed below, Gilles Deleuze’s ([1962] 1983) *Nietzsche and Philosophy* led Foucault to mischaracterizing Nietzsche’s view of genealogy and adopting this concept for his own use. Hence Deleuze is really the key figure responsible for initiating this new use, but if Foucault had not adopted this terminology, it is doubtful that it would have its current influence, especially among Anglo scholars. Thanks to Anna Marie Smith for drawing my attention to this text.

3. I discuss the German/English and not German/French translation of *Zur Genealogie* because Foucault read Nietzsche in German and because my audience will certainly read this

and most likely Nietzsche in English. The French 'généalogie' is etymologically indistinguishable from its German and English counterparts.

4. Rée never lived in England and was born to Jewish parents in Bartelshagen, Pomerania, then part of Prussia and now governed by Poland (Andreas-Salomé 1995, 162).

5. Strauss's book was immediately translated into English (by none other than George Eliot, then Marian Evans, who was commissioned to do this within weeks of the book's first publication in German) (Haight 1968, 52-53). Strauss and Eliot subsequently met and appear to have been in the same social circle (Haight 1968, 261, 510). Thanks to Laura Green for her thoughts on this association, which makes much sense in light of Eliot's later strong enthusiasms for Darwin.

6. Breazeale believes that Strauss's first book led to Nietzsche's atheism (Breazeale 1997, xii). Because Strauss wrote *The Life of Jesus* without any reference to Darwin, who of course had not yet been published, it is not the slightest bit inconsistent for Nietzsche to have appreciated the first text and dismissed the second. See also Johnson (2001), who argues that Nietzsche believed Strauss misrepresented Darwin and that Nietzsche desired a use of evolutionary theory closer to what Darwin intended. My own view is that Nietzsche works the tensions between German moral psychology and evolutionary theory in a parodic effort to destabilize both foundational discourses.

7. The essays in *Untimely Meditations* repeatedly object to the quest for a progressive history, be it religious, Hegelian, or Darwinian. Nietzsche observes that such writers "weave the isolated event into the whole: always with the presupposition that if a unity of plan does not already reside in things it must be implanted into them" (Nietzsche [1873] 1997b, 91).

8. To be fair to Strauss, Nietzsche's characterization is misleading, as Strauss, near the section Nietzsche quotes, goes out of his way to emphasize, perhaps incoherently, that humans are qualitatively different from animals. "Man ought to rule Nature within as well as without him" according to Strauss (1874, §72), a feat animals cannot accomplish.

9. When Strauss does try to accommodate the intuition about moral differences among cultures he offers overtly racist Darwinian hypotheses:

[Darwin] unhesitatingly points to the chimpanzee as the common ancestor of the black African, or Ethiopian race, and to the pongo as that of the brown Asiatic, or Mongolian, while he regarded the white Caucasian as an offshoot bleached by a colder climate. (Strauss 1874, §58)

10. Rée (1877) repeatedly invokes Darwin's authority for his project, for instance: "Darwin explains unegotistical actions as follows" (p. 7), and "Darwin explains pangs of conscience another way [from those who see it a result of people calculating to maximize success]" (pp. 24-25), and "Consideration of the following examples show Darwin to have been right" (pp. 24-25).

11. A contemporary analogy would be the difference between the recent best-seller *A Natural History of Rape* (Thornhill and Palmer 2000)—tracing out the alleged adaptive roots of sex selection in men's contemporary sex crimes—and what Sharon Marcus (1992) calls the "rape script," where she suggests rape is constituted through a discourse that interpellates women as weak, potential victims defined by their vulnerability to forced vaginal penetration. Rape is not harmful because sexual intercourse is inherently more dangerous, painful, or shameful than being punched viciously and repeatedly in the kidneys but has been constructed as especially horrible and humiliating through the same Madonna/whore holograph that itself victimizes women.

12. An excellent historical, literary, and historiographical study of Salomé, Rée, and Nietzsche's intimacies and their later representations can be found in Biddy Martin, *Woman and Modernity* (1991).

13. In his paper on Rée's relation to Nietzsche, Dirk Robert Johnson (1998) describes Rée as a transitional figure who "liberated [Nietzsche] from his earlier infatuations [with Wagner and German tradition]" finding evidence from Nietzsche's notebooks of the 1880s, which

reveal a cautious, critical reworking of the thoughts he had previously championed in the 1870 writings, much in the same way he had previously overturned Schopenhauer. In these entries, Nietzsche's dialectical method systematically undercut Rée's original premises from various angles, a process which culminated in *The Genealogy of Morals*, in 1888. (P. 8)

14. Salomé counted among her friendships and intimacies relations with Richard Wagner, Ferdinand Tönnies, Rainer Maria Rilke, August Strindberg, and Sigmund Freud (Andreas-Salomé 1995). Salomé overemphasizes the underlying intellectual compatibility of Nietzsche and Rée prior to this break. For the period between approximately 1876 and 1882, Nietzsche seems to have been willing, out of friendship, to sacrifice the anti-positivism and anti-Darwinism of his *Untimely Meditations* to accommodate the pro-Darwinian views of Rée, and perhaps to facilitate his break from Wagner and even irritate him during this time.

15. Kaufmann cites Binion (1968) to refute Salomé's contention that Nietzsche proposed and was rebuffed (Andreas-Salomé 1995, 175; Kaufmann 1968, 49-51). I see nothing in Binion's book to support this, and Binion actually documents at least one proposal, in which Nietzsche says, "I should consider myself duty-bound to offer you my hand so as to protect you from what people might say" (p. 53, quoting from Bernoulli 1908, I, 336, quoting Nietzsche). Kaufmann (1968) also cites Binion to imply that all of their relations were chaste (p. 50), but I see nothing in Binion to support this claim; especially in the case of Rée this seems doubtful. The Andreas-Salomé (1995) memoir *Looking Back* edited by Ernst Pfeiffer includes copious notes on these relations and is a fabulous reference for this period, as are Binion (1968), Martin (1991), and Salomé's (1988) *Nietzsche*—a translation of the original title is *Friedrich Nietzsche in His Works*.

16. In an insightful passage Binion (1968) observes:

Done with Lou as far as he knew, Nietzsche turned against Rée in July 1887 with *The Genealogy of Morals*, subtitled, "a polemical piece." In the preface he declared his arguments of 1876-1886 against Rée's moral theory to have been just that, pretending, however, to have drawn them from an age-old theory of his own about to be expounded in full for the first time. . . . By predating this theory before his acquaintance with Rée, he was extirpating Rée from his past. He was also repudiating Rée the positivist par excellence when now he represented the scientific ideal as a derivative of Christian asceticism . . . and repudiating Rée the rationalist par excellence when now he treated thinking as instinctual like everything else in life. (P. 136)

17. Foucault is among numerous secondary writers, including Deleuze, who drop the "on" in their text and footnotes citing Nietzsche's reevaluation (Foucault 1971). Since Kaufmann could not anticipate the subsequent misreading of this title by Foucault and the ensuing new use of "genealogy," Kaufmann simply states his view of "zur"'s meaning in the title and moves on.

18. The second definition of "genealogy"—"the line of development of an animal or plant from older forms"—was idiomatic in English when Nietzsche wrote (*Oxford English Dictionary*, 2d ed.); the German word was associated with the study of biological descent as well (Sanders 1876).

19. It is possible that the Grimm dictionary omits 'Genealogie' because it has a Greek etymology, a point I mention because even some contemporary German dictionaries, including the Duden, do not have an entry for it, while 'Genealogie' is mentioned in the *Deutsche*

Fremdwörterbuch. This is not a specific comment on ‘Genealogie’ but symptomatic of Germany’s continued anxiety about maintaining borders around its own pure language. The 1876 dictionary entry states that the root of genealogy, from Greek, is “concerned with genealogy. Family tree, family table, register of generations; the science that concerns itself with it; having the value of genealogy . . . referring to genealogy.” ‘Stamm’ at the root of ‘Stammbaum’ (family tree) explicitly connects one’s immediately nuclear family to a larger tribe or ethnic group than the English ‘family’, but since both ‘Stammbaum’ and ‘family tree’ tie one’s family to an ethnic group, the connotations are similar.

20. The phrase reads: “Haben sich diese bisherigen Genealogen der Moral” (Nietzsche [1887] 1988b, II, §4).

21. See also Johnson (1998), where he discusses Nietzsche’s criticisms of Rée’s reliance on “unspoken absolutes” (p. 9).

22. Rée’s reduction of ‘good’ and ‘evil’ to a utilitarian calculus raises many of the same tensions that appear when Socrates and Thrasymachus battled over the meaning of justice (Pitkin 1993, 168-92). Socrates tells us about the word ‘dikaioσύνη’, Pitkin explains, while Thrasymachus describes what people do in the name of ‘dikaioσύνη’. While Thrasymachus’s point has merit—some people advance their self-interest and claim that is just—such actions depend on a certain meaning of the word and not merely on what people do. A purely cynical definition of ‘justice’ as meaning advancing one’s own self-interest would preclude using the word to further one’s self-interest.

23. In 1886 Nietzsche ([1887] 1974) asks in the preface for the second edition of *Gay Science*:

Alas, it is not only the poets and their beautiful “lyrical sentiments” on whom the resurrected author has to vent his sarcasm: who knows what victim he is looking for, what monster of material for parody will soon attract him? “*Incipit tragoedia*” we read at the end of this awesomely aweless book. Beware! Something downright wicked and malicious is announced here: *incipit parodia*, no doubt. (§1 preface, 2d ed.)

Kaufmann notes that the first edition of *Gay Science* ended with “*Incipit tragoedia*” and then introduced Zarathustra, anticipating *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, and signifying that “*Zarathustra* is something of a parody” (in Nietzsche [1887] 1974, 33, n. 1). But since *Zarathustra* had been published following the first edition of *Gay Science* (in 1883, and then again with additions in 1884 and 1885) and hence *before* Nietzsche was penning the words just quoted, it is plausible that Nietzsche is announcing that his next work, *On the Genealogy*, is a parody. The next edition of *Zarathustra* (with the addition of book iv) did not appear until 1892. On this reading, Nietzsche is saying that his first edition ended with an announcement that *Zarathustra* would appear, and in this edition he is announcing the parody to begin with his next publication, which is not *Zarathustra* but *On the Genealogy*. This reading conforms with the section following the lines quoted above, in which Nietzsche mentions being sick and then recovering before discussing the needs of a psychologist—the field Rée claimed as own—and the physician—which is the profession to which Rée had turned to at this point (Nietzsche [1887] 1974, §2, preface, 2d ed.). All publication dates are taken from Kaufmann (1968, 477-78).

24. This paragraph makes several definitional claims about Nietzsche’s concept of “genealogy” but cites only a passage from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (Deleuze [1962] 1983, 3, citing ZIII “Of Passing By”). In a section headed “Nietzsche’s Terminology” Deleuze ([1962] 1983) writes that Nietzsche “uses very precise new terms for very precise new concepts: 1) Nietzsche calls the genealogical element of force the will to power,” but instead of a citation to Nietzsche we read an intriguing definition of genealogy that rightly should be credited to Deleuze himself, not Nietzsche (p. 52). Whereas Nietzsche condemns the efforts of genealogists, Deleuze writes:

Only a genealogist is able to discover what sort of baseness can find its expression in one value, what sort of nobility in another, because only he knows how to handle the differential element: he is the master of the critique of values. (P. 55)

Deleuze cites the preface to *On the Genealogy of Morals*, where Nietzsche calls for a critique of moral values, but Nietzsche of course does not stipulate the figure putting forth such a critique to be a genealogist; indeed the concept is not even mentioned in the section Deleuze cites (preface, §6). Deleuze says that English or German “evolutionism . . . is the reactive image of genealogy,” claiming that these approaches caricature “true genealogy” (p. 56). Where Nietzsche writes of a desire to “advance *historical* (historisch) studies of *morality*” that would upend the emphases of psychologists influenced by English biologists (First Essay, last note), Deleuze claims Nietzsche is calling for genealogies (p. 75) and in the “*Genealogy of Morals* wanted to rewrite the *Critique of Pure Reason*” (p. 88), but Deleuze provides no textual exegesis to support the inference. Since the utilitarians and sociobiologists clearly are Nietzsche’s targets and they criticize Kant themselves, Kant’s own centrality to Nietzsche’s critique in this work seems less obvious.

25. The other especially relevant work is “Two Lectures” (Foucault [1976] 1980).

26. While my own agreement with Heidegger’s reading of Nietzsche over that of Foucault implies some very crucial differences between Nietzsche’s and Foucault’s views on historical narrative, limitations of space constrain full explication of this (Heidegger [1927] 1962; [1961] 1991). One difference is that Nietzsche sought to articulate a new tradition and its use, rather than abandon the form of tradition altogether, as Deleuze and Foucault advocate.

27. One might argue that Nietzsche’s parodic technique led to something far worse than academic imitators: appropriation of his texts by the Nazis. While Nietzsche’s defenders can, rightly, stress his own irony, anti-German sentiment, and revulsion toward anti-Semites, we know that despite these biographical details his texts themselves were used by proto-Nazi and then Nazi propagandists.

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