UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

CULTIVATING ADVERSITY

BY

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Edmonton, Alberta
Fall, 1994

ISBN 0-315-94896-5

Canada

But say this, too curious stranger: how much did this people have to suffer to be able to become so beautiful! But now follow me to witness a tragedy and sacrifice with me in the temple of both deities!

The Birth of Tragedy, Section 25

If we could dispense with wars, so much the better. I can imagine more profitable uses for the twelve billion now paid annually for the armed peace we have in Europe; there are other means of winning respect for physiology than field hospitals. -- Good; *very* good even: since the old God is abolished, I am prepared *to rule the world*---

Basic Writings of Nietzsche, p. 800
(Was originally intended for the conclusion of *Ecce Homo*)

ABSTRACT

In its foreword, Nietzsche describes *Twilight of the Idols* as a "grand declaration of war". This thesis examines the many aspects in which Nietzsche saw war and adversity in general as beneficial —even poetic— as discussed in *Twilight of the Idols*. The theme of Dionysian tragedy, which Nietzsche originally introduced in *The Birth of Tragedy*, is woven throughout the book, especially with respect to suffering and inflicting hardship. This thesis also addresses how hardship can create strength, independence and freedom for an individual or a culture.

Though the whole book is made up of battles with various people and ideas, this thesis gives a detailed examination of Nietzsche's attack on Socrates, perhaps Nietzsche's foremost adversary. This examination addresses the apparent contradiction between Nietzsche's own "rules of engagement" and the seemingly malicious criticisms he levels against the "saint" of western philosophy, Socrates.

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Introduction

"From the military school of life — What does not kill me makes me stronger".[1] People who may not connect it with Nietzsche's name would none the less recognize this maxim. It comes from *Twilight of the Idols* and is a fair representation of both the book and the author. It tacitly exhorts us to learn from warriors, those who regularly overcome adversity and flirt with death. The forging house for warriors, military school, trains for combat; it develops courage, confidence and self-discipline through harsh measures. Nietzsche observes that training for war and war itself, both of which entail mastering pain and fear of pain, makes one stronger. One might speculate that the "military school of life" is akin to the "school of hard knocks" — both involve difficult yet necessary life experiences. One need not participate in war exercises to encounter pain or danger in life. Most people would affirm that they have experienced more than enough of both to suit them, and would not to be enthusiastic in seeking out still more.

The maxim has gained notoriety because it praises the value of danger and suffering — a value increasingly foreign to modern Western societies who have been remarkably successful in minimizing the need for pain and risk. A considerable part of that campaign to eliminate strife has been the pursuit of peace. This pursuit includes the re-education of the various nations' peoples, and it has become the prevalent mind-set of this generation. To those who were born after World War II in the Western world, Nietzsche's exhortation to seek strife and conflict should be repugnant.

In *Ecce Homo*, a strange type of autobiography written months after *Twilight* and weeks before his apparent mental collapse, Nietzsche describes *Twilight* thusly:

> This essay of less than 150 pages, cheerful and ominous in tone, a demon that laughs — the work of so few days that I hesitate to mention how many, is an exception among books: there is none richer in substance, more independent, more subversive — more evil.[2]

This most evil and subversive work is pronounced in the foreword of *Twilight* itself to be a "grand declaration of war".[3] In the course of his book he attacks women, morality, the Church, the English, the Germans, the Jews, the Greeks, philosophers in general, Socrates, Plato, and a long list of his contemporaries. However, simply to observe that

he attacks them finesses the complexity of Nietzsche's idea of warfare. His intention involves much more than simply criticizing the people and ideas with which he happens to disagree. In the section of *Ecce Homo* purportedly showing why he is "so wise", Nietzsche devotes a long aphorism to war. There Nietzsche affirms that he is "warlike by nature".[4] He has an instinctive need to engage others in battle. According to him, this ability to be an enemy is evidence of a strong nature. Such a nature seeks out opposition. Indeed, the stronger a spirit is, the more it is inclined to seek out equally strong opposition. Thus, "the strength of those who attack can be measured in a way by the opposition they require: every growth is indicated by the search for a mighty opponent"[5] This principle applies to "warlike philosopher[s]" such as Nietzsche; he "challenges problems, too, to single combat". He seeks not merely "to master what happens to resist, but what requires [one] to stake all [one's] strength, suppleness, and fighting skill — opponents that are [one's] *equals*".[6] So, while there may be hundreds of causes, practices and people of which Nietzsche does not approve, he will only engage in battle those that he considers worthy rivals. This principle is derived from the idea that only an "honest" contest is noble or noteworthy. "Where one feels contempt, one *cannot* wage war".[7] From his general rule about choosing enemies — that they must rival his strength — he spells out four specific principles, that guide his "practice of warfare". The first is that the cause must be victorious. Second, he fights alone, without allies, so that he compromises only himself (his "criterion of doing right" is to compromise himself). Next, he never attacks persons as such, but rather uses the person as an amplified example of a mentality that has affected many people. Last, he never attacks in cases where he feels any personal animosity — quite the opposite: in his case, attacks are signs of *good* will, sometimes even of gratitude. He compliments them by choosing them as a worthy opponent. He honors "by associating [his] name with that of a cause or a person: pro or con — that makes no difference to [him] at this point".[8] Presumably, it is the reader's task to discern how these rules apply to Nietzsche's numerous attacks in *Twilight*.

Acccording to *Ecce Homo*, then, Nietzsche sees himself as a philosopher-warrior on the battlefield of ideas. This is sufficiently confirmed in the foreword of *Twilight* by his describing the work as a declaration of war. Nietzsche thrives on contest and battle. He wrote *Twilight* as an expression of this need. This book is Nietzsche's attempt to engage his readers and his chosen enemies in a war. The reader is left to choose allegiances.

Readers may be caught off-guard by Nietzsche's stated aim for writing this book. Philosophic writing generally carries the intention of edifying the reader by educating him. A writer may also have some hidden agenda of demonstrating his superior knowledge; but rarely, if ever, has a philosopher written that his works are an assault. In a sense Nietzsche may be more forthright about his *means* of determining his superiority. However, he is much too frank for the times. "War", "violence", and other words that denote the use of force, have become categorically immoral. Associated ideas such as competition and discipline also are meeting with increasing disapproval, and those who still support those ideas have had to mask them in new expressions. Today most Canadians will go to great lengths to avoid conflict of any kind. This posture toward conflict is the counter-measure of the Second World War. We have been educated to value peace above all.

In order to begin to understand the explicit content of *Twilight*, one must give careful consideration to the form it takes and the spirit in which it was written. In particular, one must take into account the textual evidence that expressly indicates or implicitly demonstrates that Nietzsche saw war and adversity as beneficial to himself in particular, if not to mankind in general. Needless to say, such a point of view in this age and part of the world is rare, especially in academic circles where tolerance, compassion, and "multi-cultural" acceptance are treated as the highest virtues. But Nietzsche not only acknowledges his own need for warfare; by implication of publishing his attacks, he also apparently believes that drawing certain of his readers into his battles will nurture a neglected need in them, or in their society. Of course, praising war and aggression in any form is apt to offend the sensibilities of all those for whom peace, cooperation, and harmony are paramount concerns. Therefore, the tone of Nietzsche's public writing will be not merely unusual but profoundly distasteful to the vast majority of modern readers. One suspects that this unpalatable aspect would cause many readers to reject Nietzsche's views out of hand, and moreover, that this would be the very result Nietzsche would wish for: that he means to separate the sheep from the goats.

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the value of adversity as Nietzsche presents it in *Twilight*, and to assess the implications of his antagonistic approach. This would be the first hurdle to overcome in the process of learning what his book has to teach. The method of exploration will be, first, to consider what Nietzsche explicitly says about the value of adversity; this will be the business of my first chapter. That done, I shall examine his attack on what seems to be his principal foe of

the book, the Platonic Socrates. Socrates has been singled out to be Nietzsche's foremost enemy not by reason of his many vices or weaknesses, but because of his tremendous strength. Yet some of Nietzsche's attacks on Socrates are outlandish; for example, he impugns Socrates for being ugly — a matter which hardly seems relevant in a battle of ideas. This section of my thesis will attempt to determine whether there is some serious philosophic purpose behind Nietzsche's apparently slanderous attack on Socrates. Finally, I will offer some concluding observations.

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1 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols,* (hereafter cited as *Twilight),* "Maxims and Arrows", Aphorism 8, trans. Hollingdale, (New York: Penguin Books, 1990), p. 33.

2 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo,* "Twilight of the Idols", Aphorism 1 in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche,* trans. and ed. Walter Kaufmann, (New York: Modern Library, 1968), p. 770.

3 *Twilight of the Idols,* Foreword, trans. Hollingdale, p. 32.

4 *Ecce Homo,* "Why I Am So Wise", Aphorism 7, p. 687.

5 *Ibid.,* p. 688.

6 *Ibid.*

7 *Ibid.*

8 *Ibid.,* p. 689.

Chapter One:

Nietzsche Speaks On Adversity

The Tragic Nature of War:

The Optimistic Joy in Destruction

The foreword of *Twilight* in conjunction with certain aphorisms from the rest of the work suggest that Nietzsche sees himself as the *tragic* philosopher: overburdened by the responsibilities inherent in what he knows, yet compelled to proceed nonetheless. The third sentence of the book speaks of his destined task as a *"revaluation of all values"*, a task of such oppressive seriousness that he must actively work to alleviate it by whatever means he can, including war. He says this book is a war. He is putting himself at risk by waging it. This thesis will discuss further the nobility of facing the possibility of injury for the sake of the future. In certain instances, the future of the individual who risks being harmed is improved, as he is strengthened by the trial. In other instances, it is the future of a particular community or even the species that is benefited. Nietzsche brings the sacrificial aspect of war to light and emphasizes its beautiful poetic qualities.

When speaking of Nietzsche, the teacher of the eternal return, it seems only fitting to consider the end of his book while addressing the foreword. In aphorism fifty-one of "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man"[1] he remarks: "my ambition is to say in ten sentences what everyone else says in a book".[2] His style is nothing if not laconic. It is fair to assume, then, that he would not discuss something in his foreword unless he believed it to be crucial to the proper understanding of his book. Nietzsche indulges himself to the extent of seventeen sentences to prepare his readers for *Twilight of the Idols*. They give scarcely any indications, however, as to what the book is actually about. Presumably, then these few enigmatic observations are to set the tone or atmosphere for the reader and excite his curiosity. It is unlikely that Nietzsche would waste words on matters that do not pertain to the central ideas of the work.

But given Nietzsche's own commitment to concision, one might wonder how an extended exposition of his concentrated text can be justified. The authorization comes from Nietzsche himself in the preface of *The Genealogy of Morals* in which he writes:

> If this book is incomprehensible to anyone and jars on his ears, the fault, it seems to me, is not necessarily mine. It is clear enough, assuming, as I do assume, that one has first read my earlier writings and has not spared some trouble

> in doing so: for they are, indeed, not easy to penetrate....[3] [Also,] people find difficulty with the aphoristic form: this arises from the fact that today this form is *not taken seriously enough*. An aphorism, properly stamped and molded, has not been "deciphered" when it has simply been read; rather, one has then to begin its *exegesis*, for which is required an art of exegesis. I have offered in the third essay of the present book an example of what I regard as "exegesis" in such a case — an aphorism is prefixed to this essay, the essay itself is a commentary on it.[4]

Indeed, the third essay, entitled "What Is the Meaning of Ascetic Ideals?", is an exegesis of an (incompletely quoted) aphorism taken from *Thus Spake Zarathustra:* "Unconcerned, mocking, violent — thus wisdom wants us: she is a woman and always loves only a warrior".[5] This third essay is twenty-eight sections in length and occupies sixty-seven pages in Kaufmann's *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*. Therefore, if Nietzsche is to be our exemplar, there are volumes to be written about *Twilight of the Idols.*

Its 'foreword' is seemingly biographic in nature. Nietzsche admits that he has been endeavoring to stay cheerful — to keep his spirit light. A light spirit is how Nietzsche characterizes the free, the high and the strong. He has taken on himself the task of "a revaluation of all values"; he does not clarify what this means, but judging from subsequent discussions in the book it need not entail the replacement of all values. Be that as it may, this task has weighed him down. It is so ominous to him that melancholy would overtake him if he did not actively fight it off. Every means of winning the battle against this oppressive seriousness is justified. Warfare, he suggests, is of itself an especially effective means. He presumably means open, frank, straightforward fighting, as elsewhere he tells us that a war which *cannot* be waged openly is poisonous, making one "crafty" and "bad".[6] He claims here that even the wounds received in battle have curative powers for spirits that have grown too inward and too profound.

For those who have read his other works, "too profound" is an unexpected expression to see coming from Nietzsche. In his writings he criticizes shallowness so severely that one might have believed that Nietzsche views profundity as an absolute good.[7] However, he also discusses the heavy burden of truth in *Twilight*. Truths can be so hard to bear that they require all the courage one has and more.[8] Wisdom knows that too much truth can be harmful to life.[9] So, Nietzsche highly respects profundity, but he is also aware that it has its price.

Nietzsche apparently sees himself as the tragic philosopher; and he suggests in the foreword that he is fighting this war as a means of dealing with his tragic nature. In the *Ecce Homo* section discussing *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche says that when he wrote *Twilight of the Idols* he "found the concept of the 'tragic' and at long last knowledge of the psychology of tragedy....".[10] He quotes *Twilight* and then states, "[i]n this sense I have the right to understand myself as the first *tragic philosopher* — that is, the most extreme opposite and antipode of a pessimistic philosopher".[11] He is a tragic philosopher not only in the sense that he philosophizes about tragedy, but also that *he philosophizes in a tragic way.*

In "Maxims and Arrows" he asks, "[c]an an *ass* be tragic? — To be crushed by a burden one can neither bear nor throw off?" He goes on to say that this is "[t]he case of the philosopher".[12] What, then, is his burden? In the foreword he says that he must "shake off a seriousness grown all too oppressive".[13] This oppressive seriousness attends the weight of responsibility imposed by his task of revaluating all values. His endeavor is to be his gift to his fellow men. It is the product of his wisdom, gathered from his knowledge, which, like a fruit tree in autumn, is plentiful and ripe.

In the *Ecce Homo* section discussing *Twilight*, he also uses the image of a tree to demonstrate how laden he is with truths. "A great wind blows among the trees, and everywhere fruit fall down — truths. The squandering of an all-too-rich autumn: one stumbles over truths, one steps on and kills a few — there are too many".[14,15] Truths can be hard to bear, and, unless one somehow manages to forget them, they are impossible to "throw off". The burden of responsibility that Nietzsche refers to in the foreword is related to the burden of truth in the sense that the more one is aware of the truth, the more considerations there are to account for. That is, one holds oneself accountable for what one knows; therefore, the greater one's knowledge, the greater one's responsibility. Nietzsche sees himself as the tragic philosopher in the sense that he is courageously bearing these truths despite the cost to himself.[16]

The sacrifice of the individual for the sake of promoting the whole is one of the main aspects of Greek tragedy. Those familiar with Nietzsche know of his admiration for this art form. In the last aphorism of "What I Owe To The Ancients", Nietzsche describes the concept of the *tragic* feeling as "an overflowing feeling of life and energy within which even pain acts as a stimulus." Tragedy is the

> [a]ffirmation of life even in its strangest and sternest problems, the will to life rejoicing in its own inexhaustibility through the *sacrifice* of its highest types —*that* is what I called Dionysian, *that* is what I recognized as the bridge to the psychology of the tragic poet.[17]

On the whole, his declaration of war is, according to his own criteria, the essence of a tragic philosopher. In *Ecce Homo*, directly after he claims the right to call himself the first tragic philosopher, he continues to describe what this title means:

> The affirmation of passing away *and destroying*, which is the decisive feature of a Dionysian philosophy; saying Yes to opposition and war; *becoming*, along with a radical repudiation of the very concept of *being* — all this is clearly more closely related to me than anything else thought to date.[18]

What does Nietzsche mean by "tragedy"? In *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche says that his book on *The Birth of Tragedy* is "the first instruction about how the Greeks got over their pessimism, how they *overcame* it".[19] Speaking in very broad summary terms of the nature of Greek tragedy, it involves the overcoming or surrender of individuation, which Nietzsche attributes to the Apollinian drive, in favour of the instinct that protects the welfare of the whole, the Dionysian force. Although Nietzsche discusses these forces at considerable length, one might glimpse his meaning of the Apollinian in the following passage:

> In fact, we might say of Apollo that in him the unshaken faith in this *principium* [principle of individuation] and the calm repose of the man wrapped up in it receive their most sublime expression; and we might call Apollo himself the glorious divine image of the *principium individuationis*...[20]

And this next quote provides a type of description of the Dionysian:

> ....this is the most immediate effect of the Dionysian tragedy, that the state and society and, quite generally, the gulfs between man and man give way to an overwhelming feeling of unity leading back to the very heart of nature. The metaphysical comfort — with which, I am suggesting even now, every true tragedy leaves us — that life is at the

> bottom of things, despite all the changes of appearances, indestructibly powerful and pleasurable.[21]

Often when Nietzsche refers to tragedy, in *The Birth of Tragedy* and elsewhere, there is a strong emphasis on the Dionysian element. Nietzsche focuses so much attention on the importance of the Dionysian that one might presume that it is the ruling or predominant force:

> In the light of this insight we must understand Greek tragedy as the Dionysian chorus which ever anew discharges itself in an Apollinian world of images. Thus the choral parts with which tragedy is interlaced are, as it were, the womb that gave birth to the whole of the so-called dialogue, that is, the entire world of the stage, the real drama. In several successive discharges this primal ground of tragedy radiates this vision of the drama which is by all means a dream apparition and to that extent epic in nature; but on the other hand, being the objectification of a Dionysian state, it represents not Apollinian redemption through mere appearance but, on the contrary, the shattering of the individual and his fusion with primal being. Thus the drama is the Dionysian embodiment of Dionysian insights and effects and thereby separated, as by a tremendous chasm, from the epic.[22]

> In the total effect of tragedy, the Dionysian predominates once again. Tragedy closes with a sound which could never come from the realm of Apollinian art. And thus the Apollinian illusion reveals itself as what it really is — the veiling during the performance of the tragedy of the real Dionysian effect; but the latter is so powerful that it ends by forcing the Apollinian drama itself into a sphere where it begins to speak with Dionysian wisdom and even denies itself and its Apollinian visibility.[23]

However, this would contradict other sections of *The Birth of Tragedy* where he states that tragedy is nothing less than a symbiosis of the Apollinian and Dionysian,[24] and it would also ignore the conclusion of the book where he insists that these artistic drives must be held in balance. Nevertheless, he does refer to the drama as "Dionysian tragedy"[25] in *The Birth of Tragedy,* and he seems to associate the Dionysian with tragedy in Aphorism five of "What I Owe To The Ancients". Yet this may be an attempt to compensate for the prior

neglect of the Dionysian. So, to be cautious, I will summarize Nietzsche's conception of tragedy as the "mysterious union" of the Apollinian and the Dionysian.[26]

One could also use the resources of *Twilight* to discover Nietzsche's understanding of the Dionysian instinct to suffer pain willingly — even desirously:

> Every individual detail in the act of procreation, pregnancy, birth, awoke the most exalted and solemn feelings. In the teachings of the mysteries, *pain* is sanctified: the "pains of childbirth" sanctify pain in general — all becoming and growing, all that guarantees the future, *postulates* pain...For the eternal joy in creating to exist, for the will to life eternally to affirm itself, the "torment of childbirth" *must* also exist eternally.... All this is contained in the word Dionysus: I know of no more exalted symbolism than this *Greek* symbolism, the symbolism of the Dionysian. The profoundest instinct of life, the instinct for the future of life, for the eternity of life, is in this word experienced religiously — the actual road to life, procreation as the *sacred road*....[27]

Thus we may begin to see why war, enmity, and adversity are central to Nietzsche's idea of the tragic philosopher. And thereby one may deduce that *Twilight of the Idols* is the product of a tragic philosopher.

The Dionysian element is also what inspires the creative element in man. In the eighth "Skirmish", Nietzsche examines the psychology of an artist, and he gives a list of the types of intoxication which must exist "for any sort of aesthetic activity or perception to exist".[28] Included in this list are: contest, victory, cruelty and destruction, all of which entail, if they do not originate in, enmity and adversity. Intoxication produces the feeling of increased energy — the sense that one may enforce one's will. Strangely, Nietzsche calls this state *idealizing*; it is the prerequisite physiological condition for the artist, or (presumably) for any type of creator. One requires a feeling of increased energy in order to overcome all the objections and obstructions. One must be inebriated with a sense of power for the "Yes-saying" element to govern. Contest, victory, cruelty and destruction are all possible means to that end, (although artists commonly have a reputation for depending on sexual excitement and narcotics).

The description that Nietzsche gives of intoxication in *Twilight* compares closely with his description of the Dionysian. Returning to *The Birth of Tragedy*, one sees that he introduces the Dionysian nature through the experience of intoxication. He writes:

> Either under the influence of the narcotic draught, of which the songs of all primitive men and peoples speak, or with the potent coming of spring that penetrates all nature with joy, these Dionysian emotions awake, and as they grow in intensity, everything subjective vanishes into complete self-forgetfulness.[29]

Joy and a kind of *optimism* are what unites all these types of intoxication. These two elements are the necessary conditions for the creative element to flourish. Nietzsche later calls it "the tragic feeling". In Aphorism five of "What I Owe To The Ancients", Nietzsche describes tragedy as "the decisive repudiation"[30] of pessimism. It is *"to realize in oneself* the eternal joy of becoming — that joy which also encompasses *joy in destruction*".[31]

Continuing on with the spirit of optimism in destruction as presented in the foreword of *Twilight*, Nietzsche quotes an anonymous maxim: *"increscunt animi, virescit volnere virtus"* — ("a spirit grows, strength is restored by wounding").[32] One question to be answered in *Twilight* is: who or what is being wounded, and has that "spirit" grown as a result? At this point, one might speculate that Nietzsche is putting himself at risk of being injured, and that he intends to injure others. The objects of his attack are numerous; he specifically mentions many names, groups of people, and ideas. Yet one also wonders if he intends to injure and thereby strengthen his readers by destroying their ideals — or, as Nietzsche calls them, their idols.

Nietzsche entitled his book *Twilight of the Idols*. There would seem to be a double allusion here: to Wagner's "Twilight of the Gods" (the concluding opera of his *Ring* cycle); and to Bacon's famous "Idols of the mind" that typically obstruct or distort human understanding (as discussed most fully in his *New Organon*, aphorisms 39-65). I shall not attempt to interpret the book in light of those tacit allusions — important though they doubtless are.[33] I shall instead attempt to understand the title in light of books' own resources. One might begin by considering the significance of the word "idol". Certainly Nietzsche would have been aware of the primary religious meaning of idol as a false god. *Webster's* dictionary traces the etymology to the Greek word *eidolon* which means phantom. The dictionary also cites "an object of

extreme devotion" and "a false conception". In the *Ecce Homo* section on *Twilight*, Nietzsche says that "[w]hat is called *idol* on the title page is simply what has been called truth so far".[34] All the denotations of idol include an aspect of falsity. (Even in the case of "an object of extreme devotion", the devotion is extreme because the object is not worthy of it; the object has false importance.)

Nietzsche claims he enjoys sounding out idols even more than warfare, at least "under certain circumstances".[35] By "sounding out" he means figuratively to strike with a hammer "as with a tuning fork", in order to judge whether or not the idol is solid. Of course, if it were hollow, a forceful blow of the hammer would destroy the idol. He does not expressly exclude that possibility. In any event, we are to understand that the idols are commonly held ideas. Nietzsche's metaphor of an idol implies that these ideas have become so precious and so fundamental that to doubt their veracity would be an act of heresy. Nietzsche prepares the reader to be surprised because those who worship them do not regard them simply as *idols*.

He assures his reader that there are more idols in the world than there are realities. He speculates that he *might* find that these idols are hollow. As a literary conceit, he speaks as if he does not know yet whether or not they are substantial, but he intends to strike and thereby reveal *how* substantial (or insubstantial) they are. He subsequently speaks of shooting arrows at them. It will be the reader's task to decide whether each idol has been mortally wounded.

Nietzsche wonders rhetorically whether this book is also a new war, as well as a sounding out of new idols. He leaves this idea in the reader's mind as a possibility. He then declares flatly that it *is* "a grand declaration of war", and asserts that he will be sounding out eternal idols[36] as opposed to merely idols of the age. They therefore are not only the most ancient idols in existence, but also the most believed in, yet the most hollow or "puffed-up". However, in *Ecce Homo* he again discusses the age of the idols. In the second aphorism about *Twilight* he asserts, "[t]here is no reality, no 'ideality' that is not touched in this essay (touched: what a cautious euphemism!). Not only *eternal* idols, also the youngest which are therefore the feeblest on account of their age. 'Modern ideas,' for example." So, taking *Ecce Homo* as expressing Nietzsche's authoritative view, he will be addressing himself in *Twilight* to some idols of the age *as well as* the eternal ones.

Next in the foreword he says that there is both sacrifice and growth resulting from war. Nietzsche credits an appreciation of war as

a kind of great wisdom, at least on the part of "spirits who have become too inward, too profound". With respect to this book and in consideration of what he has just indicated as his motives for waging the war, one must wonder if Nietzsche means for the reader to gain such wisdom himself.

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As discussed above, a significant component of tragedy is the sanctification of pain. Aphorism seventeen of "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man" affords tremendous affirmation to those who are suffering:

> The most spiritual human beings, assuming that they are the most courageous, also experience by far the most painful tragedies: but it is precisely for this reason that they honour life, because it brings against them its most formidable weapons.[37]

Those who possess great spirits also suffer terrible pain. It hardly seems likely that these people are simply predestined for more untimely deaths or more unfortunate accidents. A more plausible explanation is that the more spiritual people feel pain and joy more acutely — more deeply and intensely than others. These spiritual people honor life because their lives and the lives of others carry profound significance. In a sense, it is greater capacity for joy and pain that those lives provide that is the formidable weapon.

One might also use *Ecce Homo* to illuminate why the strong suffer so much and so willingly. The most spiritual and courageous people are the people with strong natures that Nietzsche describes in Aphorism seven of "Why I Am So Wise". They carry this instinctive need to seek out adversaries who equal their strength, who will test them and thereby stimulate growth. Such a nature must have extraordinary courage. Nietzsche acknowledges that at some point (if not recurrently) they will encounter a challenge that surpasses their ability, and the result will be painful. However they honor life precisely because it provides them with these worthy challenges. It is analogous to athletes who do not resent their toils and injuries. The risk of damage was accepted for the love of the game. So, when Nietzsche uses the term "tragedy", he means more than an unfortunate occurrence. He means "...the sacrifice of its highest types—".[38]

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The twenty-fourth aphorism also eulogizes tragedy. It begins with the words "The struggle". This particular struggle is about morality. Paradoxically, the artists are fighting against morality in art while Nietzsche, the immoralist, is quashing the artists' rebellion. The artists want to be free of any moral purpose. Nietzsche, in the persona of a psychologist, asks several rhetorical questions which together strongly suggest that art inescapably has a moral purpose: it beautifies and glorifies its objects, and in the process necessarily affects the values of a society that pays it any attention. The meaning of art, and hence the sign of a true artist, is the promotion of life. A standard for judging art follows from his discussion of the beautiful and ugly in which he states, "Reckoned physiologically, everything ugly weakens and afflicts man".[39] The tragic, however, differs profoundly from the ugly. The tragic is a "victorious condition" of "bravery and composure in the face of a powerful enemy".[40] The heroic man, one who is accustomed to and who seeks out suffering, brings nobility to his life through tragedy. The tragic poet creates this dose of "sweetest cruelty" specifically for the heroic. The tragic artist depicts courage in the face of adversity and thus shows the beautiful meaning in the heroic life. Heroes seek out danger and accept the pain willingly. They need enemies, and they need tragic poets to depict their struggle beautifully.

Opposition Develops Strength — Seeing The Bigger Picture

The eighth "maxim" or "arrow" may well be the most renowned aphorism of Nietzsche: *"From the military school of life* — What does not kill me makes me stronger". Those who "would rather say No" to this are quick to point out the seemingly neglected qualification that some things that ought to kill us leave us permanently disabled or severely weakened in some fashion. However, those who would consider the truth of this maxim would agree that hardship, even in extreme cases, develops new strength. Nietzsche in fact reaffirms this view in Aphorism thirty-eight of "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man" in which he observes of history that great danger has caused men to become the most resourceful — using their previously undiscovered talents and charting new dimensions of their spirit. Great danger and adversity cause a people to become strong:

> It was *great danger* which made [a nation] something deserving reverence, danger which first teaches us to know our resources, our virtues, our shield and spear, our *spirit* — which *compels* us to be strong.... *First* principle: one must need strength, otherwise one will never have it.[41]

Strength would not be developed unless it were out of necessity. Thus he gives a recommendation to seek out peril:

> To venture only into situations in which one may not have any sham virtues, where, like the tightrope walker on his rope, one either stands or falls — or gets away.[42]

One's *real* (as opposed to "sham") virtues or strengths are developed only in those situations where a great deal is at risk -- with respect to the psychological virtues, one stakes one's pride and vanity, one's confidence, perhaps even one's sanity. One must find a situation where one is compelled to gather all one's resources in order to succeed. One must walk on the tightrope and risk falling to develop one's virtues.

Both of Nietzsche's observations imply that the potential to become strong exists in any group of people, but only dire circumstances could motivate most of them to cultivate it. The harsh conditions that the community had to overcome was the element of their culture that

caused them to become strong. Again, the nay-sayers would object that when the potential to surmount these perils is lacking, and it often is, this dire situation would become even worse.

So, Nietzsche's eighth maxim about being made stronger through risk and injury may deliver us from bitter feelings about our fate. That is, if one were destined to suffer through some painful experience, one might be able to reflect on Aphorism eight and discover the ways in which one has benefited. To pick a very common example, some people who have lost their eyesight have come to accept and appreciate the loss because they were forced to discover the expanded worlds of touch, scent and sound that they otherwise would never have known. In that case, the aphorism itself may be life-serving because it helps fight off resentment.

However, the same maxim may be used to justify imposing suffering on others, or the intentional promotion of conflict. It is with such maxims in mind that Dannhauser[43] accuses Nietzsche of political imprudence. He writes:

> A man who counsels men to live dangerously must expect to have dangerous men like Mussolini heed his counsel; a man who teaches that a good war justifies any cause must expect to have this teaching, which is presented half in jest but only *half* in jest, to be abused.... Nietzsche not only fails to advocate or teach prudence and public responsibility; he slanders prudence and public responsibility....Any exposition of Nietzsche's political philosophy must...point to the grave consequences of that philosophy.[44]

Ignoring for now the moral condemnation of Dannhauser's words, he does imply that Nietzsche's books, in and of themselves, put mankind in a dangerous situation. It seems probable that Nietzsche intended his writings to be dangerous. He sees that "the highest type of free man [is] where the greatest resistance is constantly being overcome: five steps from tyranny, near the threshold of the danger of servitude".[45] With this in mind, one might even imagine Nietzsche being gratified by the Second World War.

Nietzsche must have anticipated the Dannhausers of the world (as well as the Mussolinis), and it is likely that when he was writing this book he had heard from a number of them.[46] In his thirty-sixth maxim he asks aloud whether his attacks on morality are damaging to society. In response to his own question, he draws an analogy with anarchists

and princes. He observes the paradox that the strongest support for the prince emanates as a reaction to an attack against him. The prince requires serious opposition in order to activate and consolidate his support.

Nietzsche's analogy suggests that he is to morality, i.e. an immoralist, what anarchists are to princes. Anarchists advocate the complete elimination of authority; they want no form of government whatsoever. Nietzsche has recognized that when people are compelled to choose between imperfect government and no government at all, they become motivated to rediscover, literally re-cognize, the advantages of government. They fear chaos and destruction that they know would accompany anarchy. However, to follow through with the analogy, is Nietzsche a moral anarchist? In some respects he can be considered so because of the many textual references in which he denounces the entire concept of morality. In fact he seemingly dedicates the whole section "Morality As Anti-Nature" to condemning morality as such. Yet, if one reflects upon his actions, in particular, his passion to "re-evaluate all values" through books such as *Beyond Good & Evil, Genealogy of Morals,* and *Thus Spake Zarathustra,* one recognizes that Nietzsche has a vision for the evolution of morality and that he was engaged in the long process of articulating it. Nietzsche dotes on paradoxes — he describes this very book as both "cheerful and ominous".[47] For Nietzsche to intend to destroy and create at once would be characteristic of this book and of Nietzsche. He brings this paradox into focus in the concluding chapter of *Twilight*, "The Hammer Speaks:"

> And if your hardness will not flash and cut and cut to pieces: how can you one day — create with me?
>
> For all creators are hard. And it must seem bliss to you to press your hand upon millennia as upon wax.[48]

Destruction of the old is the prerequisite to creating the new. However, if he truly intends to destroy, how can princes "again sit firmly on their thrones"? Perhaps in the sense that the renewed appreciation and support for morality will accompany the reconstruction of it.

Therefore, Nietzsche might be more accurately described as a moral revolutionary even though he calls himself a moral anarchist or an immoralist. By dictionary definition, a revolution involves "the overthrow or renunciation of one government or ruler and the substitution of another by the governed".[49] This would be the case if

Nietzsche intends to overthrow the old morality and replace it with his own entirely new set of values. The threat to princes by revolutionaries is considerably greater than by anarchists. Those who oppose the prince may be victorious — or, worse still, civil war ensues because no one is powerful enough to win. Ironically, it may finally lead to anarchy. But if the task of "revaluation of all values" is simply a radical reconsideration of existing values, the consequences may not be so drastic.

He concludes Aphorism thirty-six with a moral to "shoot at morals". Throughout the book he attacks the very principle of morality. He argues that morality is ridiculous, that the best cultures were those that relied upon their instincts. He also argues that morality simply cannot work because human nature cannot be altered according to man's design. Everything about us has been predetermined by fate:

> ...But even when the moralist merely turns to the individual and says to him: "*You* ought to be thus and thus" he does not cease to make himself ridiculous. The individual is, in his future and in his past, a piece of fate, one law more, one necessity more for everything that is and everything that will be. To say to him "change yourself" means to demand that everything should change, even in the past...[50]

Yet he uses the very word "moral" to describe his advice. This entire work can best be described as moralizing. If indeed our fate has been predetermined, as Nietzsche suggests in the above quote, the advice given in this book would be of no benefit to us. The information could not change our destiny. This aphorism suggests that Nietzsche is not being altogether straightforward in his attack on morality. His criticisms may have some merit, but if they do, there must be some resolution that he is withholding — otherwise he would not waste his ink sharing this discovery with the public. His attack on the "idol" of morality is similar in this respect to his attack on the "idol" of Socrates. Although this thesis will only give a cursory and adjunctive consideration of his critique of morality, the second chapter on Socrates will bring to light more fully what Nietzsche means by his "declaration of war".

Exploring the Agonal Instinct - How Some People Thrive on Conflict

There are several aphorisms in "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man" which dissect the agonal instinct. One does not often hear of the agonal instinct, and so one must endeavor to understand exactly what it is that Nietzsche is trying to explore. The word is Greek in origin, and its meaning in English is taken over directly from the Greek. The dictionary defines "agon" as contest or conflict.[51] To have an instinct for conflict seems to be at cross-purposes with our desire to avoid pain and seek pleasure, since there is the undeniable possibility that one could be injured. Yet one only has to look as far as the local association of debaters to find examples of people who take great pleasure in winning an argument. The universities are rife with such people. Another well known example of the instinct for contest is sports. Men especially love sports — even if they do not care to participate in sports, they are devoted spectators. They yearn to engage in contests — if only vicariously — to determine which side is stronger.

In Aphorism fourteen of "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Nietzsche corrects the Darwinian theory. Darwin is correct in that life consists of and is a on-going struggle; however, the battle is not for mere survival, but for dominance which, almost by definition, involves enmity. In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche gives a fuller explanation of the organic nature of life. It is the struggle for domination, itself a manifestation of the will to power:

> ...life itself is *essentially* appropriation, injury, overpowering of what is alien and weaker...and at least, at its mildest, exploitation.... "Exploitation" does not belong to a corrupt or imperfect and primitive society: it belongs to the *essence* of what lives, as a basic organic function; it is a consequence of the will to power, which is after all the will to life.[52]

Our normal preoccupation is not with avoiding hunger and pain, but with maximizing all kinds of wealth and luxury — both of which are measured relatively. That is to say, wealth and luxury are indications of having *more than others*. In effect, it is an economic state of victory. One might object that there is an order of priority occuring: if, and only if, the basic needs have been met, do people then divert their attention

to competing for "more". There are common examples of people who have knowingly risked their lives for the sake of "getting ahead" in terms of money (certain kinds of criminal activity, for instance), and there are even examples of people who accept the risk of death simply for the sake of winning. The most obvious are found in dangerous sports, such as the various types of motorized racing, skiing, and mountain climbing.

Nietzsche is careful to note that in cases where the *apparently* weak triumph over the strong, the weak *in fact* had stronger minds. The Germans, he remarks for the second time in his book, are losing the agility of mind they once possessed because they have no need to exercise it. Nothing was threatening the Germans at that time except those clever weaklings, the English. It seems that "What the Germans Lack" is a worthy opponent.

❋❋❋❋

Nietzsche begins the section entitled "What I Owe to the Ancients" by explaining how he developed his taste for the ancients. Overall he has an intolerant taste: it is least likely to agree, more likely to disagree and most likely to give no opinion whatsoever. This Nay-saying taste applies to books, towns and the countryside. Even in the arena of academics and learning, Nietzsche takes the adversarial approach. He exemplifies what he speaks of earlier in "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism twenty-five:

> To put up with men, to keep open house in one's heart — this is liberal, but no more than liberal. One knows hearts which are capable of *noble* hospitality, which have curtained windows and closed shutters: they keep their best rooms empty. Why do they so? — Because they await guests with whom one does *not* have to "put up"...[53]

He is an "inhospitable" reader. His highest appreciation is not for minds that are liberal simply for the sake of being liberal. They become cluttered with indiscriminately collected knowledge and cannot provide adequate consideration for the truly distinguished ideas. Nietzsche maintains that a select few books have affected his life — none of which were the well-known ones.

His discriminating tastes led him to "scent out 'beautiful souls', 'golden means' and other perfections in the Greeks"; however, this pursuit led nowhere. He says he was preserved by the psychologist in

him that detected the strongest instinct in the Hellenes, their will to power. Recall from the discussion of Darwinian theory that Nietzsche sees the will to power as the equivalent of the will to life, and the essence of that will is, "appropriation, injury, overpowering of what is alien and weaker".[54] The tension of both wanting to destroy their fellow man and fearing destruction by him was released in the Peloponnesian War.

The Hellenes became strong out of necessity; they sensed danger all around them. Nietzsche professes that their strength was developed by persevering in a perilous position; the Greeks did not start out with this strength — it was not their "nature". The rest of Greek culture is an expression of their need for dominance — their love of contest, their will to power. Nietzsche is reiterating in this concluding section what has already been discussed above, that opposition develops strength — or, rather, that *only* opposition develops strength.

Spiritual Adversaries

Thus far we have examined Nietzsche's treatment of the value of contest and adversity with specific focus on the elements outside oneself that can pose a threat. However, the battle of greatest importance is the internal one because it is the struggle for self-control: a necessary element for achieving any true victory. Self-control is strength of will that enables one do to what one thinks is best for oneself to do. The first reference to an internal struggle is with respect to Socrates.[55] Nietzsche describes Socrates' battle against his own decadence or degeneration of instincts. There are other "enemies within" addressed in this book; Nietzsche may be attaching different labels to the same "bad" element of the soul, or he may be crafting a new understanding of the division of the soul with various elements that must be overcome. But however one divides up and labels the soul, there would be wide agreement that the element that struggles for control is commonly referred to as will-power, also known as *self-control*. It is a complicated notion because some element of the soul is always in control, and some facet of our will is always being gratified; yet, we do not always feel that we are in control or exercising will power.[56] Somehow we identify more with one element, and we feel that when it is predominant then we are behaving in accordance with whom we perceive ourselves to be. For example, when a man bursts into a fit of rage and punches a hole in the wall, people will describe his mental condition as having lost control or being beside himself with anger. His anger is as much a part of him as any other, but when the anger is directing his actions, he is considered to be out of control.

In light of the fact that the idea of the internal battle first arises in the section about Socrates, it may be useful to consider what Socrates himself teaches about self-control. In Book IV of the *Republic*, Socrates draws an analogy between his city in speech and the soul, in that there are three parts: one devoted to physical concerns (the appetites); one to bravery and battle (the spirit, seat of the passions); and one to reasoning. In the city these parts correspond to the money-making class; the auxiliary class and the guardian-rulers. More-or-less in accord with common usuage, Socrates associates self-control with moderation, which he goes on to suggest is the condition of harmony or friendship between those three elements:

> "Isn't he moderate because of the friendship and accord of these parts — when the ruling part and the two ruled parts

> are of the single opinion that the calculating part ought to rule and don't raise faction against it?"
>
> "Moderation, surely," [Glaucon] said, "is nothing other than this, in city or in private man."[57]

So, Socrates believes that each of us identifies with the calculating part of one's soul. When the spirited part or *thumos* rules over the bodily passions, according to the decree of the intellect, we would say that we were behaving in a well-controlled fashion.

Returning to *Twilight*, in Aphorism ten of "The Problem of Socrates", Nietzsche credits Socrates with providing the antidote for decaying instincts. Nietzsche states that Socrates was the foremost Greek with respect to his anarchy of instincts, and he used logic and intellect to keep his soul in order. Socrates would have called this type of soul government not an anarchy but a tyranny. His followers, or, as Nietzsche refers to them, his invalids, sought to use reason as a remedy also, for they suffered the same ailment. Reason was the daylight to counter the dark desires.[58]

According to Nietzsche, this type of war with the instincts was a new development — a decline from a state in which happiness and instinct were one. It is hard to imagine a time or a culture, except perhaps a *very* primitive one in very fortunate circumstances, in which a human being could have the best life by following his instincts. Nevertheless, Nietzsche would have us believe that the Greeks had no need for self-control until the time of Socrates, when decadence had emerged. He explains that once decadence is present, it cannot be revoked or repaired. The *expression* of decadence for Socrates and his band of invalids was altered, but the condition itself was not eluded. He thus prepares the reader for the assault on the idol of "the morality of improvement", to which a major part of his book is devoted.

The very next section, "Morality As Anti-Nature" is the full-scale assault on this idol of improving mankind. Nietzsche begins with a discussion about the passions. The passions will cause the downfall of a person, but these same passions will become spiritualized much later on. The passions in the initial stage presumably were of the flesh, considering that they were not of the spirit.[59] Nietzsche does not discuss *how* this transformation occurs, instead he immediately points out that the Church has been waging a war against the passions in an

attempt to eliminate them altogether. Nietzsche compares it to castration or the extraction of teeth. The passions need to be modified, or sublimated, but not eliminated. They still serve an important purpose if only the "folly" causing aspect could be corrected.

In the second aphorism Nietzsche continues to substantiate his claim that extirpation of the passions is a commandment from the spiritually weak. He offers the observation that "the most virulent utterances against the senses have *not* come from the impotent, nor from ascetics, but from those who found it impossible to be ascetics, from those who stood in need of being ascetics..." He charges the reader with the responsibility of surveying the entire history of priests, philosophers and artists, which would be a considerable undertaking to say the least.[60] However, this observation should also square with our experience of dealing with the passions. As children, our passions ruled us. If a baby had the power, he would kill for a cookie. Small children are completely consumed with gratifying the body. Their parents motivate them to learn to control themselves. With time their desires become increasingly sophisticated, which is a function of the mind. They will not settle for a digestive cookie once they have tasted a Fudgee-O. They do not want just any blanket, they want *their* blanket. Not just any toy, but their sister's toy. They are developing their idea of the best. At first the best is base bodily pleasure, and gradually that idea becomes something much more cerebral, more spiritual. So the aim is not to eliminate passion, for it compels us to seek the best for ourselves. What is needed is the proper education of the passions so that they cause us to lead the truly best life.

Nurture plays an enormous role in developing that idea of the best. Those things to which the child is exposed and with which he becomes familiar will undoubtedly form an impression of the best. In Socrates' description of an utopic education, he says that he would begin with stories of the gods and of heroes to ingrain in them from the earliest age what is the nature of the world and of the best life.[61] As the children become familiar with the stories, they learn to associate the best life with imitating the heroes. These quasi-divine, daimonic beings are their "role models", as we would say. For Socrates, then, the process of educating or spiritualizing the passions begins with a religious education.

For Nietzsche, however, the spiritualization of the passions is completely incompatible with Christianity. He refers to the Sermon on the Mount as the most famous formula for completely eliminating the

passions. He specifically refers to the commandment regarding adultery. Jesus said:

> You have heard that it was said, "Do not commit adultery." But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell.[62]

Nietzsche jokes that "fortunately no Christian follows this prescription", as though it really were a physical part of the body that causes one to commit adultery. Presuming that the body is not what actually goes to hell but the soul, one must credit Jesus with intending an analogy. What aspect of the soul causes one to sin, specifically in this case, commit adultery? And can it be "gouged out"? One might hastily answer that it is the desiring part as described in Socrates' tripartite soul. That answer would suit Nietzsche's critique; however, if that part were completely eradicated, there would be no desire to perpetuate life *at all*, whether adulterously or otherwise (since the desire itself does not discriminate — reason does that); there also would be no desire to avoid the fires of hell. One might argue that this is exactly Nietzsche's point — that the desires must not be "castrated"; however, it is more likely that Nietzsche is aiming his criticism at the idol — the imperfect and often misconceived phantom — of what Christ said. For later in the Sermon on the Mount, he says, "Store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also".[63] Desires in themselves are not forbidden. Christ wants us to covet God's favor in the same way we would covet great material wealth. Christ wants us to have a passion for living the kind of life that mirrors His, which itself was full of passion. The offending eye of the analogy does not translate to a part of the soul, but rather to a state of soul. Socrates describes it as injustice in the soul:

> "Mustn't [injustice of the soul], in its turn, be a certain faction among those three — a meddling, interference, and rebellion of a part of the soul against the whole? The purpose of the rebellious part is to rule in the soul although this is not proper, since by nature it is fit to be a slave to that which belongs to the ruling class. Something of this sort I suppose we'll say, and that the confusion and wandering of these parts are injustice, licentiousness, cowardice, lack of learning, and, in sum, vice entire."

"Certainly," [Glaucon] said, "that is what they are."[64]

Socrates believed that the desire to procreate, for example, was not inherently bad; instead it was the condition of allowing that desire to rule over the more suitable ruler, reason, which approves of marital fidelity.[65] If Christ thought that the desire to procreate was inherently bad, which would be absurd, he would have given a commandment to be celibate and single (as the apostle Paul seems to prefer - I Corinthians 7:1). Considering that Christ does endorse marriage (Matthew 19:4-6) and loves children (Matthew 19:14), Christ was not condemning sex in general, but illicit sex specifically. Even Paul gives this advice to married couples: "Do not deprive each other except by mutual consent and for a time so that you may devote yourselves to prayer. Then come together again so that Satan will not tempt you".[66] So either Nietzsche has misunderstood the Sermon and is addressing himself directly to Christ, or he has understood the Sermon and is addressing himself to the Church which has misrepresented the words of Christ.

Next, Nietzsche gives a rhetorical concession to Christianity:

> ...On the other hand, it is only fair to admit that on the soil out of which Christianity grew, the concept *"spiritualization* of passion" could not possibly be conceived. For the primitive Church, as is well known, fought *against* the "intelligent" in favor of the "poor in spirit": how could one expect from it an intelligent war against passion?[67]

This "admission" is less than complimentary to the Church, to put it mildly; it excuses at the price of a more comprehensive condemnation. Again, the attack is focused at "the primitive Church". The Gospels of Luke and Matthew both contain the Beatitudes in which Jesus declares, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven".[68] Poor in spirit means humble dependence on God to meet one's every need, which includes God's promise to "purify us from all unrighteousness".[69] Unrighteousness is sin or disobedience in Biblical terms, which would roughly translate to "injustice, licentiousness...vice entire" in Socratic terms.[70] And in Nietzsche's account it would be the passions that cause "fatalities".[71] Nietzsche would evidently prefer an "intelligent war"[72] against those passions, which is very close to how Socrates saw the battle for self-control. With Christianity, however, it is not so much the intellect or courage as it is faith that provides us with the backbone of adhering to moral standards. The strange part is that

Nietzsche criticizes the English for not understanding how faith in God is the underpinning of Christian morality:

> Christianity presupposes that man does not know, *cannot* know what is good for him and what evil: he believes in God, who alone knows...If the English really do believe they know, of their own accord, "intuitively", what is good and evil,...that is merely the *consequence* of the ascendancy of Christian evaluation and an expression of the *strength* and *depth* of this ascendancy: so that the origin of English morality has been forgotten....For the Englishman morality is not yet a problem...[73]

Nietzsche has answered his own charge. Those who would follow Christian morality must first admit their dependence on God. From that point one could argue that the disobedient believer must struggle to live a holy life, although this is a contentious point in theological circles. Nevertheless, all would agree, including Nietzsche, that faith in God is the primary, that is the first and most important, element in redemption.

Next, Nietzsche shocks his readers who have any attachment to Christianity when he asserts, "The spiritualization of sensuality is called *love*: it is a great triumph over Christianity".[74] After all, the sum of Christian morality is to love God and to love your neighbour as you love yourself.[75] How could love be a triumph over Christianity? If Nietzsche is right about the nature of love, he is driving the stake in the Christian idol that all sensualilty is forbidden.

Another triumph, Nietzsche asserts, is the spiritualization of enmity, which involves an understanding of the importance of having enemies. The spiritualization of enmity consists in "acting and thinking in the reverse of the way in which one formerly acted and thought".[76] What is meant by "reverse" here? Certainly Nietzsche could not be suggesting that we think that five plus two equals three, or that people get younger and younger until they are born. It may be helpful to consider the idea of enmity "before" it is spiritualized. In its most elementary form, it could be something primarily physical like fighting over a toy or wrestling. Spiritualized enmity would necessarily be something more cerebral, some sort of enmity in thought. It could even be dialectics, which will be discussed with respect to Socrates in the second half of this thesis. The spiritualization of enmity might also be manifested in the idea of playing the devil's advocate. Considering that Nietzsche's very next work was *The Anti-Christ* and that he called

himself the Anti-Christ or the Anti-Christian[77] in this context, one must give serious consideration to the possibility that Nietzsche is adopting the role of the devil's advocate in some fashion.

Nietzsche next observes that the Church seeks to annihilate its enemies; whereas Nietzsche sees the self-interested value in allowing enemies to exist. Without opposition, the Church in the public's view serves no purpose and therefore loses public support. However, if the Church had actually eliminated its enemies, it truly would have no reason for being, and public support would cease to be a concern. In order to gauge the validity of Nietzsche's comment, one would have to be able to measure the strength of both the Church and the forces that oppose it. Doing so would involve prudential judgement of a most comprehensive kind.

Nietzsche extends this principle of keeping strong enemies to politics and to the un-named "enemy within". He next describes the distasteful state of peace of soul. Inner-peace would in many respects describe the condition of the ascetics whom Nietzsche seemingly had admired earlier. Also, one ought to keep in mind the traditional view that peace is the proper goal of war — although there has long been a view that true *peace* is an illusion, and that "peace" exists for the sake of war. Nevertheless, Nietzsche lists conditions that might be *mistaken* for peace of soul, and, among the laughable ones (such as gratitude for good digestion and a change in humidity) he includes the decrepitude of the will of the desires, and of the vices. Despite a superficial similarity, such decay must be distinguished from *mastery* of the will over the desires and vices. For some, their vices grow weaker only because their bodies are incapable of fulfilling their vicious desires; but for others the vices weaken because they have been vanquished by virtue. This latter possibility is supported by Nietzsche's last suggestion: "the expression of ripeness and mastery in the midst of action, creation, endeavor, volition, a quiet breathing, **'freedom of will' *attained***".[78] He enigmatically suggests the possibility that "*Twilight of the Idols*" could be a kind of "peace of soul" — certainly not in the sense that it is a "declaration of war", but perhaps because it bespeaks "a rich autumn" as described in *Ecce Homo*. The process of conquering the "enemy within" is a war which for some culminates in mastery of the soul. But here, too one might ask whether the victory is ever *finally* won, or the peace but an interlude, "a relaxation, a sunspot",[79] in a life-long struggle.

Freedom -
Mastery over the Opposition

Like children who squander their inheritance, or like lottery winners now destitute, too often unearned gifts go unvalued. Nietzsche applies the same principle to freedom in Aphorism thirty-eight of "Skirmishes of An Untimely Man". Freedom, in order to be best appreciated, should be continually just out of reach. The political institutions that are meant to guarantee freedom, once established, no longer provide freedom. Certainly these institutions ensure that the barriers that once prevented self-determination are brought down; however, at that point few people care enough to make any use of that freedom. We need that continual sting of being confined — of having our will quashed to make us fiercely desire liberty. Nietzsche calls the achievement of liberal institutions "the leveling of mountain and valley exalted to a moral principle".[80] Trite as it sounds, one cannot know the peaks without also knowing the valleys. Liberal institutions eliminate the struggle for freedom, but the struggle itself causes us to cherish it.

Nietzsche calls this struggle "war," and says that war is training in freedom because freedom is the condition in which one has the will to self-responsibility. Most people would not define freedom in this way, but would define it as having the ability to act as one chooses. This common definition presumes that everyone has a will that longs for something worthwhile, something fulfilling. Nietzsche doubts this. He sees that when the mountains and valleys are leveled, there is little will left — *there is nothing against which to exert one's will.* Also, the common understanding of freedom rests on only the most superficial notion of self-responsibility. It is similar to how we view freedom from gravity. Most would think that freedom from gravity exists outside the earth's gravitational field; whereas, if one could extrapolate Nietzsche's understanding of freedom, freedom would lie in the strength of our bodies that allows us to perform gravity-defying feats, such as jumping and dancing — the "effort to stay *aloft*".[81]

Returning to self-responsibility, for us to think that our actions have no consequences is to think in the realm of fantasy. To long to live in a world without responsibility is to long for the impossible. The remaining choices are to transfer the responsibility to someone else or to take it upon oneself. It is also a fanciful notion to believe that we can

make all our own choices while someone else takes on the responsibility for those choices. To choose and accept consequences for oneself is the definition of independence, and that independence affords freedom. Nietzsche calls it "the distance which divides us".[82] War trains in freedom because it either kills us or makes us stronger; thus, if we emerge alive, we will be prepared for the hardship of independence.

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1 The Hollingdale translation of *Twilight* gives this section the title of "Expeditions of an Untimely Man", whereas Kaufmann translates the title as "Skirmishes of An Untimely Man". The German word in question is *streifzüge* and literally means 'raid', 'incursion', 'skirmish', 'expedition', but with military overtones, as 'expeditionary force'. I have chosen to use "Skirmishes" because I believe that the more military connotation better characterizes these minor attacks against Nietzsche's contemporaries. This section is perhaps the clearest example of Nietzsche's third rule of engagement that he never attacks persons: "I merely avail myself of the person as of a strong magnifying glass that allows one to make visible a general but creeping and elusive calamity" (*Ecce Homo*, "Why I Am So Wise", Aphorism 7, p. 688). Although the entire section is a demonstration of Nietzsche engaging in small contests or skirmishes against contemporary opinions, I will concentrate on those aphorisms in which Nietzsche discusses conflict itself.

2 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 51, trans. Hollingdale, p. 114.

3 I have used this statement as justification for using resources from his other works. Although the very fact that he quotes from and refers to his previous works is a demonstrative justification as well. There are two examples of this in *Twilight* itself: in the beginning of "The 'Improvers' of Mankind" where he reminds his readers, "One knows my demand of philosophers that they place themselves *beyond* good and evil..." Also the very last section of the book, "The Hammer Speaks" is quoted directly from *Thus Spake Zarathustra*. Nevertheless, I am careful to use his other books only to amplify what he asserts in *Twilight*. He himself admits that his views have evolved with time; and he resents being held to a position: "For me they were steps, I have climbed up upon them — therefore I had to pass over them. But

they thought I wanted to settle down on them..." (*Twilight of the Idols,* "Maxims and Arrows", Aphorism 42, trans. Hollingdale, p. 37).

4 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals,* Preface, Aphorism 8, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche,* pp. 458-459.

5 In the seventh parable of *Zarathustra* ("On Reading and Writing"), the aphorism begins, "Courageous, unconcerned, mocking, violent — thus widsom wants us..." [Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra,* trans. Kaufmann in *Portable Nietzsche* , (NewYork: Penguin Books, 1976), p. 153].

6 *Beyond Good and Evil,* Aphorism 25, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche,* p. 226.

7 Here are some examples:

> "Have the Germans produced even one book that has depth? They even lack the *idea* of depth in a book....And when I occasionally praise Stendhal as a deep psychologist, I have encountered professors at German universities who asked me to spell his name" (*Ecce Homo,* "The Case of Wagner", Aphorism 3, p. 778).
>
> "To go wrong on the fundamental problem of "man and woman", to deny the most abysmal antagonism between them and the necessity of an eternally hostile tension, to dream perhaps of equal rights, equal education, equal claims and obligations — that is a *typical* sign of shallowness, and a thinker who has proved shallow in this dangerous place — shallow in his instinct — may be considered altogether suspicious, even more — betrayed, exposed: probably he will be too "short" for all fundamental problems of life, of the life yet to come, too, and incapable of attaining *any* depth" (*Beyond Good and Evil,* Aphorism 238, pp. 356-357).

And from *Twilight* itself:

"Women are considered deep — why? because one can never discover any bottom to them. Women are not even shallow" (*Twilight of the Idols,* "Maxims and Arrows", Aphorism 27, trans. Hollingdale, p. 35).

"When one gives up Christian belief one thereby deprives oneself of the *right* to Christian morality. For the latter is absolutely *not* self-evident: one must make this point clear again and again, in spite of English shallowpates" (*Twilight of the Idols,* "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 5, trans. Hollingdale, p. 79).

"— I have said of the German spirit that it is growing coarser, that it is growing shallow" (*Twilight of the Idols,* "What the Germans Lack", Aphorism 3, trans. Hollingdale, p. 71).

8 *Twilight of the Idols,* "Maxims and Arrows", Aphorism 2, trans. Hollingdale, p. 33.

9 *Ibid.*, Aphorism 5.

10 *Ecce Homo,* "Birth of Tragedy", Aphorism 3, p. 729.

11 *Ibid.*

12 *Twilight of the Idols,* "Maxims and Arrows," Aphorism 11, trans. Hollingdale, p. 33.

13 *Twilight of the Idols,* Foreword, trans. Hollingdale, p. 31.

14 Considering that Nietzsche wrote *The Anti-Christ* and *Beyond Good & Evil,* one might wonder if this image of the fruit tree alludes to the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden.

15 *Ecce Homo,* Twilight of the Idols", Aphorism 2, p. 770.

16 The ninth "verse" of "The Drunken Song" of *Thus Spake Zarathustra* also describes the sanctification of pain associated with reproduction:

Thou grape-vine! Why dost thou praise me? Have I not cut thee! I am cruel, thou bleedest—: what meaneth thy praise of my drunken cruelty?

"Whatever hath become perfect, everything mature — wanteth to die!" so sayest thou. Blessed, blessed be the vintner's knife! But everything immature wanteth to live: alas!

Woe saith: "Hence! Go! Away, thou woe!" But everything that suffereth wanteth to live, that it may become mature and lively and longing.

- Longing for the further, the higher, the brighter. "I want heirs," so saith everything that suffereth, "I want children, I do not want *myself*,"-

Joy, however, doth not want heirs, it doth not want children, — joy wanteth itself, it wanteth eternity, it wanteth recurrence, it wanteth everything eternally-like-itself.

Woe saith: "Break, bleed, thou heart! Wander, thou leg! Thou wing, fly! Onward! upward! thou pain!" Well! Cheer up! O mine old heart: *Woe saith: "Hence! Go!"* (trans. Common, pp. 362-363).

17 *Twilight of the Idols*, "What I Owe To The Ancients", Aphorism 5, trans. Hollingdale, p. 120.

18 *Ecce Homo*, "The Birth of Tragedy", Aphorism 3, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, p. 729.

19 *Ecce Homo*, "The Birth of Tragedy", Aphorism 1, p. 726.

20 *The Birth of Tragedy*, Section 1, p. 36.

21 *Ibid.*, Section 7, p. 59.

22 *Ibid.*, Section 8, p. 64.

23 *Ibid.*, Section 21, p. 130.

24 *Ibid.*, Section 12, p. 81.

25 *Ibid.*, Section 7, p. 59.

26 *Ibid.*, Section 4, p. 47.

27 *Twilight of the Idols,* "What I Owe to the Ancients", Aphorism 4, trans. Hollingdale, pp. 119-120.

28 *Twilight of the Idols,* "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 8, trans. Hollingdale, p. 81.

29 *The Birth of Tragedy,* Section 1, p. 36.

30 *Twilight of the Idols,* "What I Owe To the Ancients", Aphorism 5, trans. Hollingdale, p. 120.

31 *Ibid.*

32 *Twilight of the Idols,* Foreword, trans. Hollingdale, p. 31.

33 It is indeed strange that despite these strong allusions Bacon is never mentioned by name and Wagner only in passing (pp. 73, 79 & 94 of Hollingdale's translation).

34 *Ecce Homo,* "Twilight of the Idols", Aphorism 1, p. 770.

35 *Twilight of the Idols,* Foreword, trans. Kaufmann, p. 465.

36 The term "eternal idol" implies that the idol has always existed and will continue to exist — regardless of what Nietzsche or anyone else does.

37 *Twilight of the Idols,* "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 17, trans. Hollingdale, p. 87.

38 *Twilight of the Idols,* "What I Owe To The Ancients", Aphorism 5, trans. Hollingdale, p. 120.

39 *Twilight of the Idols,* "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 20, trans. Hollingdale, p. 89.

40 *Twilight of the Idols,* "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 24, trans. Hollingdale, p. 92.

41 *Twilight of the Idols,* "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 38, trans. Hollingdale, p. 103.

42 *Twilight of the Idols,* "Maxims and Arrows," Aphorism 21, trans. Kaufmann (with corrections by Dr. Craig), p. 469.

43 Dannhauser is a graduate of the University of Chicago, a professor at Cornell University, and a former editor for *Commentary.*

44 Werner J. Dannhauser, "Friedrich Nietzsche", in *History of Political Philosophy,* eds. Strauss and Cropsey, (Chicago: Univ. Chicago Press, 1981), p. 802.

45 *Twilight of the Idols,* "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 38, trans. Hollingdale, p. 102 .

46 In Aphorism thirty-seven of "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Nietzsche mentions the public response that some of his writing has elicited:

> As was only to be expected, the whole *ferocity* of the moral stupidity which, as is well known, is considered morality as such in Germany, has launched itself against my concept "beyond good and evil": I could tell some pretty stories about it.... A Swiss editor, that of the "Bund", went so far — not without expressing his admiration of the courage for so hazardous an enterprise — as to "understand" that the meaning of my work lay in a proposal to abolish all decent feeling (trans. Hollingdale, p. 99).

47 *Ecce Homo,* "Twilight of the Idols", Aphorism 1, p. 770.

48 *Twilight of the Idols,* "The Hammer Speaks:", trans. Hollingdale, p. 122.

49 "Revolution", *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary,* 1989.

50 *Twilight of the Idols,* "Morality As Anti-Nature", Aphorism 6, trans. Hollingdale, p. 56.

51 "Agon", *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary.*

52 *Beyond Good & Evil,* "What is Noble", Aphorism 259 in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche,* p. 393.

53 *Twilight of the Idols,* "Skirmishes of An Untimely Man", Aphorism 25, trans. Hollingdale, p. 92.

54 *Beyond Good and Evil,* "What is Noble", Aphorism 259, p. 393.

55 *Twilight of the Idols,* "The Problem of Socrates", Aphorisms ten and eleven.

56 In the *Republic* Socrates discusses how self-control is paradoxical:

> Isn't the phrase 'stronger than himself' ridiculous though? For, of course, the one who's stronger than himself would also be weaker than himself, and the weaker stronger. The same 'himself' is referred to in all of them [Plato, *Republic* 430e-431a, trans. Bloom, (Ithica, New York: Basic Books, 1968), p. 109].

57 *Ibid.* 442c-d.

58 *Twilight of the Idols,* "Problem of Socrates", Aphorism 10, trans. Hollingdale, p. 43.

59 This process of transforming from a fatality to a state of spiritualization is reminiscent of the Christian idea of being born of flesh as a baby and then being reborn of the Spirit:

> Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit" (John 3:5-6).

60 By means of evidence, it may be useful to consider the words of Thomas Moore, a contemporary writer in the areas of archetypal psychology, mythology, and the imagination. He lived as a monk in a Catholic religious order for twelve years and has degrees in theology, musicology, and philosophy. In his book, *Soul Mates,* he specifically addresses the topic of "Sex and Morality" and writes:

In monasticism as I understood it, poverty did not mean having little or going without necessities. A toning down of materialism and consumerism was certainly part of the spirit of the vow, but its essence was common ownership. Living under this vow, I didn't own anything, not even my shirt or my pencil, yet I was never without a shirt and I usually had several pencils.... Problems of money, in any case, do not depend entirely upon quantity. A poor person can be controlling and a wealthy person can be convivial.

Chastity, another of the vows, also has interesting implications for conviviality in the modern world. People are often curious about how a monk or nun could live a life of chastity without feeling hopelessly repressed. Certainly there are problems in the celibate life, as there are in married life or in the singles world, but the withdrawal of a certain kind of sexuality can elicit another kind of eroticism, the kind that emanates from and sustains conviviality.

....Chastity can be seen not as a repression of eros, but as a form of soulful sublimation, a spreading of eros throughout life, not restricting it to sex as it is usually understood. Chastity is a form of loving, a way of letting others into your life that is not limited by a relationship to a single individual...

Just as the vow of poverty does not mean strictly living without things, and yet its spirit requires a measure of asceticism, so with chastity there may be a reserve, ways of limiting sexual activity and concern. This spirit of asceticism, applied to sex, can serve the soulful life, provided that it is not literalized into an antisoul, antibody withdrawal from the erotic life. If we could imagine chastity as an essential ingredient in the sexual life, we would not get so caught up in various excesses and repressions.

Boticelli's famous painting *Primavera* displays the world of Venus and includes both Eros and Chastity,

> Chastity dancing with Pleasure and Beauty as one of the three graces of human life. Chastity increases pleasure and actually reveals beauty, which might otherwise be drowned in lust, playing a necessary role in the full range of the convivial sexual life (pp. 108-109).
>
> Even intelligent, sophisticated people who don't consider themselves moralistic often become drawn into moralism in areas where they are emotionally vulnerable (p. 179).
>
> When moral sensitivity and respect for eros merge, the two are so close the result might be called "erotic morality".... This kind of morality is life-affirming rather than prohibiting, and respectful of eros rather than suspicious. It trusts desire, and therefore, paradoxically, it doesn't breed compulsion (p. 179).

Moore is a modern example of an ascetic who embraced the passions, and offers what might be interpreted as corroboration of Nietzsche's views.

61 *Republic* 376e-403c.

62 Matthew 5:27-29.

63 Matthew 6:20-21.

64 *Republic* 444b.

65 Cf. 443a.

66 I Corinthians 7:5.

67 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Morality As Anti-Nature", Aphorism 1, trans. Hollingdale, p. 52.

68 Matthew 5:3, *cf.* Luke 6:20. There is a difference between the two gospels, and the reconciliation of the discrepancy brings out the true meaning of spiritual poverty:

> Since Luke speaks simply of "the poor", many have concluded that he preserves the true teaching of the

historical Jesus — concern for the economically destitute — while Matthew has "spiritualized" it by adding "in spirit". The issue is not so simple. Already in the [Old Testament], "the poor" has religious overtones...those who because of sustained economic privation and social distress have confidence only in God (e.g., Psalms 37:16-17; 40:17; 69:28-29, 32-33; Proverbs 16:19...). Thus it joins with passages affirming God's favor on the lowly and contrite in spirit (e.g., Isaiah 57:15; 66:2). This does not mean there is a lack of concern for the materially poor but that poverty itself is not the chief thing.... Yet, though poverty is neither a blessing nor a guarantee of spiritual rewards, it can be turned to advantage if it fosters humility before God" [D.A. Carson, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Matthew* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), p. 131 — as quoted in Jack Kuhatschek, *Spiritual Poverty*, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1993) pp. 40-41].

69 I John 1:9.

70 *Republic* 444b.

71 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Morality As Anti-Nature", Aphorism 1, trans. Hollingdale, p. 52.

72 *Ibid.*

73 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 5, trans. Hollingdale, p. 80.

74 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Morality As Anti-Nature", Aphorism 3, trans. Hollingdale, p. 53.

75 Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: 'Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?"

Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all you heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'

This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." (Matthew 22:34-40)

76 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Morality As Anti-Nature", Aphorism 3, trans. Hollingdale, p. 53.

77 *V. Genealogy of Morals*, Section III, Aphorism 24, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, p. 585 including the note.

78 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Morality As Anti-Nature", Aphorism 3, trans. Hollingdale, p. 54 (bolding mine).

79 *Twilight of the Idols*, Foreword, trans. Hollingdale, p. 32.

80 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 38, trans. Hollingdale, p. 102.

81 *Ibid.*

82 *Ibid.*

Chapter Two

Socrates: Nietzsche's Adversary

In an essay entitled "The Battle Between Science and Wisdom", Nietzsche shares this personal insight: "Socrates, simply to confess it, stands so near to me, that I almost always fight a battle with him".[1] When that comment was written, Nietzsche had already devoted his first book, *The Birth of Tragedy,* to that chosen enemy. Hollingdale provides a glossary of names in his translation of *Twilight of the Idols,* and under Socrates he writes: "...with none of the figures he discusses is the tremendous inner dialectic of Nietzsche's lifelong monologue so clearly displayed as it is in the passages dealing with Socrates (of which there are hundreds)".[2] Numerous references to Socrates are scattered throughout his works from *The Birth of Tragedy* to *Ecce Homo*. For example, in *Beyond Good and Evil* there are at least seven aphorisms in which Socrates is explicitly mentioned. Considering that in its very preface, Nietzsche speaks about "the wicked Socrates" in connection with "the most beautiful growth in antiquity, Plato," having been corrupted by him —no other philosophers being mentioned— one might wonder if Nietzsche wants the reader to have Socrates in mind while reading the entire book. In*Genealogy of Morals,* Socrates is mentioned only once; however, Plato appears in seven aphorisms and in contexts that are strongly associated with Socrates. In the sense that Nietzsche presents Plato as the student of Socrates, and that we know Socrates primarily through the writings of Plato, one might look for the image of Socrates when Nietzsche addresses himself to Plato.[3] There are other instances in which Socrates is clearly implicated even though neither his name nor Plato's is mentioned. *Thus Spake Zarathustra* begins with a strong emphasis on traveling downwards to meet with people. Zarathustra begins with this speech to the sun:

> "Thou great star!...For ten years hast thou climbed hither unto my cave...Like thee must I *go down,* as men say, to whom I shall descend..."
>
> Thus began Zarathustra's down-going.[4]

Among the most famous images in the *Republic* are those associated with the Sun and the Cave. Moreover, Socrates begins the recitation of his monologue with "I went down...".[5] Much later, in Book VII, Socrates said that philosophic training causes a man to leave the ignorance of the mind, which he likens to the darkness of a cave, and ascend into the sunlight of the truth. However, once he has experienced life outside the cave, he will have to be compelled "to go down into that

cave again"[6] to reunite with the rest of the citizenry. The same image of "the choice human being", presumably the philosopher, going down into the cave appears in Aphorism twenty-six of *Beyond Good and Evil*. Here Nietzsche ponders what might motivate such a person to re-enter the cave if there were no one to compel him to do so. These are merely a couple of the many examples that illustrate how the image of Socrates is diffused throughout the works of Nietzsche.

Why did Nietzsche choose Socrates as a lifelong adversary? Certainly not because of Socrates' lack of strengths and virtues. In his discussion of war in *Ecce Homo*, to which I alluded earlier, Nietzsche provides us with his standards for choosing an opponent. These are worth reviewing, for they will be used to analyze this particular battle:

> My practice of war can be summed up in four propositions. First: I only attack causes that are victorious; I may even wait until they become victorious.
>
> Second: I only attack causes against which I would not find allies, so that I stand alone — so that I compromise myself alone. — I have never taken a step publicly that did not compromise me: that is *my* criterion of doing right.
>
> Third: I never attack persons; I merely avail myself of the person as of a strong magnifying glass that allows one to make visible a general but creeping and elusive calamity.
>
> Fourth: I only attack things when every personal quarrel is excluded, when any background of bad experiences is lacking. On the contrary, attack is in my case a proof of good will, sometimes even of gratitude.[7]

Nietzsche's choice of enemies is meant to provide a means to exercise his own strength; therefore he chooses the most powerful and victorious as his opponents. Furthermore, he does not attack out of a spirit of vengeance or bitterness. He, in fact, intends good will. Nietzsche's choice in enemies ought to be considered a type of compliment because he is tacitly indicating to his readers that he has found a worthy adversary. Such an outlook is rather contrary to what we moderns expect. Our enemies are those who mean us harm, whether they are weak or strong. Nietzsche, on the other hand, rejoices to find someone who is *capable* of doing him harm. In *Will to Power*, a collection of Nietzsche's notes compiled and published by his sister, he writes, "[t]he concept of power... always includes both the ability to help

and the ability to harm".[8] Thus one would err in associating Nietzsche's enmity with disaffection or contempt. In the preface of *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche, identifying himself with Zarathustra, quotes him: "[t]he man of knowledge must not only love his enemies, he must also be able to hate his friends".[9] In an aphorism entitled "War and Warriors" of *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Nietzsche declares his love for his "brethren in war":

> By our best enemies we do not want to be spared, not by those either whom we love from the very heart. So let me tell you the truth!
>
> My brethren in war! I love you from the very heart. I am and was ever, your counterpart. And I am also your best enemy. So let me tell you the truth!
>
> ....So live your life of obedience and of war! What matter about long life! What warrior wisheth to be spared!
>
> I spare you not, I love you from my very heart, my brethren in war!—[10]

Clearly, then, Nietzsche's enemies hold a place of distinction, and so one must not assume that Nietzsche despises or contemns his opponents, but rather very much the opposite.

The Section "The Problem of Socrates" sets the stage for a battle with Socrates that is threaded throughout *Twilight of the Idols* —and it is a "staged" battle, not really being what it seems. According to Nietzsche, Socrates himself was a symptom of the general decline of Greece from its cultural zenith. Nietzsche adduces many reasons in support of this belief. The first piece of evidence is Socrates' disinclination towards life itself. Nietzsche hastens to add, however, that Socrates was not alone in this opinion, claiming that all the great sages have had the same estimation of life — that it is worthless. Although wide agreement by so many acclaimed thinkers would seem to be evidence of an opinion being true, according to Nietzsche, such an opinion is not a reflection on the actual value of life at all, but rather a reflection on the people who expressed the opinion. Life is inestimable because those who are capable of making that judgement are interested parties — that is, alive; therefore, they cannot make an impartial decision. So, those who make such an evaluation have, first, demonstrated a lack of judgement by presuming to rule on such a matter at all; and second, have revealed the character of their experience of life, which, in the case of Socrates and his fellow sages, is bad.

Nietzsche deduces that their experience of life is a product of the state of their souls.

When one examines what Socrates did say about the value of life, however, one may suspect Nietzsche of misrepresentation. In the *Apology*, for example, after the jury sentences Socrates to death, Socrates is granted some time to make some further remarks before he is taken to prison. His last words are about what happens after the body dies. The first possibility that he considers is that death is like a dreamless sleep.[11] Socrates says that such a fate would be a wondrous gain because the sleep would be so restful. (He neglects to mention that one will never wake up to enjoy the feeling of being rested.) Another possibility is that one crosses over to Hades, as per the stories of the poets. He said that if this possibility were true there could be no greater good. He would meet with many famous people among the dead, and "certainly the greatest thing is that I would pass my time examining and searching out among those there —*just as I do to those here*— who among them is wise, and who supposes he is, but is not".[12] His idea of heaven is to continue to do what he has been doing right here on earth. What greater endorsement of one's life could any person give? His final opinion on whether he will find a better destiny through death is inconclusive, however: "But now it is time to go away, I to die and you to live. Which of us goes to a better thing is unclear to everyone except to the god".[13] What is clear is that Socrates suspends judgement on the value of life.

Continuing his case, Nietzsche argues that Socrates must have thought that life was worthless because his death was more a suicide than a state execution. If one is willing to agree that Socrates indeed "compelled Athens to hand him the poison cup",[14] then one must decide why he wanted to die. In the *Apology*, Socrates plainly states that he is aware that he has lived out most of his days.[15] He is also aware that he will become a martyr for philosophy, remembered by subsequent ages, thereby achieving a kind of immortality for himself, while providing the most politically effective defense of the philosophic life.

> For the sake of a little time, men of Athens, you will get a name and be charged with the responsibility, by those wishing to revile the city, for having killed Socrates a wise man. For those wishing to reproach you *will* assert that I am wise, even if I am not. At any rate, if you had waited a short time, this would have come about for you of its own accord. For you see that my age is already advanced in life and close to death.[16]

It seems that Socrates chose to die in this manner, not because he despised life *per se*, but because it was the best way to end a life that was about to end regardless. That is, he had already lived a full life and now wanted to find a good way of concluding it. Nietzsche's own recommendation for a death at the right time is virtually a dramatic précis of the *Phaedo* in which is depicted Socrates' final hours. In "A Moral Code For Physicians" Nietzsche writes:

> To die proudly when it is no longer possible to live proudly. Death of one's own free choice, death at the proper time, with a clear head and with joyfulness, consummated in the midst of children and witnesses: so that an actual leave-taking is possible while he who is leaving *is still there*, likewise an actual evaluation of what has been desired and what achieved in life, an *adding-up* of life—.[17]

The *Phaedo*, the *Apology*, and the *Crito* all provide evidence of Socrates' accordance with this notion. Socrates chose death at a time when he otherwise would have had to give up examining people who suppose they are wise because of conditions that Athens would have imposed for letting him live.[18] This would have rendered impossible what he believed was the best way of life. He also chose death at a time when he still had all his rational faculties about him so that his friends' memory of him would be that of someone whose mind was what it had always been: alert, perceptive, inquiring. He asked to have the women escorted out so that there would be no distracting mourners around him; and he did as much as he could to hearten those present, so that they would not be downcast by his —or, eventually, their own— death.

Nietzsche offers as further proof of Socrates' disinclination towards life his final words in *Phaedo*: his request that Crito sacrifice a cock to Asclepius, apparently in accordance with the Greek custom of giving thanks for being healed of an illness. It could mean that Socrates believed that he was healed of the sickness of life, as Nietzsche expressly contends. But it could as plausibly mean that Socrates believed he was being delivered from the affliction of old age. It seems far more likely that if Socrates truly thought that life was worthless, he would have ended it himself much sooner. And even if he was concerned that explicit suicide might damage his and his family's reputation, he could have purposefully got himself killed in one of the battles he fought; he might have volunteered for a "suicide mission" and thereby achieved an honorable death. It is important to note that Socrates publicly expressed a concern for an honorable death. In the *Apology*, he explains

why he did not bring his wife and children out to evoke sympathy and why he did not beg the jury for mercy:

> Why, then, will I do none of these things? Not because I am stubborn, men of Athens, nor because I dishonor you. Whether I am daring with regard to death or not is another story; but at any rate as to reputation, mine and yours and the whole city's, to me it does not seem to be noble for me to do any of these things...it would be shameful.[19]

This in itself is another affirmation of the value of life: if life held no worth, he would not care about whether or not the circumstances of his death were noble.

So Socrates may have been willing or, in a certain respect, even eager to die —given his concrete circumstances at that time; but in light of the fact that he had lived out the vast majority of his days, that he had ample opportunity to escape life in the past, and that his idea of heaven is essentially the same as his life here on earth, one must conclude that he valued life. It is more consistent with his speeches and his deeds to conclude that he was avoiding *bad* life — old age, political restrictions, or both.

Socrates' alleged low estimation of life is only the first criticism that Nietzsche brings against him. Socrates was also of base lineage; Nietzsche says Socrates' belonged "to the lowest of orders".[20] Diogenes Laertius, though living centuries later, records the traditional view (supported in Plato's dialogues) that Socrates' father was Sophroniscus, a sculptor, and his mother was Phaenarete, a midwife.[21] One might deduce that being a sculptor did not hold much influence since Diogenes Laertius describes the stonework done by Socrates as slavery:

> Duris makes [Socrates] out to have been a slave and to have been employed on stonework, and the draped figures of the Graces on the Acropolis have by some been attributed to him. Hence the passage in Timon's *Sili*: "From these diverged the sculptor, a prater about laws, the enchanter of Greece, inventor of subtle arguments, the sneerer who mocked at fine speeches, half-Attic in his mock humility."[22]

A slave would certainly qualify as plebeian, if not worse. Nevertheless, the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*, representing the standard view of modern scholars, indicates something quite different: "His father is said

to have been a sculptor or stonemason and was apparently reasonably well-to-do. At any rate Socrates served in the army as a hoplite, though he was reduced to poverty later."[23] None would dispute that Socrates was poor later in life, as he himself insists in the *Apology*.[24] Whether or not his parents were no better than rabble, as Nietzsche suggests, cannot be determined. As for what effect his lineage had on his soul, which seems to be the underlying issue, one first would have to examine his soul. Although Nietzsche alleges certain deficiencies of Socrates' soul, it would seem that the derogation of his parents is gratuitous, itself a base trick of sophistical rhetoric.

Nietzsche also argues that Socrates' ugliness was more evidence of his degenerate nature. In Aphorism three of this section, Nietzsche offers the adage "*monstrum in fronte, monstrum in animo*".[25] Again, this seems an irrelevant *ad hominem* attack, but much later in the book, in "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Nietzsche gives a more revealing explanation of why ugliness is associated with *décadence:*

> The ugly is understood as a sign and symptom of degeneration: that which recalls degeneration, however remotely, produces in us the judgement "ugly". Every token of exhaustion, of heaviness, of age, of weariness, every kind of unfreedom, whether convulsive or paralytic, above all the smell, colour and shape of dissolution, of decomposition, though it be attenuated to the point of being no more than a symbol — all this calls forth the same reaction, the value judgement "ugly". A feeling of *hatred* then springs up; what is man then hating? But the answer admits of no doubt: *the decline of his type*.[26]

At the beginning of *Twilight*, Nietzsche evidently wishes to establish that Socrates was *décadent* because he was ugly; whereas in the passage just quoted, Nietzsche contends that one first recognizes *décadence* and then pronounces the judgement of ugly. Although in the first version Nietzsche could be faulted for affirming the consequent, one might argue on the basis of the second version that ugliness and *décadence* always occur together. Nevertheless, the sources examined directly below show that Socrates' ugliness was, at most, "a token... attenuated to the point of being no more than a symbol".[27]

In Diogenes Laertius' account the only mention made of Socrates' appearance is that "[h]e took care to exercise his body and kept in good condition".[28] The book does use the word "beauty", however, to describe his soul: "Demetrius of Byzantium relates that Crito removed

him from his workshop and educated him, being struck by his beauty of soul".[29] Because Nietzsche seems to treat outer beauty as an indication or even a manifestation of inner beauty, it would seem that beauty of soul is the principle issue. The only beauty of Socrates that one *truly* "knows [and] sees for oneself"[30] *today* is his beauty of soul. Of course, one can *imagine* what he may have looked like, based on contemporary descriptions of him from Plato, Xenophon, and elsewhere. The *Oxford Classical Dictionary,* presumably based on such sources, offers this summary description; although it refers to his "general appearance", it says very little about it —and certainly nothing that would substantiate Nietzsche's claim:

> His general appearance and manner of life are probably more familiar to us than those of any figure in Greek history. He was a man of strong physique and great powers of endurance, and completely indifferent to comfort and luxury. He was remarkable for his unflinching courage, both moral and physical, and his strong sense of duty. Together with this went an extremely genial and kindly temperament and a keen sense of humour, while he was obviously a man of the greatest intellectual ability. It was the combination of these qualities which secured for him a devoted circle of friends of very varied types, from young men of good family looking forward to a public career to serious thinkers who seem to have come to him for light on the problems which interested them.[31]

But a careful sifting of ancient sources *does* allow one to "see" what Nietzsche would have us see. Xenophon's *Symposium* offers some detailed information about Socrates' appearance. Socrates takes on Critobulus, a very handsome young man, in a beauty contest. Socrates describes himself as having bulging eyes, a snub nose, and "a mouth more ugly even than an ass's".[32]

In Plato's *Symposium,* Alcibiades describes Socrates as exactly like the satyr marsyas.[33] Alcibiades says directly to Socrates, "that you are like them at least in looks, Socrates, surely not even you would dispute".[34] (Alcibiades throughout his speech challenges Socrates to correct him if he speaks anything except the truth, and Socrates kept silent throughout.[35]) The *Oxford Classical Dictionary* says that satyrs and sileni are constantly confused. Even though the Marsyas is described as either a satyr or a silenus,[36] *Oxford* specifies that Socrates was compared with a silenus:

> The comparison of Socrates with Silenus is based not only on common ugliness (K. Kerényi, *Dioniso* (1949), 17) but also on common irony and wisdom. Portraits of Socrates and idealized heads of Sileni show great similarity (c. Weickert, *Festschrift F. Loeb* (1930), 103).[37]

A silenus bears a resemblance to a horse; he is a "shaggy, bearded [old] man with horse-ears, sometimes also a horse-tail and horse legs".[38] So it would seem that Socrates quite rightly could be called a monstrous sight. The dictionary also says of a silenus that "[h]e knows important secrets and is captured to make him reveal them".[39] The statues of silenus carried a similar myth which Alcibiades relates in his speech. If a satyr was "split in two and opened up, they show that they have images of gods within".[40] This is what Alcibiades claimed to have seen when Socrates "opened up":

> And when he is in earnest and opened up, I do not know if anyone has seen the images within; but I once saw them, and it was my opinion that they were so divine, golden, altogether beautiful and amazing...[41]

Plato's Alcibiades offered everything he had, his wealth, influence, and his beautiful youthful body, to Socrates in the hopes that he might share in Socrates' wealth of soul, but Socrates would not be seduced. Nevertheless, even after Alcibiades had been rejected, he still had tremendous respect for Socrates:

> So after this, what notion do you suppose I had? I believed I had been dishonored, and yet I still admired his nature, moderation and courage; I had met a human being whose prudence and endurance were such as I believed I should never encounter. Consequently, I did not know how I could be angry at him and be deprived of his association.[42]

If this Alcibiades can be considered a reliable judge of beautiful souls, his testimony must be given some weight in the scales against Nietzsche. In the final analysis, however, as with the charge of bad origins, one must return to the dialogues and the other historical accounts and endeavor oneself to see Socrates opened up. In any case, Nietzsche himself assures us that "[e]verything about him is exaggerated, *buffo*, caricature, everything is at the same time hidden, reserved, subterranean".[43]

In addition to being accused of being ugly, Socrates is also charged with being a "typical criminal".[44] One might, at this point, wonder if Nietzsche is violating his own code of conduct with respect to enemies. Denouncing Socrates' personal appearance, his parents and calling him the criminal type would seem the very epitome of a "personal attack", directly contradicting his third and fourth rules of engagement (as presented in *Ecce Homo* and quoted at the beginning of this chapter). One can only wonder what Nietzsche is trying to achieve through such a brazenly slanderous assault.

While it is undeniable that Socrates was tried, convicted and executed on charges of impiety and corrupting the youth, those are hardly *typical* crimes. And he did plead "not guilty", did he not? In so far as the typical criminal is continually focused on immediately gratifying his lower desires, and, as Nietzsche says, contains "every kind of foul vice and lust",[45] Socrates was utterly atypical. He took pride in how simple and meager his needs were. Diogenes Laertius relates that "[o]ften when he looked at the multitude of wares exposed for sale, he would say to himself, 'How many things I can do without!'"[46] Also:

> He prided himself on his plain living, and never asked a fee from anyone. He used to say that he most enjoyed the food which was least in need of condiment and the drink which made him feel the least hankering for some other drink; and that he was nearest to the gods in that he had the fewest wants. This may be seen from the Comic poets, who in the act of ridiculing him give him high praise. Thus Aristophanes: "O man that justly desirest great wisdom...never numb with cold, never hungry for breakfast: from wine and from gross feeding and all other frivolities thou dost turn away".[47]

But one should also pay attention to what Nietzsche himself says about "The criminal and what is related to him".[48] He says that the criminal type is "a strong human being made sick".[49] And he cites Dostoyevsky who found that the very worst criminals were "carved out of about the best, hardest and most valuable timber growing anywhere".[50] The general idea is that he is a potentially good person born at the wrong time and in the wrong place: "the strong human being under unfavorable conditions".[51] This, however, is almost exactly what the Platonic Socrates says in the *Republic:*

> "Do you see," [Socrates] said, "it wasn't bad when we said that the very elements of the philosophic nature,

> when they get bad rearing, are, after all, in a way the cause of its being exiled from the practice, and so are the so-called goods—wealth and all equipment of the sort."
>
> "No, it wasn't," [Adeimantus] said. "What was said is right."
>
> "Then, you surprising man," I said, "such is the extent and character of this destruction and corruption of the best nature with respect to the best pursuit. And such a nature is a rare occurrence in any event, we say. And particularly from these men come those who do the greatest harm to cities and private men, as well as those who do the good, if they chance to be drawn in this direction. No little nature ever does anything great either to private man or city."[52]

Both Socrates and Nietzsche agree that the worst criminal types are strong natures that have been ruined by an unsuitable environment. However, Nietzsche presents this criticism of his nature *before* he gives his analysis of Socrates' nature. Again, it seems that Nietzsche is using his art of persuasion to convict Socrates without solid evidence.

Another indication of Socrates' decadence, according to Nietzsche, is his "hypertrophy of the logical faculty".[53] His art of dialectics was a result of this overgrown faculty. Dialectics was introduced to the Greeks by Socrates, and Nietzsche gives him credit for this art form's ascendancy into Greek culture. Nietzsche views it as a shift in Greek taste from noble to that of the rabble. In fact, it was a type of victory for the mob. Before Socrates' arrival, dialectics was distasteful to the Greeks because it was the stratagem of the ignoble. An aristocrat had no need nor desire to give lengthy and complicated explanations for his actions or opinions. An aristocrat's life should speak for itself: "all such presentations of one's reasons were distrusted. Honest things, like honest men, do not carry their reasons in their hands like that.... What must first be proved is worth little".[54] A man of authority has no need to justify himself in order to be obeyed — his life and his deeds are simply presumed to deserve the respect of his fellow men. He gives commands, not reasons. Genuine authority does not struggle for control. Later in the book, Nietzsche describes this type of confidence as "grand style". Although he is addressing grand style with respect to architecture, he states that "architecture is a kind of rhetoric of power", and so it can be applied to situations where there is a discussion of power.

> The highest feeling of power and security finds expression in that which possess *grand style*. Power which no longer requires proving...which is conscious of no witnesses around it; which lives oblivious of the existence of any opposition....[55]

A dialectician, on the other hand, is one who must use logic to struggle for an advantage, presumably because his actual position is weaker or because he has something to hide. Nietzsche asserts that Socrates' display of weakness would have been laughable in pre-Socratic times. However, "Socrates was the buffoon who *got himself taken seriously*".[56] How could this be? Nietzsche obligingly gives an account of how that could have happened.

Dialectics is a last resort for the desperate. The syllogism is the revenge of the weak; those who are not strong enough to prevent an attack use logic to strike back; it is an expression of the resentment of the rabble. Nietzsche asks whether Socrates derived pleasure from using his dialectics to humiliate the great men of Greece. And, as a reader of Platonic dialogues, one might also ask *oneself* if this display of power is delightful. Socrates admits that it is so in his *Apology*:

> But why, then, do some enjoy spending so much time with me? You have heard, men of Athens; I told you the whole truth. It is because they enjoy hearing men examined who suppose they are wise, but are not. For it is not unpleasant.[57]

These dialogues are often comical precisely in their making famous and even powerful men look foolish —sudden victory á la Hobbes. Nietzsche calls dialectics a "pitiless instrument" because the opponent is left to prove that he is not an idiot. Furthermore, the process of dialectics *devitalizes* the opponent's intellect; Nietzsche implies that this is the real purpose of inducing *aporia* ("perplexity"): to leave one's opponent "stunned".[58] And indeed, one must agree that Socrates' opponents are made to look foolish, ostensibly because they cannot rationally support their opinions. In the *Apology*, Socrates gives the following "religious" defense of this practice:

> That is why even now I still go around seeking and investigating in accordance with the god any townsman or foreigner I suppose to be wise. And whenever someone does not seem so to me, I come to the god's aid and show that he is not wise.[59]

Generally speaking, Socrates attacked unexamined opinions and sought out the flaws in those opinions. One suspects that his real reason for doing so is his own rational conviction that the unexamined life is not worth living for a human being.[60] He used logic to expose the many problems with peoples' unexamined opinions, which is generally how people can be opened to learn the true nature of reality. Socrates could be more easily absolved of Nietzsche's accusation, however, if he did not so often use "bad" logic: false dichotomies, false analogies, and other slippery sophistical devices that are difficult to detect in a live conversation, even for a quick wit. Those who lack the skills of a wily sophist are handily carved up — and in public, no less. As to whether or not this process actually devitalizes the intellect, that would depend on the individual. It certainly left many of his opponents reeling. Plato portrays illustrative examples, having some characters openly admit that after Socrates had traced the implications of their opinion to its most absurd limits, "I no longer know what I did mean".[61] They become momentarily helpless in the sense that they become disoriented, and they no longer trust their own intellect.

The sensation of complete bafflement can be disorienting; however, if one views dialectics as verbal fencing (as Nietzsche does here and in *Will To Power*),[62] it becomes clear how an expert could make short work of a novice. Furthermore, the only way to improve one's skill at this art is practice. In the sense that the training in dialectics causes a person to sharpen their logical faculty, the art actually may *vitalize* the intellect. It sharpens the mind with practice, even though the initial experience is daunting. Still, a Nietzsche-turned-Socrates would ask, why wish to become a skilled dialectician at all?

In Aphorism eight, by way of explaining Socrates' appeal, Nietzsche alludes to the peculiar pleasure felt by the Greeks who watched dialectics. The Greeks are instinctively drawn to contest, and Socrates' art of dialectics offered a new form of competition, a kind of verbal wrestling.[63] Nietzsche explains its appeal in terms of "the agonal instinct of the Hellenes".[64] As mentioned earlier, Socrates readily admits that some people (especially youths) enjoyed watching these logical (and psycho-logical) battles. However, Nietzsche *ends* this aphorism by mentioning, almost as if an afterthought, "Socrates was also a great erotic".[65] Socrates, in the *Symposium,* presents a long dialogical eulogy to Eros, and though he in other places said that he knows nothing good or noble,[66] here he does claim to know about Eros. In fact he has a conviction about it:

> I assert that every real man must honor Eros, as I myself honor erotics and train myself exceptionally in them; and I urge it on the rest, and now and always I eulogize the power and courage of Eros as far as I am able.[67]

This combination of agon and *eros* at first may seem peculiar — particularly when using the terms to describe a philosopher famous for his asceticism. But later, Nietzsche himself ties together these two characteristics in his "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man":

> Philosophy in the manner of Plato should rather be defined as an erotic contest, as a further development and inward intensification of the old agonal gymnastics and their *presuppositions*...What finally emerged from this philosophical eroticism of Plato? A new artistic form of the Greek agon, dialectics.[68]

An earlier version of the eighth aphorism of "The Problem of Socrates" that was printed in *Will To Power* includes this submission about Plato:

> In Plato, as a man of overexcitable sensuality and enthusiasm, the charm of [dialectics] had grown so strong that he involuntarily honored and deified the concept as an ideal Form. Intoxication by dialectic: the consciousness of exercising mastery over oneself by means of it —as a tool of the will to power.[69]

Reflecting on the Platonic dialogues, especially *The Symposium* and *The Lovers [or, on Philosophy]*, one can see the close relationship of *eros* and *agon* in Platonic philosophy. The *Symposium* is the recounting of a dinner party in honor of a victorious poet at which those present compete in praising Eros. There is also a competition between Socrates and Alcibiades for the favor of Agathon, which turns into one between Agathon and Alcibiades for the favor of Socrates. The rivalry between Socrates and Alcibiades is more overt:

> Then Socrates said, "You are sober, in my opinion, Alcibiades, for otherwise you would never have so elegantly cast a screen about yourself and tried to conceal why you said all this; for you spoke of it as if it were a side-issue by inserting it at the end, as though you had not said everything for its sake — to set Agathon and me at odds, believing that I must love you and no one else, and that Agathon must be loved by you and no one else. But you

> did not get away with it; this satyr and silenic drama of yours was quite obvious. Well, my dear Agathon see that he does not get the advantage — and prepare yourself against anyone setting you and me at odds.[70]

Similarly, *The Lovers* is a dialogue between Socrates and two men who are admirers of the same young and beautiful boy. These two men see themselves as rivals for the affection of a student who is verbally disputing with another student, and the competition between these "lovers" enters readily into their discussion with Socrates. Both dialogues, then, the *Symposium* and *The Lovers*, illustrate how dialectics encompasses both *eros* and *agon*. Nietzsche goes so far as to say that "there would be no Platonic philosophy at all if Athens had not possessed such beautiful youths".[71] In this connection, one might recall the erotic contests among the animals, often involving outright fighting for mating rights. So Nietzsche may not be making a too large leap in suggesting that what Socrates offered appealed to young men's animal instincts.

There is an irony in Nietzsche's critique of Socrates' dialectics, however: the critique itself is in a dialectical format. He takes the thesis of Socrates and responds with an antithesis. Nietzsche is using arguments to prove that dialectics is a tool of the weak. And yet, according to him, "[w]hat must first be proved is worth little". What is really happening *here*? It hardly seems likely that Nietzsche would be unaware that he is criticizing his own technique. Once again, one encounters a serious problem with Nietzsche's criticism of Socrates. Nevertheless, Nietzsche continues with his effort to prove Socrates' *décadence*.

Dialectics was but one sign of Socrates' "hypertrophy of the logical faculty". His excessive rationalism was also evident in his battle to control his instincts. The state of Socrates' instincts, as well as all the aforementioned characteristics, are signs of *décadence*. It would seem that Nietzsche means something quite distinct by *"décadence"* for he chose the French term specifically.[72] So, one is obliged to examine how he employs that term. And in fact, Nietzsche uses *décadence* to describe several different things; however, he uses it especially with reference to the instincts. In "The Problem of Socrates", Nietzsche gives this formula for *décadence*:

> The harshest daylight, rationality at any cost, life bright, cold, circumspect, conscious, without instinct, in opposition to the instincts, has itself been no more than a

> form of sickness, another form of sickness — and by no means a way back to 'virtue', to 'health', to happiness....To *have* to combat one's instincts — that is the formula for *décadence*: as long as life is *ascending*, happiness and instinct are one.—[73]

One would deduce from his formula that wholesome, natural instincts are what determines happiness. Whereas, if following the instincts nonetheless leads to vice, then life is degenerating. In "Four Great Errors", Nietzsche again asserts that the good life is instinctive and that "[e]very error, of whatever kind, is a consequence of degeneration of instinct, disgregation of will: one has thereby virtually defined the *bad*".[74] Both the Hollingdale and the Kaufmann translation of that passage use the term "disgregation". The definitions offered in *Oxford English Dictionary* are primarily in the context of chemistry. It is a type of diffusion or disintegration. It denotes the dispersion of particles. To apply this meaning to Nietzsche's context, disgregation would imply the scattering or disorder of the will. This term is worthy of our attention because the other references to *décadence* involve the absence of control, order and organization. Socrates' *décadence* was characterized in part by the "dissoluteness and anarchy of his instincts".[75] Plato was a *décadent* writer because he "mixes together all forms of style".[76] Also, wherever the strong and weak are put together and treated equally (rather than in accordance with the natural hierarchy), Nietzsche smells decay:

> 'Equality'...belongs essentially to decline....All our political theories *and* state institutions...are consequences, necessary effects of decline; the unconscious influence of *décadence* has gained ascendancy even over the ideals of certain of the sciences. My objection to the whole of sociology in England and France is that it knows from experience only the *decaying forms* of society and takes its own decaying instincts with perfect innocence as the *norm* of sociological value judgement. *Declining* life, the diminution of all organizing power, that is to say the power of separating, of opening up chasms, of ranking above and below, formulates itself in the sociology of today as the *ideal*.[77]

Democracy is another example of Nietzsche's idea of *décadence* because of its "egalitarian" principles:

> "Democracy has always been the declining form of the power to organize: I have already, in *Human, All Too*

> *Human*, characterized modern democracy... as the *decaying form* of the state.... That which *makes* institutions institutions is despised, hated, rejected: whenever the word "authority" is so much as heard one believes oneself in danger of a new slavery. The *décadence* in the valuating instinct of our politicians, our political parties, goes so deep that *they instinctively prefer* that which leads to dissolution, that which hastens the end...[78]

So, in instances where there are elements which could be in a proper order, *décadence* denotes disorder. This kind of "dissoluteness and anarchy" of elements is at the root of the sickness and decay that Nietzsche describes in individual people and cultures.

According to Nietzsche, Socrates believed that he could overcome his decadent instincts and achieve happiness and virtue with logic and knowledge; however, Nietzsche declares that "virtue is the *consequence* of... happiness".[79] Socrates used his logic to battle his disorderly instincts. He thought he might escape decadence, but Nietzsche claims that one can merely alter its expression:

> It is self-deception on the part of philosophers and moralists to imagine that by making war on *décadence* they therewith elude *décadence* themselves. This is beyond their powers: what they select as an expedient, as a deliverance, is itself only another expression of *décadence* —they *alter* its expression, they do not abolish the thing itself.[80]

So whereas the Greeks previously had virtue and happiness simply because of their healthy nature, Socrates had to work to develop his reason in an effort to attain virtue and perhaps happiness. Nietzsche regards this association of reason with virtue and happiness the "most bizarre of all equations". He claims that Socrates' efforts were futile because both virtue and happiness are instinctive traits —they cannot be forced. He says that Socrates was fundamentally mistaken in this respect; human nature cannot be molded according to human designs:

> Let us consider finally what naiveté it is to say 'man *ought* to be thus and thus!' Reality shows us an enchanting wealth of types, the luxuriance of a prodigal play and change of forms: and does some pitiful journeyman moralist say at the first sight of it: 'No! man ought to be *different*'? ...He even knows *how* man ought to be, this

> bigoted wretch; he paints himself on the wall and says *'ecce homo'!* ...But even when the moralist merely turns to the individual and says to him: *'You* ought to be thus and thus' he does not cease to make himself ridiculous. The individual is, in his future and in his past, a piece of fate, one law more, one necessity more for everything that is and everything that will be. To say to him 'change yourself' means to demand that everything should change, even in the past...[81]

Thus Socrates and all other "improvers" of human behavior are gravely mistaken. "Socrates was a misunderstanding: *the entire morality of improvement, the Christian included, has been a misunderstanding*".[82]

Nietzsche's description of Socrates' fate is odd, in the sense that we fundamentally believe in the ability to educate our "instincts" to be more virtuous. It is the rationale for parents and teachers educating children. It is odd also in the respect that Nietzsche begins his book with the admission of having to struggle to be happy: "To stay cheerful when involved in a gloomy and exceedingly responsible business is no inconsiderable art: yet what could be more necessary than cheerfulness?"[83] Staying cheerful to him is an art; he must disobey the instinct that is causing his melancholy. He has had to develop his own method of defying the forces that would weigh down his spirit. By his own criterion, his objectionable effort must be "a consequence of degeneration of instinct".[84]

At the same time, Nietzsche sees that we moderns are past the point of being able to trust our instincts in a healthy manner: "—In times like these, to have to rely on one's instincts is one fatality more. The instincts contradict, disturb and destroy one another; I have already defined the *modern* as physiological self-contradiction".[85] Apparently, then, we have no choice but to suffer along with Socrates, battle our decadent instincts, and struggle for virtue and happiness.

By the time Socrates arrives on the scene, the Greeks also were battling for control of their instincts, and so his morality of reason ruling the desires was well-received in Athens:

> [e]verywhere the instincts were in anarchy; everywhere people were but five steps from excess: the *monstrum in animo* was the universal danger. "The instincts want to play the tyrant; we must devise a *counter-tyrant* who is stronger."[86]

As discussed in chapter one, a human being who could rely completely on instinct and live a happy life is hardly imaginable in anything but a primitive society fortunately located. Even if this state ever actually existed in Greece (which is most doubtful), it was long since past. Nietzsche concedes —indeed insists— that we moderns have decayed instincts as well. He warns that such an attempt to rely on our instincts would lead to "one calamity more".[87] So, the Greeks, who saved themselves from destruction by following Socrates' prescription of using reason to control the desires, were suffering the same ailment as we moderns. And Nietzsche prognosticates that our instincts will *always* be corrupted and destined to self-destruct.[88] However, he does suggest the following remedy: "Rationality in education would require that under iron pressure at least one of these instinct systems be paralyzed to permit another to gain in power, to become strong, to become master".[89] The process Nietzsche suggests is a rational education in which at least one instinct system is immobilized or completely denied and another instinct system takes control. But the important point is that Nietzsche is here clearly recommending the use of reason to impose order and rule over the other instincts. Hence, if we moderns cannot return to relying on our instincts (meaning, doing whatever we feel like doing), and if Nietzsche's suggested remedy for controlling those instincts is reason and education, then Nietzsche's description of Socrates actually provides the model for improving the soul. Socrates prescribes the very method Nietzsche recommends for combating the bad instincts with which we all are afflicted.

Nietzsche also indirectly commends Socrates' mastery of soul in his discussion of freedom. Socrates, battling with his instincts which "want to play the tyrant",[90] must be the "highest type of free man" according to Nietzsche's own conception of freedom:

> The free man is a *warrior*. —How is freedom measured, in individuals as in nations? By the resistance which has to be overcome, by the effort it costs to stay *aloft*. One would have to seek the highest type of free man where the greatest resistance is constantly being overcome: five steps from tyranny, near the threshold of the danger of servitude. This is true psychologically when one understands by "tyrants" pitiless and dreadful instincts, to combat which demands the maximum of authority and discipline towards oneself — finest type Julius Caesar—[91]

Julius Caesar indeed! By Nietzsche's own account, it was Socrates who first showed how to become master of his "cave of every evil lust".[92]

More indirect proof that Socrates and Nietzsche were in agreement about the formula for the well-being of the soul is their shared metaphor of health. Nietzsche uses sickness to describe degeneration of the soul, and he says that the Greeks saw Socrates as a type of physician of the soul: "I have intimated the way in which Socrates exercised fascination: he seemed to be a physician, a saviour".[93] As previously discussed, his remedy is reason, although Nietzsche argues that strictly speaking *décadence* is irreparable[94] —in which case, Nietzsche too must believe that life itself is a sickness only "curable" by death. Socrates discusses health of the soul most fully in the *Republic*. As discussed in the first chapter of this thesis, he does say that reason must rule over the rest of the soul; however, he shares Nietzsche's view of health in the sense that it is when the parts of the soul are well-ordered:

> "Then," [Socrates] said, "as for performing unjust actions and being unjust and, again, doing just things, isn't what all of them are by now clearly manifest, if injustice and justice are also manifest?"
>
> "How so?"
>
> "Because," [Socrates] said, "they don't differ from the healthy and the sick; what these are in a body, they are in a soul."
>
> "In what way?" [Glaucon] said.
>
> "Surely healthy things produce health and sick ones sickness."
>
> "Yes."
>
> "Doesn't doing just things also produce justice and unjust ones injustice?"
>
> "Necessarily"
>
> "To produce health is to establish the parts of the body in a relation of mastering and being mastered by one another that is according to nature, while to produce sickness is to establish a relation of ruling, and being ruled by, one another that is contrary to nature."
>
> "It is."
>
> "Then in its turn," [Socrates] said, "isn't to produce justice to establish the parts of a soul in relation of mastering, and being mastered by, one another that is according to nature, while to produce injustice is to establish a relation of ruling, and being ruled by, one another that is contrary to nature?"
>
> "Entirely so," [Glaucon] said.

> "Virtue, then, as it seems, would be a certain health, beauty and good condition of a soul, and vice a sickness, ugliness and weakness."
> "So it is."[95]

Notice also that Nietzsche and Socrates agree that health of the soul is in accordance with nature as Socrates says above, and as Nietzsche observes in "Morality as Anti-Nature": "[a]ll naturalism in morality, that is all *healthy* morality, is dominated by an instinct of life".[96] Health is, by definition, life at the peak of its power. Therefore, when Socrates' prescription for health of the soul is compared to what Nietzsche says throughout the book about cultivating health in the soul, it becomes evident that they share the same views, despite Nietzsche's explicit disapprobation.

In light of all the false accusations that have been leveled against Socrates, one might ask again: what is really happening here? It may be appropriate to reflect on the title and the foreword to discover Nietzsche's intentions. In chapter one, it was asserted that *Twilight of the Idols* is intended to be an attack on idols or ideals that have been called truth. Dannhauser's account of Socrates' reputation would suggest that Socrates has been idolized. Dannhauser observes that even though modern writers such as Hobbes would discard ancient philosophy as vanity, Socrates was somehow exempt:

> Before Nietzsche, however, the repudiation of ancient philosophy did not entail a rejection of Socrates. Socrates had written nothing and was not thought of primarily as offering a philosophy. Rather, he exemplified the life of the philosopher; he was an embodiment of the spirit of philosophy. Particular philosophies might be exposed as absurd, but from Socrates one learned how to philosophize, and to philosophize meant to engage in one of the highest of human activities. Socrates therefore never ceased to engage the imagination of men. With the rise of humanism came the phrase "Saint Socrates, pray for us". Later, Socrates was admired by contemporary philosophers as far apart as Voltaire and Rousseau. Thus the Socrates whom Nietzsche attacked was one of the most universally celebrated heroes of Western civilization.[97]

Dannhauser's observation is primarily of writers, but this high esteem for Socrates was handed down the academic hierarchy to junior level courses in the various disciplines of education, sociology, philosophy,

and political science. I recall the shock I felt when I first read Nietzsche's attack in *The Birth of Tragedy* on Socrates' entire way of thinking. My initiation into Socrates' group of admirers began with the reading of his *Apology* in an introductory political science course. To me at that time, the *Apology* was the portrayal of a courageous man who suffered a tragic death at the hands of the mean-spirited Athenians. The Athenians had charged him with corrupting the youth and impiety with respect to the gods of the city. Socrates gave his defense, or his "apology", and argued that he believed that the philosophic pursuit was the highest kind of life. He was so genuinely devoted to promoting philosophy that he would not take money for his teaching. The jury decided by a small majority that he was guilty and sentenced him to death. Socrates did not beg for mercy, nor did he display bitterness towards the jury. I felt that his death was the epitome of tragedy as described by Nietzsche himself: "[b]ravery and composure in the face of a powerful enemy, great hardship, a problem that arouses aversion. It is this *victorious* condition which the tragic artist singles out, which he glorifies".[98] I was also inspired by his dream for utopia as depicted in the *Republic*. In this, arguably Plato's greatest dialogue, Socrates lays out the perfect regime. He achieves perfect justice by redesigning education and social class structures so that everyone is living the best and most harmonious life.

Of course those impressions were naive, but I believe my experience is common among people upon becoming acquainted with the Platonic Socrates. So, it is reasonable to assume that people who are familiar with the most popular dialogues, such as the *Apology, Crito, Phaedo* and the *Republic* would be shocked by Nietzsche's attacks against Socrates. In his foreword, Nietzsche sets up an expectation that he will be destroying our most cherished ideas, which may be considered a promise to shock:

> This little essay is a great declaration of war; and regarding the sounding out of idols, this time they are not just idols of the age, but eternal idols, which are here touched with a hammer as with a tuning fork: there are altogether no older, no more convinced, no more puffed-up idols — and none more hollow. That does not prevent them from being those in which people have the most faith; nor does one ever say "idol", especially not in the most distinguished instance.[99]

Though there are many distinguished writers who fall victim to Nietzsche's stinging criticism, the person in this book who is given the greatest distinction is Socrates: Nietzsche begins *Twilight* with an entire

section on him, and he makes several other references to him in the other sections of the book.[100] In this light, Nietzsche would be fulfilling the first two rules of engagement: because Socrates had ascended into sainthood, he would definitely come under the category of victorious causes; and Nietzsche would practically stand alone in his attack against this martyred philosopher.

How then, does one reconcile the two ideas that Nietzsche has the greatest respect for Socrates; *and* that Nietzsche intends to smash our ideals about him? It seems that this attack is intended to compel people to look past the pleasant veneer to the substance of Socrates' true character. Nietzsche is self-consciously using sophistry and half-truths to provoke his readers to dig for the whole truth to refute his arguments. Doing so obliges one to look at Socrates afresh, and as a result become more fully aware of his real qualities and accomplishments —and of one's own prejudices and "instincts". In many respects, Nietzsche is a modern gadfly, stinging, awakening, persuading, reproaching, and vexing each of us.[101]

Kaufmann wrote a commentary on the works of Nietzsche, and one of the last chapters is entitled "Nietzsche's Admiration for Socrates". In it Kaufmann quotes a passage from Nietzsche's lectures on "The Study of the Platonic Dialogues" which may support the hypothesis that Nietzsche saw himself as the modern gadfly:

> Plato seems to have received the decisive thought as to how a philosopher ought to behave toward men from the apology of Socrates: as their physician, as a gadfly on the neck of man.[102]

Continuing, Kaufmann observes that Nietzsche has an unfinished "Untimely" essay entitled "The Philosopher as the Physician of Culture". From this Kaufmann deduces that "Nietzsche himself derived his picture of the ideal philosopher from the *Apology*, and Socrates became his model".[103] Assessing Kaufmann's conclusion would require much more extensive examination of Nietzsche's writings, but a thoughtful reading of *Twilight of the Idols* does support the view that Nietzsche considered Socrates a model philosopher whose role included that of society's physician and gadfly. Perhaps the justification for Nietzsche's apparent enmity toward Socrates is implicit within his own role of gadfly. Nietzsche expects the agonal instinct in us to rise to the defense of the prince of western philosophy. He wants to rouse us to carefully re-examine our opinions about Socrates. In this sense, his apparently "personal" attacks seemingly inconsistent with his

principles of warfare are intended to honor Socrates in their end result, and are indeed proofs of goodwill.

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1 *Werke*, 3:333, as quoted in Werner J. Dannhauser, *Nietzsche's View of Socrates*, (Ithica, New York: Cornell Univ. Press, 1974), p. 15.

2 "Socrates", *Twilight of the Idols*, trans. Hollingdale, p. 205.

3 a) In Aphorism 5 of the Preface of *Genealogy*, Plato is said to have a "low estimation of pity" (p. 455). Nietzsche, as discussed below, ascribes to Socrates the promotion of dialectics, "a pitiless instrument". (*Twilight of the Idols*, "The Problem of Socrates", Aphorism 7, trans. Hollingdale, p. 42.)

b) In Aphorism 18 of the third essay, Nietzsche says that Plato bears witness in a hundred passages that "every oligarchy constantly trembles with the tension each member feels in maintaining control over this lust [for tyranny]" (*Op.cit.*, p. 572). Books VIII and IX of the *Republic* give Socrates' account of how once the love of money is allowed to govern in an oligarchy, the regime quickly can degenerate to a tyranny.

c) Aphorism 19 mentions Plato's estimation of the "honest" lie (*Op.cit.*, p. 573). Socrates discusses the hatred of the "true" life at the end of Book II (382a).

d) Aphorisms 24 and 25 deal with the tension between poetry and philosophy. Nietzsche sums up the antagonism as "Plato versus Homer" (Aphorism 25, p. 590), although it is Socrates who critiques Homer at length in Book X of the *Republic*.

4 *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Prologue, Aphorism 1, trans. Common, pp. 3-4.

5 *Republic* 327a.

6 *Ibid.* 539e, *v.* 519c-520e.

7 *Ecce Homo,* "Why I am So Wise", Aphorism 7, in *Basic Writings of Nietzsche,* pp. 688-689.

8 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will To Power,* Aphorism 352, trans. Kaufmann and Hollingdale, ed. Kaufmann, (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), p. 193.

9 *Thus Spake Zarathustra,* "Bestowing Virtue", Aphorism 3, trans. Common, p. 82.

10 *Ibid.,* The First Part, Aphorism 10, pp. 47 & 49.

11 Plato, *Apology,* in *Four Texts on Socrates,* trans. West and West, (Ithica, New York: Cornell Univ. Press, 1984), 40d.

12 *Ibid.,* 41b, my emphasis.

13 *Ibid.,* 42a.

14 I hold this opinion and could give evidence in its support, but it doesn't seem necessary since Nietzsche himself put the suggestion foreword.

15 *V. Apology* 38c; also *Crito* 53d.

16 *Ibid.,* 38c-d.

17 *Twilight of the Idols,* "Skirmishes of An Untimely Man", Aphorism 36, trans. Hollingdale, p. 98.

18 *V. Apology* 37c-38b.

19 *Apology* 34d-35a.

20 *Twilight of the Idols,* "The Problem of Socrates", Aphorism 3, trans. Hollingdale, p. 40.

21 Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of Eminent Philosophers,* trans. R.D. Hicks, (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1980), 18.

22 *Ibid.,* 19.

23 "Socrates", *Oxford Classical Dictionary,* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970).

24 *Apology* 31c.

25 *Twilight of the Idols*, "The Problem of Socrates", Aphorism 3, trans. Hollingdale, p. 40.

26 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Skirmishes of an Untimely", Aphorism 20, trans. Hollingdale, p. 89.

27 *Ibid.*

28 Diogenes Laertius, 22-23.

29 *Ibid.*, 20-21.

30 *Twilight of the Idols*, "The Problem of Socrates", Aphorism 3, trans. Hollingdale, p. 40.

31 "Socrates", *Oxford Classical Dictionary*.

32 Xenophon, *Symposium*, V. 5-8, in *Xenophon*, vol. IV, trans. O.J. Todd, (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 1968).

33 Plato, *Symposium*, trans. Seth Benardete, in *The Dialogues of Plato*, (Toronto: Bantam Books, 1986), 215a.

It is rather interesting to note that in *Ecce Homo* Nietzsche says of himself that, "I am a disciple of the philosopher Dionysus; I should prefer to be even a satyr to being a saint." (Preface, p. 673.)

34 *Symposium*, 215b.

35 *Ibid.*, 214e.

36 "Marsyas", *Oxford Classical Dictionary*.

37 *Ibid.*, "Satyr".

38 *Ibid.*

39 *Ibid.*

40 *Symposium*, 215b.

41 *Ibid.*, 216d.

42 219d.

43 *Twilight of the Idols*, "The Problem of Socrates", Aphorism 4, trans. Hollingdale, p. 41.

44 I have been unable to find an independent account of "that famous physiognomist" who "told Socrates to his face that he *was* a *monstrum* — that he contained within him every kind of foul vice and lust." According to Nietzsche, Socrates agreed (*Ibid.*).

45 *Ibid.*

46 Diogenes Laertius, 25.

47 *Ibid.*, 27.

48 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 25, trans. Hollingdale, pp. 108-109.

49 *Ibid.*, p. 108.

50 *Ibid.*, p. 109.

51 *Ibid.*

52 *Republic* 459a-b.

53 *Twilight of the Idols*, "The Problem of Socrates", Aphorism 4, trans. Kaufmann, p. 475.

54 *Twilight of the Idols*, "The Problem of Socrates", Aphorism 5, trans. Kaufmann, pp. 475-476.

55 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 11, trans. Hollingdale, p. 84.

56 *Twilight of the Idols*, "The Problem of Socrates", Aphorism 5, trans. Hollingdale, p. 41.

As much as Nietzsche calls Socrates a buffoon and characterizes him in the preceding aphorism as *buffo*, in *Ecce Homo* Nietzsche says of himself "I do not want to be a holy man; sooner, even a

buffoon. —Perhaps I am a buffoon" (*Ecce Homo*, "Why I Am A Destiny", Aphorism 1, p. 782).

57 *Apology* 33b-c.

58 *Cf. Meno* 79e-80b.

59 *Ibid.* 23b-c.

60 *Apology* 38a.

61 *Republic* 334b, *v. Laches* 194b.

62 *Twilight of the Idols*, "The Problem of Socrates", Aphorism 8, trans. Hollingdale, p. 42.

In *Will To Power* Nietzsche calls Socrates "the first fencing master to the leading circles of Athens" (Aphorism 432, p. 236).

63 *Cf. Republic* 544b.

64 *Twilight of the Idols*, "The Problem of Socrates", Aphorism 8, trans. Hollingdale, p. 42.

65 *Ibid.*

66 *Apology* 21d, p. 70.

67 *Symposium*, p. 274.

68 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 23, trans. Hollingdale, p. 91.

69 *The Will To Power*, Aphorism 431, p. 236.

70 *Symposium*, 205.

71 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 23, trans. Hollingdale, p. 90.

72 He may have chosen French because he thinks of France as "poor, sick, [and] feeble-willed" (*Twilight of the Idols*, "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 2, trans. Hollingdale, p. 78). Then again, he also says that France has gained "a new importance as a

cultural power" (*Twilight of the Idols*, "What the Germans Lack", Aphorism 4, p. 73).

73 *Twilight of the Idols*, "The Problem of Socrates", Aphorism 11, trans. Hollingdale, p. 44.

74 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Four Great Errors", Aphorism 2, trans. Hollingdale, p. 58.

75 *Twilight of the Idols*, "The Problem of Socrates", Aphorism 4, trans. Hollingdale, p. 41.

76 *Twilight of the Idols*, "What I Owe To The Ancients", Aphorism 2, trans. Hollingdale, p. 116.

77 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 37, trans. Hollingdale, p. 101.

78 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Skirmishes of An Untimely Man", Aphorism 39, trans. Hollingdale, pp. 103-104.

79 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Four Great Errors", Aphorism 2, trans. Hollingdale, p. 58.

80 *Twilight of the Idols*, "The Problem of Socrates", Aphorism 11, trans. Hollingdale, p. 44.

81 *Twilight of the Idols*, "*Morality As Anti-Nature*", Aphorism 6, trans. Hollingdale, p. 56.

82 *Twilight of the Idols*, "The Problem of Socrates", Aphorism 11, trans. Hollingdale, p. 44.

83 *Twilight of the Idols*, Foreword, trans. Hollingdale, p. 31.

84 *Twilight of the Idols*, "The Four Great Errors", Aphorism 2, trans. Hollingdale, p. 58.

85 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 41, trans. Hollingdale, p. 105.

86 *Twilight of the Idols*, "The Problem of Socrates", Aphorism 9, trans. Hollingdale, pp. 42-43.

87 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 41, trans. Kaufmann, p. 545.

88 *Ibid.*

89 *Ibid.*, pp. 545-546.

90 *Twilight of the Idols*, "The Problem of Socrates", Aphorism 9, trans. Hollingdale, p. 43.

91 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 38, trans. Hollingdale, pp. 102-103.

92 *Twilight of the Idols*, "The Problem of Socrates", Aphorism 9, trans. Hollingdale, p. 43.

93 *Ibid.*

94 This passage has been cited twice, but I will repeat it here in the notes for the sake of clarity:

> ...The harshest daylight, rationality at any cost, life bright, cold, circumspect, conscious, without instinct, in opposition to the instincts, has itself been no more than a form of sickness, another form of sickness — and by no means a way back to 'virtue', to 'health', to happiness.... (*Ibid.* p. 44).

95 *Republic* 444c-e.

96 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Morality as Anti-Nature", Aphorism 4, trans. Hollingdale, p. 55.

97 *Nietzsche's View of Socrates*, p. 82.

98 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 24, trans. Hollingdale, p. 92.

99 *Twilight of the Idols*, Foreword, trans. Kaufmann, (New York: Penguin Group, 1982), p. 466.

100 "The 'Improvers' of Mankind", Aphorism 5, trans. Hollingdale, p. 68; "How the 'Real World' at last Became a Myth", pp. 50-51;

"Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 23, pp. 90-91; and "What I Owe To The Ancients", Aphorism 2, pp. 116-117 and Aphorism 3, p. 118. Some of these references are to Plato, but it would take very little analysis to show that Nietzsche is referring to what Plato said through the voice of his "beautiful" Socrates (Plato's Second Letter, as quoted in *Nietzsche's View of Socrates*, p. 86).

101 *Apology* 30e-31a.

102 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Musarion* ed. of the *Gesammelte Werke*, IV, 365-443, as cited in Walter Kaufmann's *Nietzsche*, (Cleveland: Meridian Books, 1966), p. 340.

103 Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche*, p. 340.

Conclusion

Taking the instance of Socrates as an example of how Nietzsche treats his so-called idols in this book, what can be learned about his idea of warfare in *Twilight of the Idols*? Admittedly, not every reader will reach the same conclusion as I have in chapter two. Some might read through his critique of Socrates, flatly reject Nietzsche's views, and hold on to their original opinions; perhaps this is what Nietzsche means by an "eternal" idol. Others might simply accept Nietzsche's apparent criticisms at face value, and thereby accept the view that Socrates was an overly-rational monster. It would seem that this second possibility is the greater threat, for in rejecting the Platonic Socrates, one denies oneself access to a most important physician of souls. Nietzsche is aware that many people will misunderstand him — not just in the case of Socrates, but in his attacks on his many other enemies — and that this may create "a crisis without equal on earth":

> I know my fate. One day my name will be associated with the memory of something tremendous — a crisis without equal on earth, the most profound collision of conscience, a decision that was conjured up *against* everything that had been believed, demanded, hallowed so far. I am no man, I am dynamite.[1]

Whether or not Nietzsche was a dangerous writer — perhaps even the most dangerous writer — is a matter which necessarily involves some speculation. Many accusations have been made against him: inspiring fascism, weakening the Church, spreading nihilism, to name but a few. It is difficult to assess what kind and how much impact his writings have had on these movements. However, what is certain is that he intended to be dangerous. Some have tried to excuse Nietzsche by explaining that what he said has been misrepresented — misquoted or used out of context. That may be true; however, his style of writing certainly lent itself to misuse, and, moreover, Nietzsche himself revelled in his ability to wreak terror:

> I am by far, the most terrible human being that has existed so far; this does not preclude the possibility that I shall be the most beneficial.... I obey my Dionysian nature.... I am the first immoralist: that makes me the annihilator *par excellence*.[2]

In *Twilight of the Idols,* Nietzsche intends to destroy "what has been called the truth so far".[3] The possibly disastrous implications of such a mission might be summarily described as moral anarchy, if not intellectual chaos.

Shortly after Nietzsche declares that he is dynamite, he says that he is not the founder of a religion and that he wants no "believers".[4] He put the word within quotation marks, indicating that he intends to reject people who believe him in a certain way, and consequently believe "in" him. It is doubtful he intends people to disbelieve *everything* he wrote. His advice to the Germans on how to "see" and learn might provide a helpful insight on his repudiation of "believers":

> To be true to my nature, which is *affirmative* and has dealings with contradiction and criticism only indirectly and when compelled, I shall straightaway set down the three tasks for the sake of which one requires educators.....—Learning to *see* — habituating the eye to repose, to patience, to letting things come to it; learning to defer judgement, to investigate and comprehend the individual case in all its aspects.... —A practical application of having learned to see: one will have become slow, mistrustful, resistant as a *learner* in general. In an attitude of hostile calm one will allow the strange, the *novel* of every kind to approach one first — one will draw one's hand back from it. To stand with all doors open, to prostrate oneself submissively before every petty fact, to be ever itching to mingle with, *plunge into* other people and other things... is bad taste, is ignoble *par excellence.*—[5]

On the other hand, "believers" may be those who prostrate themselves before Nietzsche. Considering what he has said about the virtue of "seeing", one can well imagine that he would praise those who approach him with a "hostile calm". The second chapter of this thesis was intended to be a "slow" and "mistrustful" consideration of Nietzsche's attack on Socrates. My interpretation has yielded an understanding of Socrates which strongly differs from the "*monstrum in animo*" offered to Nietzsche's "ignoble" readers. This understanding was achieved by overcoming a certain amount of resistance offered by Nietzsche. In this sense, perhaps a kind of intellectual "freedom" has been achieved with respect to Socrates. If so, Nietzsche himself could be considered the "great danger" in our culture that "teaches us to know our resources, our virtues, our shield and spear, our *spirit* — which *compels* us to be strong".[6]

Nietzsche calls himself "the last disciple of the philosopher Dionysus".[7] He shows "fearlessness in the face of the fearsome and questionable"[8] in that he knows that he will be misunderstood by some, and moreover that such misunderstanding may have highly unpleasant consequences. Nevertheless, he is compelled to proceed in part because he has the optimistic conviction that the destruction he causes is only part of "the eternal joy of becoming"[9] — that mankind must overcome whatever damage he may do to regnant beliefs, that it has the resources to rebuild its ideals more solidly than any that have existed heretofore. And all creation of new values presupposes some destruction of the old. Humanity will be able to withstand the battles occasioned by a clash of values because it will have "become hard".[10]

"The Hammer Speaks", an excerpt from *Thus Spake Zarathustra,* marks the ending of *Twilight of the Idols.* The diamond, presumably "The Hammer", speaks to his brother, the charcoal. They are brothers because they are made up of the same material; however, tremendous pressure has transformed soft carbon into precious stone. Apparently, this is Nietzsche's hope for mankind: that we become diamond-hard by entering into "great forcing-houses for strong human beings".[11] Nietzsche's role in this process is to cultivate free and independent thinkers — independent of himself especially, which is why he wants no "believers". We are to learn from him, but this does not mean accepting everything he says in slavish submission. Rather, we are to contest him. He concludes his preface of *Ecce Homo* with a quote from *Zarathustra* which articulates this instruction for his readers:

> Now I go alone, my disciples. You, too, go now, alone. Thus I want it.
>
> Go away from me and resist Zarathustra! And even better: be ashamed of him! Perhaps he deceived you.
>
> The man of knowledge must not only love his enemies, he must also be able to hate his friends.
>
> One repays a teacher badly if one always remains nothing but a pupil. And why do you not want to pluck at my wreath?
>
> You revere me; but what if your reverence *tumbles* one day? Beware lest a statue slay you.
>
> You say that you believe in Zarathustra? But what matters Zarathustra? You are my believers — but what matter all believers?

You had not yet sought yourselves; and you found me. Thus do all believers; therefore all faith amounts to so little.

Now I bid you lose me and find yourselves; and only *when you have all denied me* will I return to you.[12]

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1 *Ecce Homo*, "Why I Am A Destiny", Aphorism 1, p. 782.

2 *Ibid.*, Aphorism 2, p. 783.

3 *Ecce Homo*, "Twilight of the Idols", Aphorism 1, p. 770.

4 *Ecce Homo*, "Why I Am A Destiny", Aphorism 1, p. 782.

5 *Twilight of the Idols*, "What the Germans Lack", Aphorism 6, trans. Hollingdale, pp. 74-75.

This quote matches well with what he says in "Whether we have grown more moral":

> On the other hand, let us be in no doubt that we modern men, with our thick padding of humanity which dislikes to give the slightest offense, would provide the contemporaries of Cesare Borgia with a side-splitting comedy. We are, in fact, involuntarily funny beyond all measure, we with our modern "virtues".... The decay of our hostile and mistrust-arousing instincts — and that is what constitutes our "advance" — represents only one of the effects attending our general decay of *vitality*...(*Twilight of the Idols*, "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 37, trans. Hollingdale, p. 100).

6 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 38, trans. Hollingdale, p. 103.

7 *Twilight of the Idols*, "What I Owe to the Ancients", Aphorism 5, trans. Hollingdale, pp. 120-121.

8 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", Aphorism 24, trans. Hollingdale, p. 92.

9 *Twilight of the Idols*, "What I Owe To the Ancients", Aphorism 5, trans. Hollingdale, p. 120.

10 *Twilight of the Idols*, "The Hammer Speaks", trans. Hollingdale, p. 122.

11 *Twilight of the Idols*, "Skirmishes of an Untimely man", trans. Hollingdale, p. 103.

12 *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, First Part, last chapter, as quoted in *Ecce Homo*, Preface, Aphorism 4, p. 676.

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