

AMOR FATI AND ZÜCHTUNG: THE PARADOX OF NIETZSCHE'S NOMOTHETIC NATURALISM

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My formula for greatness in a human being is *amor fati*: that one wants nothing to be different, not forward, not backward, not in all eternity. Not merely bear what is necessary, still less conceal it—all idealism is mendaciousness in the face of what is necessary—but *love* it.

—*Ecce Homo* "Why I Am So Clever" 10¹

To teach the human being the future of humanity as its *will*, as dependent on a human will, and to prepare great ventures and over-all attempts of discipline and cultivation by way of putting an end to that gruesome dominion of nonsense and accident that has so far been called "history" . . . at some time new philosophers and commanders will be necessary for that, and whatever has existed on earth of concealed, terrible, and benevolent spirits, will look pale and dwarfed by comparison.

—*Beyond Good and Evil* 203

The last ten years have witnessed the triumphant return of the "naturalistic" Nietzsche.² Yet even as Nietzsche's thought is situated ever more securely within the lineage of philosophical naturalism, familiar questions are being raised concerning its overall coherence. Indeed, it is becoming increasingly common to identify some basic, irreconcilable problem within Nietzsche's naturalism. Daniel Conway, for instance, notes the tension between Nietzsche's descriptive account of nature as utterly indifferent to the delicate economy of life and his prescriptive call for a "return" to nature.³ Leslie Paul Thiele similarly points out the incompatibility between Nietzsche's skeptical, privative account of nature and his anti-demo-

cratic privileging of the heroic sovereign individual.⁴ Brian Leiter and Robert Solomon both attempt, in different ways, to resolve the contradiction generated by Nietzsche's uncompromising fatalism and his philosophy of self-creation.⁵ In this paper, I want to look at the "paradox" of Nietzsche's naturalism (as it is sometimes called) in a way that cuts across all three of these formulations, by examining the apparent irreconcilability between Nietzsche's doctrine of *amor fati* and his volitional emphasis on the deliberate self-overcoming of the human. With regard to the latter, I shall focus specifically on Nietzsche's political program of *Züchtung*, i.e., his call for the "breeding" or "cultivation" of a higher, healthier, stronger, and in some sense, more "natural" type of human being. Although the doctrine of *amor fati* and the political program of *Züchtung* seem fatally at odds with one another, I shall argue that their relation is complementary rather than contradictory. But before examining and attempting to resolve this problem, it will be necessary to sketch out Nietzsche's overall naturalistic project.

NIETZSCHEAN NATURALISM: AN OVERVIEW

Nietzsche's naturalism is typically seen as comprising two distinct but complementary tasks, famously described in *The Gay Science* as the "de-deification" of nature, and the "naturalization" of the human being (GS 109). The first constitutes an attempt to expose and eliminate what Nietzsche calls the "shadows of God."⁶ Inasmuch as Nietzsche's notion of "God" encompasses any kind of supersensible world whatsoever, to vanquish the *shadows* of God is to expose and eliminate those residual traces of changelessness, stability, and purposiveness that continue to haunt our understanding of nature in the aftermath of the death of God. Since these moral and metaphysical "shadows" are on Nietzsche's account human projections, rooted in the human desire for permanence and overarching meaning, the de-deification of nature is ultimately nothing other than the *dethroning* of nature.⁷

The second project, the so-called "naturalization" of the human being, itself comprises at least two distinguishable tasks. First, it involves a kind of descriptive philosophical anthropology, the aim of which is to acquire a more adequate grasp of who and what we are.⁸ Appropriating the Delphic imperative to self-knowledge, Nietzsche endeavors

To translate the human being back into nature; to become master over the many vain and overly enthusiastic interpretations and connotations that have so far been scrawled and painted over that eternal basic text of *homo natura*; to see to it that the human being henceforth stands before itself as even today, hardened in the discipline of science, it stands before the *rest* of nature, with intrepid Oedipus eyes and sealed Odysseus ears, deaf to the siren songs of old metaphysical bird-catchers who have been piping at him all too long, "you are more, you are higher, you are of different origin!" (BGE 230)

He thus attempts to comprehend what we might tentatively call "human nature." I say tentatively, because if we can speak of a Nietzschean conception of human nature, it ought not to be understood in terms of some ahistorical, transcultural essence, but rather has to do with the natural *history* of the human, as it emerges and continues to develop from the interplay of fully natural forces and events. The human being, as Nietzsche never tires of reminding us, is no *aeterna veritas*: "man too has become" (HH 2). To recover the "terrible" and "eternal basic text of *homo natura*" is thus to understand and affirm the ossified contingencies of our origins and the whole non-teleological course of our developmental history—what Nietzsche calls our "granite of spiritual *fatum*" (BGE 231).⁹ Nietzsche's naturalization of the human being accordingly acknowledges the continuity between the human and the animal,¹⁰ and emphasizes our minuscule and seemingly insignificant position within the great eternal, aleatory flux of nature.¹¹ It uncovers the extent to which we are conditioned and determined by the amoral and the inhuman, and strives to reconcile us to the tenuous contingency and conclusive transitoriness of the human.¹² In short, it schools us in modesty, a virtue which Nietzsche defines as "the recognition that we are not the work of ourselves" (HH 588).¹³

Apart from translating the human being back into nature in this descriptive, anthropological sense, Nietzsche has quite a lot to say about naturalizing humanity in a more *prescriptive* or normative sense as well.¹⁴ He himself sometimes describes it as a return—or perhaps more accurately, an *ascent*—to nature.¹⁵ For lack of a better term, I shall call this aspect of Nietzsche's project his "nomothetic" naturalism. Nietzsche's nomothetic naturalism is not simply about revaluing ostensibly "anti-natural" moral values.¹⁶ More ambitiously, it has to do with the philosophical legislation of a new goal or "ideal" towards

which humanity might strive. The naturalization of the human being thus ultimately points towards the practical transfiguration of human nature, or perhaps more accurately, its completion and perfection. It aims towards the cultivation of "natural" human beings in the fullest sense of the term: beings overflowing in health, power and vitality, who have won for themselves a remarkable new spontaneity and freedom, and who are capable of affirming reality as it is, in all its painful (and joyful) immanence. This is the normative *telos* that Nietzsche, as philosophical "commander and legislator" (BGE 211), ultimately attempts to impress upon the malleable clay of human nature.¹⁷

THE PARADOX OF NIETZSCHE'S NOMOTHETIC NATURALISM

The question, of course, is whether Nietzsche's own naturalism undermines the legitimacy of positing any such goal. For there are times when it seems as though he rejects the very idea of normativity, and with it the legitimacy of nomothetic legislation altogether. Certainly the Zarathustrian teaching of eternal recurrence (whether construed as cyclical cosmology or existential imperative) would seem to render such striving at best superfluous. So too the doctrine of *amor fati*, which enjoins that we "see as beautiful what is necessary in things" (GS 276).¹⁸ Many of Nietzsche's anthropological ruminations are also marked by a strong fatalism.¹⁹ Consider, for instance, this *Nachlass* note from early 1888:

A human being as he *ought* to be: that sounds to us as insipid as "a tree as it ought to be." (KSA 13:11[132]/WP 332)

He develops the point further in the published version of this note in the *Twilight of the Idols*:

Let us finally consider how naive it is altogether to say: "the human being *ought* to be such and such!" Reality shows us an enchanting wealth of types, the abundance of a lavish play and change of forms—and some wretched loafer of a moralist comments: "No! The human being ought to be different." He even knows what the human being should be like, this wretched bigot and prig: he paints himself on the wall and comments, "*Ecce homo!*" But even when the moralist addresses himself only to the single human being and says to him, "You ought to be such and such!" he does not cease to make himself ridiculous. The single

human being is a piece of fate from the front to the rear, one law more, one necessity more for all that is yet to come and to be. To say to him, "change yourself!" is to demand that everything be changed, even retroactively. And indeed there have been consistent moralists who wanted the human being to be different, that is, virtuous—they wanted him remade in their own image, as a prig: to that end, they *negated* the world! No small madness! No modest kind of immodesty! (TI "Morality" 6)²⁰

Considering the title of Nietzsche's subsequent autobiography (as well as his recognition of the embarrassingly autobiographical nature of such normative ideals), this particular passage can't help but provoke a reflexive suspicion about Nietzsche's own nomothetic ambitions. For it raises the question whether the immodest normative "ought" demanded by any philosophical legislation is simply incompatible with Nietzsche's self-proclaimed respect for "reality." On the face of it, Nietzsche's policy of *amor fati* would seem to commit him to an acceptance and affirmation of the human being *as it is*, leaving him without any normative leverage to move beyond mere celebration of the actual. We find the same remorseless logic in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. As his doctrine evolves and unfolds, Nietzsche's prophet eventually realizes—to his horror and nausea—that his own this-worldly teaching necessarily entails an affirmation of the eternal recurrence of even the "small human" (Z:3 "The Convalescent"). So too does Nietzsche struggle to say yes to the "dreadful accidents" and "miscarriages"—those who resent life and wish to sit in judgment of it. It should come as no surprise, then, that he characterizes the human being as a "piece of fate," which he and his fellow "immoralists" strive to "comprehend" and even "affirm," rather than negate or condemn (TI "Morality" 6). And because, from Nietzsche's naturalistic standpoint, "the whole improvement-morality . . . was a mistake" (TI "The Problem of Socrates" 11), it should come as no surprise when he avers in his autobiography that "The last thing I should promise would be to 'improve' mankind" (EHP2).

IDEALISM, NECESSITY AND CHANCE

Although Nietzsche advocates the comprehension and affirmation of *homo natura* as a piece of fate, I want to argue that he does not thereby forfeit the privilege of philosophical legislation altogether. Two points are germane here. First, when Nietzsche takes a hostile

stance towards nomothesis (most typically in the 1888 writings), he is almost invariably focusing on a *particular kind* of philosophical legislation, which he calls "idealism"—that is, legislation predicated on a profound misunderstanding of human nature, a hatred of reality, and a cowardly falsification of necessity. In *Ecce Homo*, for instance, Nietzsche characterizes idealism as "the curse on reality" (EH P2), "the ignorance in *physiologicus*" (EH "Clever" 2), "mendaciousness in the face of what is necessary" (EH "Clever" 10), "for the weak" (EH "Books" BT:2), "innermost cowardice before reality," "cowardice before the truth," and "untruthfulness which has become instinctive" (EH "Books" CW:2).²¹ It might of course be claimed that *all* nomothetic legislation is by definition idealism, inasmuch as it posits a goal beyond the actual. Yet this is not a position that Nietzsche himself maintains. For the central opposition in the passages above is between the ideal and the *real*, not the ideal and the actual.²² Indeed, defending himself against those who misread him as an idealist (rather than the "realist" he fancies himself to be), Nietzsche observes that

The word "*Übermensch*," as the designation of a type of supreme achievement, as opposed to "modern" human beings, to "good" human beings, to Christians and other nihilists—a word that in the mouth of a Zarathustra, the annihilator of morality, becomes a very pensive word—has been understood almost everywhere with the utmost innocence in the sense of those very values whose opposite Zarathustra was meant to represent—that is, as an "idealistic" type of a higher kind of human being, half "saint," half "genius." (EH "Books" 1)

Far from rejecting nomothesis as such, Nietzsche holds up one of his own normative exemplars as a realistic counterexample to idealistic legislation.²³

Second, it is worth noting that Nietzsche's doctrine of *amor fati* requires not complete passivity in the face of the real, but simply that he "see as beautiful what is *necessary* in things" (GS 276, italics mine). It is tempting to read Nietzsche as courting some variety of determinism when he valorizes necessity (*Notwendigkeit*) in this way. Yet Nietzsche's own naturalism requires the rejection of a deterministic worldview, as residually theistic and humanistic.²⁴ Joan Stambaugh suggests—rightly, I think—that "Nietzsche's conception of necessity is not deterministic, but is rather closer to Spinoza, for whom necessity and freedom were identical. Necessity is inner necessity as opposed to being compelled by some external force."²⁵ However, what

Nietzsche understands as "inner necessity"—our own nature—is itself a product of accident or chance [*Zufall*].²⁶ It is a creation of the blind, purposeless play of forces that he calls the will to power. *Zufall*—literally, what falls to one—bears some kinship to the Stoic's *heimarmenê*, even more to the older—and less providential—notion of *moira* (it is one's "allotment" or "portion"), but is not ultimately traceable to any purpose or reason. When Nietzsche proffers his ostensibly Stoic-Spinozistic creed of *amor fati*, he is advocating the affirmation of fate and necessity, not in the sense of what *must be*, but of what *has been*, i.e., the unalterable nature of the past. We might characterize it as the necessity of "fact" rather than law.²⁷ This idea emerges with greatest force in the third part of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, where Nietzsche's mouthpiece struggles with the penultimate obstacle to his affirmation of this world: "That time does not run backwards, that is what enrages [the will]; 'That which was'—that is the stone it cannot roll away" (Z:2 "On Redemption").²⁸ By casting fate temporally in terms of that which was rather than that which must be, Zarathustra emphasizes the extent to which the unalterable nature of the past is itself ultimately a product of chance:

All "it was" is a fragment, a riddle, a dreadful accident [*ein grauser Zufall*—until the creative will says to it, 'But thus I willed it.' Until the creative will says to it, "But thus I will it; thus shall I will it" (Z:2 "On Redemption").²⁹

Thus, to "see as beautiful what is necessary in things"—or in Zarathustrian terms, to will the "it was"—is to affirm the chance character of events and the innocence of becoming.³⁰

In short, necessity *is* chance, viewed under the aspect of the past.³¹ The accidental natural-historical particularities of both the species and the individual self—that is, the cards we happened to be dealt by the innocent, aleatory workings of nature—comprise what Nietzsche calls our "fate." This means that the "it was" of our contingent origin cannot be undone. It also means that the historically-conditioned fatality of *homo natura* cannot be changed: our efforts and potentialities are bound by certain ineradicable limitations in that respect, necessities that Nietzsche, as a philosophical naturalist, seeks to comprehend and affirm.³² But it does *not* mean that the human being is a finished, unalterable product which we cannot—or should not—cultivate. One way of thinking about this is to see Nietzsche's

aforementioned conception of human nature as comprising three interrelated but nonetheless distinguishable strata: (1) the body as a matrix of contending forces and drives; (2) the contingent formations imposed upon these drives by the aleatory events of natural history (i.e., our "fate," in an individual and more broadly conceived collective sense); and (3) that undetermined aspect of the human being that exists only *in potentia*, and which we ourselves have some power to mold and influence, through various techniques of aesthetic, experimental self-cultivation. This last stratum is easy to overlook, especially if we want to take Nietzsche seriously as a naturalist. But on Nietzsche's account, the human being's most distinguishing characteristic is that it is the "as yet undetermined animal [*das noch nicht festgestellte Tier*]" (BGE 62; cf. GM III:13). This is not to say that human nature is infinitely malleable, or that "self-creation" is possible in any radical sense. Rather it means that there is a kind of indeterminacy or *openness* to the human being, and Nietzsche will accordingly claim that our true nature is not so much something given, as it is something yet to be attained or achieved.³³

THE BLIND IMPRESS OF NATURE

But what of this open-ended formative process so far? On the one hand, Nietzsche recognizes and accepts the extent to which "we are not the work of ourselves" (HH 588). He realizes that many of the most decisive moments in the ongoing development of human nature have heretofore been primarily determined by chance, rather than by any self-imposed, purposeful goal, and he suffers an "anxiety beyond all comparison" in the face of "the monstrous fortuity [*Zufälligkeit*] that has so far had its way and play regarding the future of the human being—a game in which no hand, and not even a finger, of God took part as a player" (BGE 203). The opportunity cost of such neglectful indifference can be seen in the "botched product[s] of nature's artistry" (SE 6), that is, the great multitude of resentful "fragments," "inverse cripples" and "dreadful accidents"—to use Zarathustra's unflattering language—that populate our history and threaten to close off our future (Z:2 "On Redemption").

Yet at the same time, in the absence of any guiding hand, natural history has also provided us with a variety of what Nietzsche calls "fortunate accidents" or "lucky strikes [*Glücksfall*]" (A 3-4), where

some chance concatenation of forces and historical circumstance has produced exemplary human beings who serve as signs to what we might yet become. Such precedents give Nietzsche reason to hope that comparable beings might yet again emerge. For instance, in one of the few hopeful moments of the *Genealogy*, he reflects on the possibility of

Something perfect and complete [*Vollkommenes*], wholly achieved [*zu-Ende-Gerathenes*], happy, mighty, triumphant, something still capable of arousing fear: . . . a human being who justifies humanity . . . a complementary and redeeming fortunate accident [*Glücksfall*] on the part of humanity for the sake of which one may still believe in humanity. (GM I:12)

Sometimes Nietzsche indulges in a kind of playful anthropomorphism, and writes as though such redemptive beings are in fact the dimly perceived *goal* of nature. In *Schopenhauer as Educator* in particular, he emphasizes

the way [nature] presses onward toward the human being, how it painfully senses that its work has once again miscarried, and how it is everywhere nonetheless successful in producing the most amazing outlines, features, and forms, so that the human beings among whom we live are like a field strewn with the most precious fragments of sculptures, everything calling out: "Come! Help us! Complete us! Put together what belongs together! We have an immeasurable longing to become whole!" (SE 6)³⁴

But nature is a squanderer and a bad economist, and the future of humanity can no longer passively be left to its blind, indifferent experimentation and wasteful expenditure. The task of Nietzsche's "new philosophers," qua commanders and legislators, is thus

To teach the human being the future of humanity as its *will*, as dependent on a human will, and to prepare great ventures and over-all attempts of discipline and cultivation [*Zucht und Züchtung*] by way of putting an end to that gruesome dominion of nonsense and accident that has so far been called "history." (BGE 203)³⁵

Even as early as the *Schopenhauer* essay, Nietzsche realizes that human beings must take it upon themselves to perfect their own nature.

"Humanity must work continually at the production of individual great human beings—that and nothing else is its task." How

much one would like to apply to society and its goals something that can be learned from observation of any species of the animal or plant world: that its only concern is the individual exemplar, the more uncommon, more powerful, more complex, more fruitful. . . . The goal of [a species'] evolution lies not in the mass of its specimens and their wellbeing, let alone in those specimens who happen to come last in point of time, but rather in those apparently scattered and chance existences which favorable conditions have here and there produced; and it ought to be just as easy to understand the demand that, because it can arrive at a conscious awareness of its goal, humanity ought to seek out and create the favorable conditions under which those great redemptive human beings can come into existence. (SE 6)

Intervention is thus called for; purposeful human design and deliberate self-experimentation must replace the innocent blunderings of nature. The "perfect, complete, [and] wholly achieved" human being must be "bred" or "cultivated" rather than left to chance. In the *Antichrist*, he recapitulates this idea:

The problem I thus pose is not what shall succeed humankind in the sequence of living beings (the human being is an *end*), but what type of human being shall be *bred* [*züchten*], shall be *willed*, for being higher in value, worthier of life, more certain of a future.

Even in the past this higher type has appeared often—but as a fortunate accident, as an exception, never as something *willed*. (A 3)

What is particularly striking about these passages—drawn from various stages of Nietzsche's career—is their continuity. From the *Untimely Meditations* to the final writings of 1888, the deliberate cultivation of a higher type (based in part upon a recuperation of natural-historical fortuities) remains at the heart of Nietzsche's philosophical project. Although the language of his nomothetic exemplars shifts and develops over the course of these two decades—compare, for instance, the "genius," or "great, redemptive human being" of *Schopenhauer as Educator*, the "Übermensch" of *Zarathustra*, the "sovereign individual" of the *Genealogy*, the "great human beings" of the *Twilight*, the "higher type" of the *Antichrist*, the "synthetic human being" of the late *Nachlass* notes, etc.—his legislation of a goal towards which humanity should strive remains as a constant throughout his writings.³⁶

OUR NOMOTHETIC LEGACY

Nietzsche is, of course, not the first philosopher-legislator to attempt an intervention in the development of human nature. The history of the human race is, on Nietzsche's own account, a history of continuous self-experimentation and engineering. We ourselves have ceaselessly and amateurishly meddled with our contingent nature, and in doing so, ineluctably contributed to its development: "our attitude towards *ourselves* is *hubris*," Nietzsche writes, "for we experiment with ourselves in a way we would never permit ourselves to experiment with animals, and carried away by curiosity, we cheerfully slice open our living souls" (*GM III:9*). Indeed, this painful process of self-knowledge, cultivation and transformation constitutes an on-going, open-ended experiment in which we cannot help but participate, for what Nietzsche calls the "self-creation" of the human being is but a particular manifestation of the *autopoiesis* of nature as will to power, just as the "tyrannical drive" to philosophical legislation is the most spiritual form of this will to power (*BGE 9*).

The problem is thus not that we desire—and sometimes achieve—transformation and self-overcoming, but that our goals—our normative ideals—have too often been rooted in feelings of ignoble resentment, and based on a fundamental ignorance of human nature. In particular, philosophical legislators following in the footsteps of Plato and St. Paul have erred most grievously when it comes to the body:

They despised the body: they left it out of account: more, they treated it as an enemy. It was their delusion to believe that one could carry a "beautiful soul" about in a cadaverous abortion—To make this conceivable to others they needed to present the concept "beautiful soul" in a different way, to revalue the natural value, until at last a pale, sickly, idiotically fanatical creature was thought to be perfection, "angelic," transfiguration, higher humanity. (*KSA 13:14[96]/WP 226*)

Not surprisingly, the vast majority of psychosocial engineering has, on the whole, botched us up even further. Nietzsche's *Genealogy* can be read in part as a gruesome natural historical reconstruction of these fateful blunders. But his subsequent distinction between the moralities of "taming" and "breeding" (in the section of the *Twilight* facetiously entitled "On the 'Improvers' of Humanity") sums up the salient points most economically:

To call the taming [*Zähmung*] of an animal its "improvement" sounds almost like a joke to our ears. Whoever knows what goes on in menageries doubts that the beasts are "improved" there. They are weakened, they are made less harmful, and through the depressive effect of fear, through pain, through wounds, and through hunger they become sickly beasts. It is no different with the tamed human being whom the priest has "improved." In the early Middle Ages, when the church was indeed, above all, a menagerie, the most beautiful specimens of the "blond beast" were hunted down everywhere; and the noble Teutons, for example, were "improved." But how did such an "improved" Teuton who had been seduced into a monastery look afterward? Like a caricature of a human being, like a miscarriage: he had become a "sinner," he was stuck in a cage, imprisoned among all sorts of terrible concepts. And there he lay, sick, miserable, malevolent against himself: full of hatred against the springs of life, full of suspicion against all that was still strong and happy. In short, a "Christian."

Physiologically speaking: in the struggle with beasts, to make them sick *may* be the only means for making them weak. This the church understood: it *ruined* human beings, it weakened them—but it claimed to have "improved" them. (TI "Improvers" 2; cf. GM II:16)

On the other hand, the morality of "breeding" or cultivation [*Züchtung*], as exemplified by the caste system of the *Mānavadharmashāstra*, appears terrible and cruel, but is in fact "healthier," and "a hundred times milder and more reasonable" (TI "Improvers" 3). Yet despite Nietzsche's denunciations of the Christian morality of taming, he occasionally recognizes something almost heroic in the human being's misguided ascetic attempts to bend—and sometimes break—its own nature:

The human being is more sick, uncertain, changeable, indeterminate [*unfestgestellter*] than any other animal, there is no doubt of that—he is *the* sick animal: how has that come about? Certainly he has dared more, done more new things, braved more and challenged fate more than all the other animals put together: he, the great experimenter with himself, discontented and insatiable, wrestling with animals, nature and gods for ultimate dominion—he, still unvanquished, eternally directed toward the future, whose own restless energies never leave him in peace, so that his future digs like a spur into the flesh of every present—how should such a courageous and richly endowed animal not also be the most imperiled, the most chronically and profoundly sick of all sick animals? (GM III:13)

As is clear from this passage, Nietzsche is ambivalent about the cruel "conscience vivisection and human animal torture" to which we have, for dubious reasons, voluntarily subjected ourselves (GM II:24). He admits that such ascetic practices have inadvertently made us "interesting," "profound," and "pregnant" (GM I:6, GM II:18, 19).³⁷ For he finds in them not only ignorance, sickness, and resentment, but also the instructive spectacle of life turned against life:

The existence on earth of an animal soul turned against itself, taking sides against itself, was something so new, profound, unheard of, enigmatic, contradictory, and *pregnant with a future* that the aspect of the earth was essentially altered. . . . From now on, the human being is *included* among the most unexpected and exciting lucky throws in the dice game of Heraclitus' "great child," be he called Zeus or chance; he gives rise to an interest, a tension, a hope, almost a certainty, as if with him something were announcing and preparing itself, as if the human being were not a goal but only a way, an episode, a bridge, a great promise.— (GM II:16)

If Nietzsche has learned nothing else from Christianity's misguided and overzealous attempts to suppress (and even extirpate) our animality, it is that the turning of life against itself sometimes inadvertently brings about an increase in power and resources, just as convalescence from an illness can bring on renewed vigor and health. Nietzsche thus wishes to capitalize upon his ascetic predecessors' unintentionally productive blunders, and even appropriate some of their techniques of the self, albeit without their otherworldly, life-negating metaphysical baggage. Indeed, one might read Nietzsche as endeavoring to *naturalize* asceticism itself, reclaiming it as a kind of spiritual exercise or *askesis*, directed towards the strengthening and intensification of human life.³⁸

CONCLUSION

In short, Nietzsche's nomothetic naturalism aims (1) to replace the blind, accidental workings of nature with purposeful intervention, and (2) to replace the ignorance and resentment of previous philosophico-religious legislators with a new patience, sophistication, and understanding towards the living body. Both of these tasks are ultimately directed towards advancing the frontier of human perfectibility, or, as Nietzsche puts it, breeding a higher type of human

being. The question I have endeavored to answer in the course of this paper is whether this project is essentially at odds with Nietzsche's doctrine of *amor fati*, and more generally, the fatalistic cast of his naturalism. It is tempting to read Nietzsche as contradicting himself at this juncture, and thus to see his whole naturalistic project as fundamentally incoherent: he requires that humanity affirm fate/nature, yet he himself will not affirm the *human being* as a piece of fate and nature. It is no surprise that various commentators speak of the "paradox" of Nietzsche's naturalism. And indeed, on my own reading, the relation between *amor fati* and *Züchtung* is paradoxical—albeit only in the weakest sense of the word. What then does it mean to say that Nietzsche's nomothetic naturalism involves a "weak" paradox?

As I have tried to show in my earlier discussion, Nietzsche's doctrines of *amor fati* and *Züchtung* only seem to be mutually exclusive; when we examine them more closely, it turns out that they are in fact quite compatible. In other words, Nietzsche's stance, while initially surprising, does not involve any real contradiction, which is what I mean when I speak of a "weak" paradox.³⁹ Further, in spite of the apparent tension between these two aspects of Nietzsche's naturalism, they seem to be intimately connected, such that any attempt to grasp or articulate one without reference to the other is at best problematic. On the one hand, inasmuch as Nietzsche admires, and even attempts to cultivate, the kind of being who is whole enough and strong enough and healthy enough to affirm fate and "redeem" nature as it is in all its brute immanence, the nomothetic dimension of his thought actually presupposes his doctrine of *amor fati*, in at least two ways. First, in order to work effectively and successfully with human nature, a philosophical legislator must understand and accept the human being's "granite of spiritual *fatum*" in both individual and collective terms, i.e., the necessities and constraints that circumscribe all attempts to cultivate and perfect it. But second, and perhaps more importantly, *amor fati* ultimately functions as a kind of normative criterion for the sort of creatures we might become. Nietzsche himself suggests this, I think, when he refers to it in his autobiography as "my formula for greatness in a human being" (EH "Clever" 10). In short, if Nietzsche's nomothetic naturalism aims towards the cultivation of "great human beings" (or "higher types," or *Übermenschen*, etc.) then by definition it aims at the production of beings who are capable of

loving fate. Conversely, the exemplification of Nietzsche's doctrine of *amor fati* itself presupposes new regimes of *Züchtung*, since human beings are as yet incapable of such joyous affirmation. This, then, is the weak paradox of Nietzsche's naturalism: in order for the human being to be able to affirm fate and nature, it must first deny one aspect of nature—*itself*. For only in that way can it build itself into the kind of being capable of such affirmation.⁴⁰ This is precisely the sort of being that Nietzsche, qua philosophical legislator, wishes to produce from the raw, unfinished material of *homo natura*. Viewed in this way, Nietzsche's nomothetic program neither contradicts nor undermines his naturalistic project: rather, it represents its apotheosis and culmination.

NOTES

1 With occasional emendations, I have used the Kaufmann translations of *A*, *BGE*, *BT*, *EH*, *GS*, *TI*, and *Z*, the Hollingdale translations of *D*, *HH*, *UM*, and *WS*, and the Kaufmann-Hollingdale translations of *GM* and *WP*. Translations of *Nachlass* passages not collected in *The Will to Power* are my own.

2 Although the last ten years have seen numerous articles that have characterized Nietzsche's thought as a kind of philosophical naturalism, the most detailed and extensive examinations can be found in Richard Schacht, *Nietzsche* (London: Routledge, 1983), chapters 5–7, as well as Schacht, *Making Sense of Nietzsche: Reflections Timely and Untimely* (Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press, 1995), chapters 11–13; Laurence Lampert, *Nietzsche and Modern Times: A Study of Bacon, Descartes, and Nietzsche* (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1993), Part III, (particularly chapter 11); and Christoph Cox, *Nietzsche: Naturalism and Interpretation* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1999). Martin Heidegger's lectures and articles on Nietzsche from the 1930s and 40s—first published as *Nietzsche I & II* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1961), and later translated in four volumes by David Farrell Krell, et al. as *Nietzsche* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979–86)—first suggested the inadequacy of affiliating Nietzsche with the tradition of philosophical naturalism. Famously characterizing Nietzsche as the last metaphysician, he warns that "we would lapse into terrible error if we were to label Nietzsche's guiding representation of the world as chaos with cheap slogans like 'naturalism' and 'materialism,' especially if we were to think that such notions explained his notion once and for all" (vol. II, p. 94, cf. vol. III, pp. 39–47 for a similar treatment of Nietzsche's alleged biologism). Eugen Fink takes a similar stance, disparaging Nietzsche's "crass

and often provocatively formulated 'naturalism' " as intentionally coarse hyperbole in "Nouvelle Expérience du monde chez Nietzsche," delivered at Cerisy-la-Salle, first published in *Nietzsche aujourd'hui?* (Paris: Union Générale d'Éditions, 1973), and subsequently translated as "Nietzsche's New Experience of the World," in *Nietzsche's New Seas*, ed. Michael Gillespie and Tracy B. Strong (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1988), pp. 203-19, esp. pp. 205-06. While Heidegger's influential study undoubtedly discouraged naturalistic readings of Nietzsche for some time, Nietzsche-interpretations are to some extent a function of more general philosophical trends: the tendency to read Nietzsche as a naturalist coincides closely with the re-emergence of naturalism as a viable philosophical contender.

3 Daniel W. Conway has pointed out the apparent tension between life and nature that one finds in Nietzsche's post-Zarathustrian writings, drawing attention to the equivocal role that "nature" seems to play in his thought. "The further we pursue [Nietzsche's] naturalism," Conway points out, "the more apparent his dilemma becomes: Nature may serve either as a standard for nomothetic legislations or as an indifferent, amoral agency, but it cannot serve in both capacities simultaneously" (Conway, "Returning to Nature: Nietzsche's *Götterdämmerung*," in *Nietzsche: A Critical Reader*, ed. Peter Sedgwick [Cambridge: Blackwell, 1995], p. 42).

4 Leslie Paul Thiele argues that Nietzsche's valorization of "heroic" individualism (and by extension, his notion of cultivating a higher type of being) is at odds with his overall naturalistic project (which Thiele characterizes first and foremost as a "radical scepticism"). According to Thiele, "Nietzsche's notorious proposals for the breeding of a super race only further undermine his sceptical credentials" (Thiele, "Out From the Shadows of God: Nietzschean Scepticism and Political Practice," *International Studies in Philosophy*, Vol. 27, No. 3 [1995]: 66).

5 Brian Leiter emphasizes the centrality of Nietzsche's fatalism, reading it as a kind of "causal essentialism," according to which "there are essential natural facts about persons that significantly circumscribe the range of life trajectories that a person can realize and that, as a result, make one's life 'fated,' not in the classical sense, but in the sense that what we become is far more constrained, in advance, than we had ever realized" (Leiter, "The Paradox of Fatalism and Self-Creation in Nietzsche," in *Willing and Nothingness: Schopenhauer as Nietzsche's Educator*, ed. Christopher Janaway [Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1998], p. 225). A paradox thus ostensibly arises when we try to square this with Nietzsche's philosophy of self-creation, which, according to Leiter, requires two conditions. First, it requires that a person must be a necessary, though perhaps not sufficient, cause of what he becomes (what Leiter calls the "Causal Condition"). Second, the person, in fulfilling said Causal

Condition, must satisfy the requirements for autonomous or free action (what he calls the "Autonomy Condition"). The paradox of Nietzsche's naturalism accordingly runs as follows: "if a person's life trajectories are determined in advance by natural facts about himself, then how can a person really create himself, i.e., how can he make an autonomous causal contribution to the course of that life? The fatalism sits in tension with the Autonomy Condition that is essential to genuine self-creation" (p. 226). Leiter ultimately attempts to resolve the paradox by rereading Nietzsche's rhetoric of self-creation in such a way that it can be subordinated to his fatalism. For another perspective on Leiter's paradox, see Robert C. Solomon, "Nietzsche as Existentialist and Fatalist: The Practical Paradoxes of Self-Making," *International Studies in Philosophy*, Vol. 34, No. 3 (2002): 41–54.

6 For three suggestive examinations of this idea, see Thiele, "Out From the Shadows of God: Nietzschean Scepticism and Political Practice," Yirmayahu Yovel, "Nietzsche and the Shadows of God," in *Dark Riddle: Hegel, Nietzsche, and the Jews* (University Park: Pennsylvania State Univ. Press, 1998), and Cox, *Nietzsche: Naturalism and Interpretation*.

7 Cf. GS 109: "When will we complete our de-deification of nature [*Wann werden wir die Natur ganz entgöttlicht haben*]? When may we begin to naturalize [*vernaturlichen*] humanity in terms of a pure, newly discovered, newly redeemed nature?"; KSA 9:11[211]: "My task: the dehumanization [*Entmenschung*] of nature and then the naturalization [*Vernaturlichung*] of the human being, after it has achieved the new concept of 'nature'"; and KSA 9:11[238]: "Human beings and philosophers have formerly written the human into nature—let us dehumanize [*entmenschlichen*] nature!" See also KSA 9:11[197].

8 For a clear and comprehensive treatment of Nietzsche's naturalistic philosophical anthropology, see Schacht, *Making Sense of Nietzsche*, pp. 187–224.

9 Walter Kaufmann's translation leaves the adjective "terrible" [*schreckliche*] out of BGE 230 (Nietzsche initially writes of "the terrible basic text of *homo natura*").

10 See, e.g., the first paragraph of HC; HL 9; AOM 185; D 49; GS 115; BGE 230; GM III:25; A 14; and KSA 13:14[133]/WP 684.

11 See, e.g., TL 1 and GS 109.

12 See, e.g., D 49 and KSA 9:11[228].

13 For an excellent discussion of some of these themes in Nietzsche's naturalism, see Graham Parkes, "Staying Loyal to the Earth: Nietzsche as Ecological Thinker," in *Nietzsche's Futures*, ed. John Lippitt (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1999), pp. 167-88.

14 Of the naturalism laid out in *The Gay Science* Schacht writes, "One of Nietzsche's main themes here is . . . what we are, and another, equally important to him, is *what we may become*. These twin themes—of the generally human, naturalistically considered, and of the genuinely or more than merely human, reconceived accordingly—are the point and counterpoint which give the volume its underlying structure and unity, with the 'death of God' as pedal tone" (Schacht, *Making Sense of Nietzsche*, p. 190).

15 See, e.g., TI "Skirmishes" 48: "Progress in my sense. I too speak of a 'return [*Rückkehr*] to nature,' although it is really not a going back but an ascent [*Hinaufkommen*]*—up into the high, free, even terrible nature and naturalness where great tasks are something one plays with, one may play with.*" Cf. KSA 12:10[53]/WP 120: "Not 'return to nature'—for there has never yet been a natural humanity. The scholasticism of un- and anti-natural values is the rule, is the beginning; the human being reaches nature only after a long struggle—he never 'returns'—."

16 Nietzsche's thought can certainly be characterized as a kind of "ethical naturalism." For some readings along these lines, see Schacht's two studies, as well as George Stack, "Emerson, Nietzsche, and Naturalistic Ethics," *Humanist*, Vol. 50, No. 6 (Nov.-Dec. 1990): 21-25; Hans Seigfried, "Nietzsche's Natural Morality," *The Journal of Value Inquiry* 26 (1992): 423-31; Lee F. Kerckhove, "Re-thinking Ethical Naturalism: Nietzsche's 'Open Question' Argument," in *Man and World* 27 (1994): 149-59; Theodore R. Schatzki, "Ancient and Naturalistic Themes in Nietzsche's Ethics," *Nietzsche-Studien*, Band 23 (1994): 146-67; and Paul J. M. van Tongeren, *Reinterpreting Modern Culture: An Introduction to Friedrich Nietzsche's Philosophy* (West Lafayette: Purdue Univ. Press, 1999), pp. 174-249. For a more skeptical approach to this sort of reading, see Michael J. Matthis, "Nietzsche as Anti-Naturalist," *Philosophy Today* (Summer 1993): 170-82.

17 "Genuine philosophers, however, are commanders and legislators: they say, 'thus it shall be!' They determine the Whither and the For What of humanity, and in doing so have at their disposal the preliminary labor of all philosophical laborers, all who have overcome the past. With a creative hand they reach for the future, and all that is and has been becomes a means for them, an instrument, a hammer. Their 'knowing' is *creating*, their creating is a legislation, their will to truth is—*will to power*" (BGE 211, cf. 203). Nietzsche clearly counts himself among this elite group, and yet the *telos* he will attempt to impress upon human nature is quite different from those who precede him.

18 For the most part, Nietzsche discusses the doctrine of the eternal recurrence only in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and the *Nachlass*, the few exceptions being GS 341, TI "Ancients" 5, and EH "Wise" 3, "Books" BT:3, "Books" Z:1 and Z:6. For his remarks on *amor fati*, see GS 276 (as well as KSA 9:15[20] and 9:16[22]), EH "Clever" 10 and "Books" CW:4, and NCW E1 (cf. KSA 13:16[32] and 25[7]).

19 See, e.g., D 130; BGE 231; and TI "Morality" 6. Brian Leiter has already done an admirable job of excavating this neglected but vastly important aspect of Nietzsche's naturalism (see "The Paradox of Fatalism and Self-Creation in Nietzsche," particularly pp. 219–26). Leiter attempts to resolve the paradox by deflating Nietzsche's rhetoric of self-creation and showing (on textual, philosophical, and historical-intellectual grounds) how it is actually reducible to his fatalism. However, in focusing solely on overblown notions of individual self-creation, Leiter ultimately overlooks the substantial political component of Nietzsche's naturalism—i.e., his nomothetic legislation of a higher type of human being. Thus, while his reading may arguably win some kind of internal coherence for Nietzsche's naturalism, it does so at the expense of incompleteness. In the following discussion, I will focus specifically on passages where there is an explicit tension between Nietzsche's fatalism and his own pretensions to nomothetic legislation.

20 Note that Nietzsche addresses both the individual and humanity in general here. Again, by casting the problem in terms of fatalism vs. self-creation (and thus focusing primarily on the individualist and existentialist dimension of Nietzsche's thought), both Leiter and Solomon overlook what I take to be the larger political program of Nietzsche's naturalism (what Nietzsche sometimes refers to as his "great politics"). Certainly, throughout all of Nietzsche's writings one finds the idea that the greatest human beings are products of a tremendously ambitious creative aesthetic process. It surfaces as early as *The Birth of Tragedy* (1–5), although there the true artist turns out to be the Dionysian *Ur-Eine* of nature (BT 5). However, when Nietzsche subsequently distances himself from his first book's romantic "artists' metaphysics" (BT P7), his conception of the human being as a "work of art" evolves in two important ways. First, he no longer conceives of it as an unconscious product of the primordial Dionysian world-artist, but rather as a deliberate self-creation on the part of the individual. Accordingly, when Nietzsche reflects in his early to middle-period books on the human being as self-created work of art, his remarks are presented primarily as existential advice to the individual reader. SE (*passim*) and HH 163 offer early versions of this, but the theme becomes explicit in KSA 9:7[213]; AOM 102; D 218; GS 17, 290, and 335. For an excellent discussion of this idea, see Graham Parkes, *Composing the Soul: Reaches of Nietzsche's Psychology* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 157–69. With the publication of *Zarathustra*, however,

Nietzsche's observations along these lines become more ambitious, and acquire a pronounced nomothetic tone. Now Nietzsche/Zarathustra as philosophical legislator has become the Apollinian sculptor, responsible for forming the misshapen, imperfect human being into something remarkable (Z:2 "Upon the Blessed Isles," cf. BGE 225). In subsequent books, the focus is on Nietzsche as legislating a goal for humanity rather than dispensing existential tips for self-cultivation to individuals. For a clear and persuasive examination of this latter project, see Daniel W. Conway, *Nietzsche and the Political* (London: Routledge, 1997).

21 Cf. KSA 10:1[70] (idealism is "the opposite of honest [*redlichen*] and fearless knowing"); GS 372 (entitled "Why we are not idealists"); GM III:19; TI "Ancients" 2; A 8; and EH "Books" HH:1.

22 See, e.g., TI "Skirmishes" 32: "What justifies the human being is his reality—it will eternally justify him. How much greater is the worth of the real human being, compared with any merely desired, dreamed-up, foully fabricated human being? With any ideal human being? And it is only the ideal human being who offends the philosopher's taste." It is worth noting as well that when Nietzsche characterizes the "whole improvement-morality" as a "mistake" in TI "The Problem of Socrates" 11, he is referring, not to nomothesis as such, but specifically to Socratic and Christian moralities.

23 Nietzsche sometimes employs the term "ideal" rather loosely, even referring to the Zarathustrian *Übermensch* as his own new ideal (EH "Books" Z:2). As Daniel W. Conway points out, if Nietzsche were to aim for the complete transfiguration or transcendence of human nature, he himself would be guilty of idealism (in his own disparaging sense of the term). While Zarathustra's depiction of the *Übermensch* may arguably warrant this charge, Nietzsche himself is more circumspect about his "ideals." Indeed, it is quite likely, given the fact that the *Übermensch* constitutes the initial stage of Zarathustra's evolving doctrine (to be displaced later by the eternal recurrence), that Nietzsche wished to illustrate this very temptation through his spokesman's philosophical development. For a reading of the *Übermensch* as the completion and perfection of the all-too-human rather than its transcendence, see Conway, "The Genius as Squanderer: Some Remarks on the *Übermensch* and Higher Humanity," in *International Studies in Philosophy*, Vol. 30, No. 3 (1998): 81–96.

24 Perhaps Nietzsche's most sustained critique of determinism, which he typically associates with mechanistic-materialistic varieties of naturalism, can be found in the fragments posthumously grouped together in *The Will to Power* under the rubric "The Mechanistic Interpretation of the World" (WP 618–39). However, Nietzsche develops the idea quite ex-

tensively in his published works as well: see, e.g., GS 109, 127, and 373; BGE 12–14; and GM III:16. See also his critique of efficient causality, which (1) radicalizes Hume and Kant's accounts by reinterpreting causality as at best a necessary humanistic fiction (D 121; GS 112, 121, 357; BGE 4, 11, 14, and 21; cf. KSA 12:2[83]/WP 550), and (2) reveals the extent to which notions of efficient causality are still predicated on the "hangman metaphysics" of teleological explanation (see D 13; TI "Errors" *passim*; and KSA 12:2[83]/WP 550, 12:9[91]/WP 552, 13:14[95]/WP 633, 13:14[98]/WP 551, 13:15[30]/WP 765; cf. PTG 4; Z:2 "On Poets"; and GM I:13, and II:12–15). Cf. also Nietzsche's critique of the notion of "laws of nature" (AOM 9; GS 109; BGE 22; KSA 11:36[18]/WP 630, and 12:7[14]/WP 629).

25 Joan Stambaugh, "Thoughts on the Innocence of Becoming," in *Nietzsche: Critical Assessments*, ed. Daniel W. Conway with Peter S. Groff (London: Routledge, 1998), vol. II, p. 93. Cf. Leiter's reading of Nietzschean fatalism as a kind of "causal essentialism" (Leiter, "The Paradox of Fatalism and Self-Creation in Nietzsche," pp. 219–26). For two illuminating comparisons of Nietzsche and Spinoza as naturalists, see Yirmayahu Yovel, "Spinoza and Nietzsche: *Amor dei* and *Amor fati*," in *Spinoza and Other Heretics: The Adventures of Immanence* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1989), and Schacht, *Making Sense of Nietzsche*, pp. 167–86.

26 For two readings of Nietzsche that privilege this aspect of his thought, see Richard Rorty, "The Contingency of Selfhood," in *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1989), pp. 23–43, and Alexander Nehamas, *Nietzsche: Life as Literature* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1985), esp. Chapter 6.

27 Clément Rosset makes this point in his excellent collection of essays on Nietzsche: "As far as necessity and its problematic relation with fortuitousness [i.e., chance] is concerned, it suffices to distinguish—as Nietzsche himself invites us to do—between the necessity of the *fact* and the necessity of the *law*. The necessity of that fact poses no problem and signifies only the irrefutable character of that which comes into existence, that is, of the real in general. Only the necessity of the law would be in contradiction with the idea of the fortuitousness of the world. But all of Nietzsche's work tends precisely to criticize the idea of a necessary law, to show the fragile and anthropomorphic character of the concept of law, whether it be judicial laws or laws of physics. . . . In short, every necessity in the form of a law is rejected by Nietzsche as an anthropomorphic projection; only the necessity of the fact is 'necessary' " (Rosset, *Joyful Cruelty*, trans. David F. Bell [Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1993], p. 52).

28 As Graham Parkes points out, fate in Nietzsche's texts is usually represented by the image of rock or stone (Parkes, *Composing the Soul*, p. 134). See, for example, BGE 231: "In our ground, 'deep down' inside, there

is something unteachable, some granite of spiritual *fatum*, of predetermined decision and answer to predetermined selected questions. In every cardinal problem there speaks an unchangeable 'this is I.' Cf. SE 1. Keiji Nishitani sheds considerable light on this passage by tying it to a short geological essay by Goethe entitled "Über den Granit," in Keiji Nishitani, *The Self-Overcoming of Nihilism*, trans., Graham Parkes with Setsuko Aihara (Albany: SUNY, 1990), pp. 91–92. The "it was" is only the penultimate obstacle to Zarathustra's affirmation; the *final* obstacle is of course the eternal recurrence of the "small human being" (Z:3 "The Convalescent").

29 See Z:1 "On the Afterworldly": "A new will I teach humanity: to will this way which human beings have walked blindly, and to affirm it"; see also Z:2 "On Redemption," where Zarathustra broaches the question of affirming everything, even the past: "To redeem those who lived in the past and recreate all 'it was' into a 'thus I willed it'—that alone should I call redemption."

30 See, e.g., Z:2 "Before Sunrise." Gilles Deleuze makes a similar point in his perspicacious discussion of the "dice throw" in *Zarathustra*: "The dice which are thrown once are the affirmation of *chance*, the combination which they form on falling is the affirmation of *necessity*. Necessity is affirmed of chance in exactly the sense that being is affirmed of becoming and unity is affirmed of multiplicity. . . . [J]ust as unity does not suppress or deny multiplicity, necessity does not suppress or abolish chance. Nietzsche identifies chance with multiplicity, with fragments, with parts, with chaos: the chaos of the dice that are shaken and then thrown. . . . What Nietzsche calls *necessity* (fate) is thus never the abolition but rather the combination of chance itself" (Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson [New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1983], p. 26). Deleuze focuses primarily on *Zarathustra* in his discussion, but the dice-throw emerges elsewhere in Nietzsche's writings as well. For a passage that combines this trope with the notions of *Notwendigkeit* and *Zufall*, see D 130.

31 Robert Solomon makes a similar point in "Nietzsche as Existentialist and Fatalist," when he attempts to resolve the paradox of self-creation via Nietzsche's perspectivism.

32 GS 335 makes this point most clearly: "We, however, *want to become those we are*—human beings who are new, unique, incomparable, who give themselves laws, who create themselves. To that end we must become the best learners and discoverers of everything that is lawful and necessary in the world: we must become *physicists* in order to be able to be *creators* in this sense—while hitherto all valuations and ideals have been based on *ignorance* of physics or were constructed so as to *contradict* it. Therefore: long live physics! And even more that which *compels* us to turn to phys-

ics—our honesty!” While the opening lines of this passage suggest a Nietzsche who embraces a philosophy of radical self-creation, its conclusion indicates that any such product of aesthetic cultivation has as the condition of its possibility a recognition of the necessities and insurpassable limitations that proscribe what we might become. Leiter and Solomon are thus right in pointing out that Nietzschean self-creation presupposes some form of fatalism.

33 See, e.g. *SE* 1; *TI* “Skirmishes” 48; and *KSA* 12:10[53]/*WP* 120.

34 The continuity between these early passages in the *Untimely Meditations* and some of his late writings (1887–1888) is striking. See, e.g., *KSA* 12:10[111]/*WP* 881: “Most human beings represent pieces and fragments of man: one has to add them up for a complete human being to appear. Whole ages, whole peoples are in this sense somewhat fragmentary; it is perhaps part of the economy of human evolution that the human being should evolve piece by piece. But that should not make one forget for a moment that the real issue is the production of the synthetic human being; that lower human beings, the tremendous majority, are merely preludes and rehearsals out of whose medley the whole human being appears here and there, the milestone human being who indicates how far humanity had advanced so far.”

35 Cf. *BGE* 62: “The accidental, the law of absurdity in the whole economy of humankind, manifests itself most horribly in its destructive effect on the higher human beings whose complicated conditions of life can only be calculated with great subtlety and difficulty.” A bit further on in *BGE* 203, Nietzsche (describing a new philosophical commander and legislator) writes: “With a single glance he sees what, given a favorable accumulation and increase of forces and tasks, might yet be *made of the human being*; he knows with all the knowledge of his conscience how the human being is still unexhausted for the greatest possibilities and how often the type ‘human being’ has already confronted enigmatic decisions and new paths—he knows still better from his most painful memories what wretched things have so far usually broken a being of the highest rank that was in the process of becoming, so that it broke, sank, and became contemptible” (*BGE* 203). Here he is presumably referring not only to the “monstrous fortuity” of natural history, but to the ignorant and destructive impress of previous nomothesis, a topic I shall address in the next section.

36 See, e.g., *SE* 5–6; *Z* “Prologue” 3–4; *GM* II:2; *KSA* 12:9[119]/*WP* 883, and *KSA* 12:10[111]/*WP* 881; *TI* “Skirmishes” 44 (as well as his discussion of Goethe as a paradigmatic great human being in *TI* “Skirmishes” 48–51); and *A* 3–5. It is worth noting that Nietzsche actually employs the phrase “great human being” with some frequency before 1888. Although in

Zarathustra and Beyond Good and Evil, he uses the title critically and pejoratively to signify the debased and mediocre expectations of contemporary culture (see, e.g., Z:1 "On the Flies in the Marketplace"; Z:2 "On Redemption"; and BGE 269), in earlier writings he employs it honorifically (i.e., as a kind of normative "ideal"), much as he does in *Twilight*. See, e.g., SE 6 (second paragraph); HH 163; WS 125; and D 548.

37 Nietzsche observes in both the *Genealogy* and *Zarathustra* that the human being is now a "bridge," thus suggesting that a vista of unforeseen and unpredictable opportunities has been opened up (Z "Prologue" 3; GM II:16).

38 See, e.g., KSA 12:9[93]: "I even want asceticism naturalized again; in place of the purpose of denial, the purpose of strengthening or intensification; a gymnastic of the will; a privation and adopted fasting time of every kind, even the most spiritual . . . a casuistry of deeds with regard to the estimation we have of our powers: an experiment with adventure and arbitrary dangers.—One should invent trials even for strength in holding to one's word." In attempting to naturalize asceticism, Nietzsche strips it of its metaphysical baggage and reappropriates it—no longer as the imposition of some transcendent meaning or purpose upon existence, no longer as a denial of "the world of life, nature, and history" (GS 344), but for the purpose of "strengthening" and "intensification," as "education" and "gymnastic of the will." In short, he holds onto asceticism, but only in the older, more life-affirming sense of *askesis*, i.e., exercise, as an expression of the will to power.

39 Note that while an antinomy necessarily involves some contradiction (inasmuch as it is syntactically reducible to the proposition "P & ~P"), a paradox, while surprising, does not necessarily involve any real contradiction. For a useful discussion, see W. V. O. Quine, *The Ways of Paradox and Other Essays* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1966), pp. 1–18.

40 Cf. the tension between Zarathustra's dual rhetoric of affirmation and the "great despisers," particularly in Z "Prologue" 3–5.