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Cover Page Footnote

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Is Nietzscheanism an Extension of Kant's Moral Philosophy? A Nietzschean-Kantian Dialectic for Morality

Sami Shaheen¹

Abstract

In contrast to mainstream philosophy, this paper argues that Nietzsche's philosophy allies itself with Kantian thought despite his explicit resentment towards Kant's emphasis on metaphysical interpretations of morals. Although Nietzsche's criticisms towards Kantian philosophy are motivated by his attempts to originally as well as creatively distinguish his thought towards morality from Kant's metaphysical assertions, it could be argued that Nietzsche's fear from the advent of nihilism requires a transcendentalist framework to regain value for existentialist concerns. The first section of this paper will argue that Nietzsche's claims against Kant are nothing more than a broader concealment of Nietzsche's admiration for Kant's metaphysical groundings of morality. Yet a discussion on the differences between both respective philosophers must first be held so as to give the readers background on what their thoughts are concerning morality. The second section will try to relate Nietzsche's proclamation of the "death of God" with Kant's emphasis on the categorical imperative. Finally, the third section will try to convey that Nietzsche's theory of the will to power could be ontologically understood through transcendentalism, namely through the Kantian emphasis on transcendental idealism.

Key Words: Will to Power; Transcendental Idealism; Transvaluation of Values; Categorical Imperatives; Übermensch

Introduction

Nietzsche's concerns towards Kantianism are based on the dangers of objective reasoning. For he believes that Kant's objectivist philosophy does not (1) provide any meaningful solutions to life's suffering and (2) could potentially redirect Kant's objectivity into relativity via misuse and misconceptions from the part of his readers and students. For Nietzsche, maintaining sanity requires a purpose that aims to overcome suffering. And sanity could only be achieved, quite certainly, through practicing the desire of enforcing and sustaining power, or as Nietzsche coins it the *will to power*. This desire could only be maintained over time if and only if the host has knowledge of his own desire for power. And manifesting such knowledge into his daily routines produces personal growth and increases his social as well as cultural status (Hill 20).

Given Kant's emphasis on reason as the faculty that determines the objective standards for moral pretenses, Nietzsche claims that the dependence on a moral system which resides in the existence of objective ideals, hence independently existent of our cognition, is *unphilosophical, spurious, and irrational*, therefore delegitimizing Kant's status as a moral philosopher in his own right (Hill 22). However, it is to be noted that Nietzsche believes that the truth resides in the *interpretation* of the truth seeker, and the very means of seeking an explanation for some given

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experience is *fundamentally relative* assuming that each individual has his/her own criteria for managing to seek truth, let alone defining the fundamentals of what constitutes such truth. For an objective reality that dictates what is right versus wrong, good as opposed to bad, and righteousness in contrast to sinfulness is, according to Nietzsche, arguably as well as evidently non-existent and repressive, and that meaning must be (as a rather dire solution for humanity's sake) constructed under one's will rather than being subjected to it.

Influenced by R Kevin's Hill's book "*Nietzsche's Critique*" and his further contributions in contemporary neo-Kantian thought, this paper aims to converse both Nietzschean and Kantian philosophies with an aim to uncover Nietzsche's subtle admirations towards Kant in contrast to the general understanding of Nietzsche being a contrarian to Kant's philosophy. And given this short introduction for Nietzsche's resentment towards Kant's metaphysical and epistemological analyses of morality, this essay will instead argue that Nietzsche's moral philosophy could only be understood through Kant's philosophical methodology. That is, the insistence for a strict division between metaphysical and physical realities for morality is fundamental when it comes to understanding what value is and which observable facts deserve the appropriation of value. Furthermore, the ascription of a certain amount of value unto an observable fact indicates, to some degree, (a) a potential existence of an unobservable entity that dictates the nature of the observable fact and (b) the value by which this potential unobservable entity holds. A closer reading of Nietzsche's philosophy illustrates that it does not have a clear methodology at hand that formalizes his strong belief towards individuality. And given that his meticulous articulations are impossible to be driven only by aesthetic and poetic endeavors, I will be arguing that it is possible that Nietzsche has adopted Kantian thought to base his theorizations on but with an attempted reevaluation of Kantian principles, namely refocusing Kantian philosophy to the individual instead of the universal (or, in Nietzschean terms, the individual must seek to be the representative of a universal ethic and not subjected to it). Accordingly, this paper will start off by arguing that: 1. Nietzsche's claims against Kant are nothing more than a broader concealment of Nietzsche's admiration for Kant's metaphysical groundings of morality; 2. Relating Kant's *categorical imperative* with Nietzsche's proclamation of the "*death of God*" as warnings against the abolishment of objective values that are essential for ideal human cognition and sustainability (therefore emphasizing on the value of morality as a distinctive and independent category); 3. Linking Nietzsche's conceptualization and operationalization for the *will to power* (i.e., everything that wills for self-preservation must seek it through power relations) to Kant's theory of *transcendental idealism* (i.e., that observable objects are mind-dependent, and that the mind does not have the capacity to cognize what is beyond our senses). Specifically, I will argue that Kant's philosophical methodology that grounds his metaphysical theorizations are the closest possible explanations to Nietzsche's conceptualization of both the *will* and *power* independently of one another (with which I will come to argue that the assimilation of the definitions of both concepts is made possible if and only if both concepts are carefully attuned to their observable realities). Henceforth, the main question of this paper is as follows: "*Can Nietzscheanism be Considered as an Extension of Kant's Moral Philosophy?*"

Contrasting Kantian and Nietzschean Convictions of Morality

In order to go on with this paper, I must first outline the differences between both philosophers so as to exemplify their philosophical convictions as well as help flourish my argument pertaining to Nietzsche's concealed appropriations of Kantian moral theory within his

own works. Outlining their philosophical differences is dependent on summaries of two works that I will be mostly referencing in this paper, which are Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals* and Kant's *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*.

To begin with, Nietzsche's genealogical analysis for morality sparks a novel interpretation on how morals came to be and how resentment, or decadence, has altered the foundations of both moral thought and ethical applications. Through his contemplation of what constitutes the fundamentals of good and evil, Nietzsche recognized that what represses us as not just rational animals but as social beings is our *consciousness towards guilt*. For guilt is what disfigures our moral sentiments by intensifying a sense of blameworthiness. Blame projects punishments, and punishments aim to rehabilitate behavioral problems that are best defined as actions that fall outside of the norm. Therefore, we can assume that the primary function of blame is to rehabilitate behavior. Yet there are instances where rehabilitation fails to adjust behavior by becoming excessively controlling rather than restorative, which then results in propagating a sense of worthlessness that disseminates (or rather stains) around those who are blamed, therefore intensifying a sense of guilt. And it is this failure that produces repressive structures, that instead of healing others, society begins to constantly label those who fall out of the norm as being unsophisticated, uncivilized, and guilty of their own actions so much so that they deserve to be outcasted from their own community. These assumptions normalize what Nietzsche would argue as the road to *malevolence, vengefulness, and hence resentment*. Through the dichotomy of good and evil, Nietzsche attempts to decipher what essentially labels an individual as either superior or inferior, deserving in contrast to undeserving, and righteous as opposed to sinner. And whoever embodies such statuses are characterized as either being masters or slaves of morality, therefore producing the master-slave morality distinction.

In his second essay, he moves on to critiquing the concept of *promise* as a key feature for sustaining human relations. He analogizes this interaction as a representation of a "creditor-debtor" type relationship, where punishments assumed by the creditor—if the debtor fails to pay his duties—are justified, normalized, and legitimized on the basis of superiority through maximally achieving and exercising power. This in turn produces social constraints that make people predictable in action, thought, and intentions. However, Nietzsche believes that such constraints do not produce productive individuals who aim to genuinely maintain their social and cultural fabrics but rather indoctrinate a sense of false consciousness towards moral obligations that are, in essence, immoral. Finally, the third essay circulates around the notion of asceticism and what it takes to embody ideals that symbolize ascetic modes. He mentions three traits that so called ascetic individuals tend to embody, namely the artist, philosopher, and priest. The works and outlooks of an artist, in this case, heavily depend on what is considered as objective, in which Nietzsche proclaims the artist's dependence to be nothing more than a mere representation of their incapacity to endure and struggle with the inevitability of life's suffering. Henceforth, such dependence offers them "protection, support, and authority" (Nietzsche 81) in their own respective fields as well as in the broader social sphere. The philosopher, on the other hand, tends to purify his soul by overcoming his all-too human desires. For the philosopher has—through his expansive efforts in formulating and constructing pathways to discover truth—mastered his abilities to regulate the calling of his desires, thus entrenching their efforts that Nietzsche describes as "their arrogant assertions over spirituality" (Nietzsche 88). Finally, Nietzsche insists that the priest must be constantly criticized as he strives to spiritualize what is essentially unspiritual, that is propagating falsehoods in the name of faith, purpose, and hope. Again, Nietzsche believes that the culmination of all factors contributing to faith is decadence.

On a technical note, Nietzsche's conviction that a priest's occupation, goals, and status are nothing but absurd by-products of illegitimate creditworthiness vis-à-vis his theological knowledge, and that all activities and rhetoric that he establishes are nothing by corrupt and violative schemes to spread false teachings. According to Nietzsche, the priest upholds a will that strives to dominate, if not also alter, the meaning behind existential ideals. And the authority that he holds and enjoys (rather exultantly!) demands of him to fulfill such domination. For such assertions grounds the priest's efforts in transcending worldly values (or at the very least justifies the perversion of such values through the exemplification of his own "good-deeds") that further encapsulates his authority, free of questioning and scrutiny, within an overarching socio-religious hierarchy.

Immanuel Kant, on the other hand, sets up a framework that introduces a rational and empirical interpretation for a possible existence of a metaphysical substrate of morals. Kant defines metaphysics as a concept that exceeds our direct experience of an object, which then demands efforts to discern the casualties behind the correlations as well as effects held and produced by phenomena (Kant 43). Kant begins to explain the notion of goodness as a metaphysical entity that shapes ideals, for actions devoted to accomplishing the expected goal of a given ideal should be based on the goodness of character that which the ideal embodies (i.e., non-instrumental value) and not for the consequences (i.e., status, prestige, etc., instrumental value) that it produces. Indeed, Kant accredits the Greeks for instigating such distinctions within moral philosophy and he believes that it should be revived within the psyches of individuals. For seeking goodness in itself will not only produce good characters but also permits the combination of all good characters into a single legitimated body. Simply put, it is an impulse rather than an imperative to pursue social control via practical judgment, and such judgment is only conditioned by the nature of certain deeds that are either praiseworthy or blameworthy (Wood 239). In addition to that, discovering a set of morals that guide us to righteousness requires us to maintain, if not also exemplify, the *will* to "goodness" which does not and cannot be defined by reason and logic *alone*. It is unequivocally true that inclinations are present, desires exist, and that decisions are formulas that encapsulate both reason and inclinations. Yet Kant's philosophy does not discount desires nor inclinations. Rather, he affirms their influences by claiming that it should be reason that leads the path for genuine understanding of moral inclinations (Driver 70). Reason could explain the consequences of what is presupposed as goodness. Explaining the consequences must also bear some understanding of the nature underlying the value at hand (Driver 71). Therefore, all actions, after being rigorously analyzed and rationalized (which later yields to the production of what Kant defines as maxims (or the "principle on which the agents acts" upon (19)), should start adhering to their supposed goodness that exist *as they are* instead of adhering to duties for the sake of their "good" consequences (Kant 11).

Differences Between Kantian and Nietzschean Perspectives Towards Moral Thought

Key differences between Nietzsche and Kant lie within their conceptualizations of moral consciousness, or how individuals come to justify moral standards through experiential (*a posteriori*) and/or *a priori* knowledge. On the one hand, Kant begins his metaphysical assumptions of morals by placing emphasis on the notion of *self-knowledge*, or knowledge that identifies constituents that form a unique character. The way whereby a character erupts is through dialogues that ordain a set of standards which bound one's identity with their expectations. The culmination of different characters and their corresponding standards produces *culture*. Yet it does not simply erupt, rather it takes shape incrementally and evolutionarily such that *contracts* begin to

materialize between different individuals so as to maintain a degree of harmony amongst them. Thus, according to Kant, culture is conditioned through a series of efforts that form an understanding towards *transcendental* knowledge (in which I will further explain at the end of this paper), and that such knowledge contributes to the maintenance of a metaphysical substrate which substantiates a communitarian ethos that operates social and cultural norms (Rotenstreich 305).

Consequently, Kant argues that social and cultural welfare must be framed under the guise of *duty*, or what Kant defines as acting “as if the maxim of your action were to become by your will a universal law of nature” (31). In other words, concessions that an individual must accept for the general good is not natural but rather *naturalized* (or normalized) under appropriate social contexts. However, it is an attempt to continuously *modify* as well as *tame* man's instinctual implications to allow the re-structuring of culture according to the newly emerging demands. This process must in turn attune newly modified moral conceptions with socio-cultural structures that exemplify (1) simplified conceptualizations of the observable (i.e., phenomena) and (2) justify the contents, relations, and character of the unobservable in light of our understanding of the observable. With that said, the Kantian understanding of sociability is broadly defined as the interchange of ideas that amalgamates (rather than disperses) individuals within a given space and time. It is also the case that man is an imminent danger to both society and himself if he fails to regulate his moral beliefs dictated by ethical principles that bind all people under one moral system. Those principles ought to establish a *tolerant* environment where a sense of mutuality and co-existence aim to assimilate the unassimilable, that is the intersubjective understanding and application of *reason* (Rotenstreich 308).

Reason, in this case, is the source of understanding of how and why objects act the way they do, namely by illustrating the underlying properties that form a phenomenon (Rotenstreich 304). In other words, reason is what allows us to accommodate our curiosities concerning substances that are immaterial by default. That is, there are no physical traces that lead up to the discovery of those substances. Simply put, reason would supply us with sufficient interpretations that are plausible enough to generate self-sustainable knowledge about those immaterial substances. Efforts to expand the idea of reason is best represented through its aggregation from merely analyzing an individual's faculties to analyzing a group of individuals and their shared faculties, therefore materializing what some would argue as the collective consciousness that underscores notions such as ‘the will’ under the guise of producing a collective ethos maintained by a set of collectively assented ideals.

In light of these interpretations, Kant's conception of morality puts forth *duty* as the precursor for moral value, for value cannot be created nor destroyed if moral imperatives cease to exist as frameworks which regulate social interactions. And value, in this case, legitimizes a set of justificatory processes that an individual carries out (rather internally) as to validate their knowledge for what they believe to be ethically and morally true. Imperatives also come with their hierarchies, for values must be ordered in accordance with their magnitude within a given time and space, and hierarchies place values in their proper statuses depending on the context at hand. Hence, duty could only be factually conceptualized by acknowledging its non-instrumental value. And the non-instrumental value of duty is only revealed through thought and reason that conduct a set of cognitive operations which transcribe responsibility into “commands” such that the ambiguous relationship between human conscience and moral worth becomes clarified (Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* 19). Hence, Kant's deontological project is contingent on reason as the primary (and not sole) utility whereby moral thought and ethical conduct are sufficiently understood (Wood 41). As a result, maxims are produced, and the aggregation of a set

principles that dictates each person's action re-produces a *universality* for what is considered as morally and ethically right and wrong. To Kant, universality is justified by the utilization of practical reason (or as Kant defines it to be the faculty that aims to define the "grounds of the will" (Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason* 17) which aims to produce maxims that are evaluated according to their categoricity. For "lawgiving" itself is conditioned by certain principles that determine who deserves judgment, praiseworthiness, blameworthiness, et cetera (Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* 43).

Accordingly, Kant believes that the result of those steps is the eruption of a structure that subjects all individuals under one moral authority (note that this does not allude to an omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent God but rather alludes to some force that is beyond our authority, needless to say a system that also rules over our own authorities). And its underlying logic is one of transcendental nature and not a mundane, earthly one. That is, an action that is carried out must abide by an *objective and indispensable* framework that is "necessary of itself, without reference to another end" (Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* 25). Kant then differentiates between two types of imperatives, the first being hypothetical while the second being categorical, each of which plays an immanent role in identifying expectations and motivations of decisions and actions. The *hypothetical imperative* is any action that defines goodness "as a means to something else" (Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* 44), an action that defines the consequences which would seemingly benefit the doer. On the other hand, a *categorical imperative* is an action that is characterized as "good" simply because of its *inherent goodness*, one that conforms to strict reason and rationality on the part of the doer. The clarification of two different imperatives is expected to allow individuals to willingly practice objective reasoning such that order and design of social and cultural structures are either maintained or refurbished according to what is right as opposed to what is convenient. Objective reasoning also allows the individual to hold "apodictic" practicality, a practicality that allows the individual to carry out appropriate measures so as to uncover the true value of what it is to be human (i.e., a rational being) (Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* 27).

In contrast to Kant's theories of morality, Nietzsche's genealogical analysis is best described as an *antidote* to any (if not all) metaphysical assumptions concerning moral and ethical principles. Namely, he has emphasized throughout his works, especially in *Human, All Too Human*, that metaphysics is *insufficient* to explain the concept of the will. Metaphysics is a tool used to analyze what he believed to be "inaccessible and incomprehensible" to us, a mere methodology that proclaims the existence of a reality that, for Nietzsche, does not entertain our actual concerns of the here and now (Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human* 18). Therefore, metaphysics trivializes the objective of a philosopher by rendering it as unphilosophical, unscientific, costly, and perhaps even non-existent or imaginary, which impedes the philosopher's desire to seek true wisdom and knowledge. With that said, Nietzsche's philosophy was almost always concerned with what we directly perceive of our current settings instead of what we ought to presume about future instances. Nietzsche believed that experience demands reflection of reality that is uniquely subjective. When such experiences are discussed interchangeably, whatever outcomes result from these discussions happen to produce an *intersubjective* affirmation of their credibility, henceforth producing a collective consensus on what is right and wrong. However, the threshold is always intersubjectivity, and Nietzsche has never settled for objective reality as a potential response to questions concerning human nature. In this case, Nietzsche believes that to sustain a degree of certain knowledge for abstract concepts such as morality, one must analyze the occurring and recurrent actions that people apply within their interactions, both of which would

demand us to study history to validate our reasoning for understanding *a posteriori* forms of knowledge (Hill 171). Moreover, Nietzsche argues that senses are an integral part of human reasoning. It is through the senses that one is ought to understand what lies outside of him. As Nietzsche argues: “the senses . . . do not lie at all. What we make of their testimony, that alone introduces lies . . . In so far as the senses show becoming, passing away, and change, they do not lie . . . Being is an empty fiction. The “apparent” world is the only one: the “true” world is merely added by a lie” (Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols* 21). Conflicts between individuals arise because of their attempt to transcend what they believe to be an object's *intrinsicity* based on their beliefs that originate from slave-like moralistic temptations. For if it were the case that mainstream thought has abolished ideas about the unknown and the “unknowable”, then conflict of interests shall cease to exist (Hill 176).

Accordingly, morality is a byproduct of power and does not exist independent of human relations, that is it does not hold a metaphysical nature. In Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals*, he attempts to map out a historical narrative that re-allocates morals within what was once considered to be *givens* rather than *constructs*. And the transvaluation of all values is what would enable us, as independent thinkers, to become “free spirits” or “men of knowledge” (Pippin 342). The efforts to overcome notions such as subservience under an omnipotent and omniscient law giver, which if left untreated then leads to the weakening of one's will that is deemed to eternal judgment, is something that Nietzsche is heavily invested in. Accordingly, a man's will determines the qualities that standardize volition. These standards then reinforce the will to power, for influential standards breed influential characters. The more influential a character is, the higher his status becomes. Higher status breeds increased power, and the cycle keeps on going. Furthermore, to gain and maintain self-autonomy, one must seek his own sets of moral values that reflect his personal identity. A personal identity could only be constructed if a person acknowledges what he perceives and accustoms it to his own being through justifying his beliefs about that which is perceived. It is through this process that Nietzsche distinguishes dogmatic from tolerable and genuine (if not also honorable) behavior. That is, shunning pure wisdom and maintaining dogmatism is not only counterproductive but is utterly decedent. In other words, dogmatism is what fuels fraud, fragility, and self-destruction that totally denounces the power of progression.

Such rationalizations are best represented by his “master-slave morality” dichotomy which is strictly based on *historical hermeneutics* that outline who and what must fall under which category. With that said, categoricity as such breeds a sense of objectivity. But Nietzsche's revolutionary philosophy entails that nothing is imperative. For the choices that we make dictate our fates, and the eradication of resentment could only materialize through the abolishment of power structures that dictate what actions are appropriate and how one is ought to act (i.e., religious doctrines), an early (perhaps even initial) postmodern critique that re-enforces relativistic behavior that is accustomed to subjective imperatives. For a life that holds one ultimate truth does not exist (Pippen 345).

In relation to truth and knowledge, Nietzsche argues that *asceticism* is the means whereby individuals seek to maximize their will to power (Nietzsche, *on the Genealogy of Morals* 82). And all other aspects that are accompanied by such an objective are added values rather than major capstones. The purification of one's soul through the means of intellectualism would craft mental states that are fixated to produce truth claims which require efforts to produce values that are uniquely compatible with them. If this process succeeds, then Nietzsche vows that the *Übermensch* would arise, the figure that successfully overcame every obstacle that hinders personal growth and

the state that views every experience, every choice, and every path as stepping stones for everlasting success.

Nietzsche's Concealed Admirations Towards Kant's Moral Philosophy

The Nietzschean-Kantian relationship is one that is often expressed to be contentious. That is, Nietzscheanism is considered to be a “non-rationalist” approach in interpreting moral theory within a naturalist paradigm, while Kantianism is the attempted *fusion* between empiricism and rationalism which later establishes logical assumptions concerning the natures of immaterial concepts. Some consider Nietzsche's philosophy as one that holds a romantic aura for issues concerning human action and human life (in general). Others critique this perspective by claiming that Nietzsche was attempting to reassert rationalism by refocusing philosophical analysis towards facts rather than impressions (Sokoloff 502). One could consider Nietzsche as the precursor for *neo-rationalism* instead of 'irrationalism', or the assertion that intuitive reasoning is subjective in so far as it produces justifications that fit one's character and moral knowledge. Neo-rationalism is best derived from a rationalist school of thought that assumes distinct entities must be related in some fashion and to some degree that “they all can be described in one breath” (Ruja 283). Neo-rationalism, in this case, would take bits and pieces of one's character along with one's moral knowledge that correspond with one another that later on produces an identity. This theory should in turn warn us from discourses that assess moral knowledge through pure scientific means which risk producing rigid theories that bind moral dynamics to atomistic analyses; that moral value becomes excessively materialized to the extent of which an idea like God (and not religion) is dissolved and thus becomes unnecessary for maintaining a moral fabric for society.

Arguably, Nietzsche inevitably transcends the “human” by redefining the means which lead to a level of self-consciousness that allows one to reconsider life as a gift rather than a burden. It is, as Ruja argues, the hallmark for sustaining a degree of transcendence unlike no other, one that corresponds with naturalist and realist propositions which later on assess moral standards in light of what empirical investigations and discoveries hold (284). But for such thought process to materialize, objectivity must be embraced, for in this case objectivity must not necessarily be referring to the existence, or even the mere idea, of an omnipotent and omniscient being but to a sense of purpose, a goal that an individual sets him/herself to in order to prosper as a living and thinking being. It is also the case that such a thought process categorizes *ascetic ideals* into different statuses that satisfy the requirement(s) incumbent upon the individual's ascendance to moral aptness. For Nietzsche, his drive to proclaim a loss of meaning as a result of a loss of values demands a methodology to support it. And the closest to Nietzsche's insistence for the establishment of subjective moral absolutes would be the subjectivation of Kant's categoricity for morals. Accordingly, Nietzsche's convictions for self-produced moral and ethical laws are deeply rooted in his respect and tolerance towards Kant's distinctive and original contributions to moral philosophy that—according to Nietzsche—is virtuous in character and is considered as “one of those impossible demands through which mankind “propagates itself”” (Sokoloff 516).

Nietzsche's admiration also runs much deeper than any student of modern philosophy would imagine, for which Nietzsche has explicitly claimed that Kant's project for deontological ethics (i.e., the view that presupposes a value that exists independent of human thought, that an ethic holds a purpose that is valuable in itself and not because of the consequences it generates) has led to “an infinitely deeper and more serious view of ethical questions” (Sokoloff 515). Coming

from a social critic who also called Kant a “moral fanatic, moralist, and cunning Christian,” it seems that Nietzsche’s insistence for producing one’s own values is contingent on Kant’s first principle² in his deontological project. However, one might consider this claim to be absurd given that Kant’s objective was to address a universal command rather than a subjective consideration. Yet I am not referring to Kant’s philosophical goals but rather his attitude embedded in the former proposition. What one sees as the denial of universalism in Nietzsche’s moral convictions, I see the opposite. That is, Nietzsche’s philosophy could have failed to withstand harsh criticism had it not been for the strength of character that his philosophy inherited from his ideas. It is also the case that his philosophy supports human action in so far as it would produce ‘maxims’ (under Kantian tutelage) that have the capacity to universalize themselves in light of that fact that there are other equally competent individuals that strive to carry out similar pathways and attempt to alter one another’s pathways in reaching such a goal (i.e., fierce competition as dictated by evolutionary psychology and biology). Yet there can only be one *Übermensch* that manages to produce a value structure that is sustainable enough to be labeled as the epitome of status and power.

Moreover, Nietzsche perceives Kant’s philosophy as an attempt to alleviate the burden of suffering through moral contemplation. This process can only crystallize through freeing the will from “modes of contamination” that are primarily constituted by blind faith and dogmatism (Sokoloff 519). In other words, Kant’s efforts in resurrecting a rather dead *will* either because of extreme devotion to one form of faith (hence reason is subsided) has motivated Nietzsche to produce ideas such as the death of God, the *Übermensch*, or the will to power. With that said, the best description of a Nietzschean-Kantian relationship could be summarized by the following description: individualism, which is best described through Kant’s concept of *moral autonomy* (i.e., the rational being producing law for itself) and Nietzsche’s *pathos of distance* (i.e., the few individuals that are capable of inventing their own sets of morals and ethical guidelines, which is then further formulated into the master-slave morality dichotomy), is a key concept that sets all the required conditions whereby a Nietzschean-Kantian dialectic is made possible. Individualized analysis of moral thought and ethical conduct focuses on the “heightening receptivity that accompanies one’s connectedness to the world and results in a greater attunement to the realm of sensibility but without being pathologically determined by it” (Sokoloff 517).

Hence, we can argue that the closest explanation to Nietzsche’s insistence for the establishment of subjective moral imperatives would be to personalize, or individualize as opposed to universalize, Kant’s categoricity for morals. That is, if we were to introduce a subjectivist reading for Kant’s categorical imperative, it would require us to maintain a degree of wisdom that would appropriate values in their rightful positions under one’s own conditions, maxims, and self-induced duties. When reading this proposition closely, one could see that it overlaps with Nietzsche’s demand for reevaluations so much so that Nietzsche’s methodological underpinnings are Kantian (if not then neo-Kantian) in nature. Therefore, we can assume that Nietzsche’s convictions for self-produced moral and ethical laws are deeply rooted in his respect and tolerance towards Kant’s distinctive and original contributions to moral philosophy that—according to

²According to Kant, the first rule for abiding by the categorical imperative is to “I ought never to act except in such a way that I could also will that my maxim should become a universal law” (Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* 57).

Nietzsche—is virtuous in character and is considered as “one of those impossible demands through which mankind ‘propagates itself’” (Sokoloff 516).

Arguably, Nietzsche’s psychological interpretations were motivated by Kant’s philosophy of the “self”. That is, Kant’s emphasis on the self as a center of analysis for understanding notions such as cognition, consciousness, rationality, and the like (i.e., the mind) has heavily influenced Nietzsche’s theorizations for the *Übermensch*. For constructing a hypothetical individual that seeks to create his own sets of ideals that guide him to spiritual purity *de facto* acknowledges Kant’s *concern* for *opaqueness*. To further elaborate, Kant argues that a true identity could only be espoused if and only if one discovers and determines his inner spirit (Wood 201). The latter process could only be crystallized through the management of exploring oneself to clear out any tendencies that “obscure” our *representations* (Wood 202), or factors that symbolize our character and standards. Kant does also believe that such representations are presented by our “physiological” natures, for physiology being the predominant factor that is directly observable and, hence, is casted upon judgment by the observers. Therefore, physical attributes (i.e., whether he is strong or weak, attractive or unattractive, healthy or ill, etc.) act as sufficient markers for representing one’s well-being. And status is the result of judgements casted by society in regards to the value that this individual brings forth within the social fabric.

However, such indicators can be greatly misleading. One must note that self-actualization can be driven by the *form* and not the *soul*. And for Kant, this is a derivative of a corrupt ego that substantiates an ill-informed will. Such corruption pushes out true spirits into the unconscious (Wood 202), which is another way of saying that actuality is trumped by falsity. It is only through falsehoods that unmanageable negative consequences erupt (Wood 203), the worst being the unacceptance of one’s own existence, that is the belittlement of one’s own capacity to bring forth change by *acting in a certain way whereby one’s maxim becomes a universal law*.

Similarly, Nietzsche argues that *opaqueness* is a consequence of our desires towards perfection, and the latter is relatively defined yet generally shared (as an end goal) by their *all-too human* attributes. His argument begins by claiming that consciousness does not truly represent one’s being (Katsafanas 329), for:

We could think, feel, will, remember, and also ‘act’ in every sense of the term, and yet none of this would have to ‘enter our consciousness’ (as one says figuratively). All of life would be possible without, as it were, seeing itself in a mirror; and still today, the predominant part of our lives actually unfolds without this mirroring—of course including our thinking, willing, and feeling lives. . . . (Nietzsche, *The Gay Science* 211)

By this standard, Nietzsche argues that our conscience is merely a tool used to identify concepts on the basis of their preconceived values. For conceiving forms of objects could only take shape through experience. Experience, in this case, is the central concept whereby our social and cultural standards, which standardize a set of rules that regulate human behavior and define what proper agency is, are conceived of. Accordingly, conscious reflections are contingent on information received by our senses, be it physical (i.e., directly stimulating our sensory organs) or behavioral (i.e., having to stimulate our mental faculties so as to discern the intentions underlying them). Therefore, Nietzsche—like Kant—argues that the mind has the capacity to deduce a variety of potential markers that, when aggregated, represent the nature of our beings. This deductive process in turn motivates us to act forthrightly in the world as uniquely independent beings that hold unique impressions, and hence value structures, of the world.

However, the conscious mind is bewildered with concepts that are difficult to discover, if not merely recognize, by the individual. Consequently, some of the spiritual elements that we recognize are merely based on some form of unconscious bias, or an attitude that “picks and chooses” the right set of traits that we tend to view as “ideal” representations of our beings. As a result, complexities arise, rationality declines, and the truth disenfranchises itself from an individual's conscience, therefore attributing nothing but utter weakness, absurdity, fabrications, and degradation of oneself (Katsafanas 332). And this is where Nietzsche begins to drift his philosophy from abstract to applied criticism, namely by constructing the concept of the *overman*. The eruption of the overman requires us to:

- A. Embrace³ one's fate (“*Amor Fati*”).
- B. Strengthen the strengths and abolish the weaknesses.
- C. Transvaluate all existing values according to the conditions set forth by one's space and time.
- D. Embody the newly transvaluated values in order to produce a reality that only suits the individual's conception of what is true.
- E. Act out the characters of those values so as to establish a grounding whereby such values become representative and universal.

Carrying out this process requires one to acknowledge “the inner world of our sensations and feelings” as more “trustworthy” and less “phenomenal than the world of external objects” (Wood 201). Note that both Kant and Nietzsche agree that *necessity* is fundamental for reasonable references. That is, the necessary existence of objects outside of us is a requirement for perception to function properly or, if you will, function at all. And personal identity is contingent on both perception and the inputs it receives from the external world. Although Kant is a transcendentalist and Nietzsche is a realist (in the context of this paper), Nietzsche's *Übermensch* cannot be substantiated without acknowledging, to some extent, that transcendence is the only process that has the capacity to elevate the spirit and, as a result, heighten its levels so as to override what is considered as the average standards that average person upholds and conducts.

Nietzsche's Proclamation of the Death of God in Relation to Kant's Categorical Imperative

Nietzsche's proclamation of the death of God has sparked a contentious debate among moral philosophers. For the accelerating modernization of cultural, ethical, and moral frameworks (especially in the west) have altered the fabric of being and, consequently, sparked unmanageable confusions that are either ignored or, even worse, embraced as some form of revolution of the mind, culture, and the relationship between both respective notions. More so than mere confusions, these shifts have constructed evaluative methods that hold rather absurd, or meaningless, standards for assessing and solving social issues. Some critics believe that such a proclamation is Nietzsche's lamentation towards the dissolution of order and certainty, with the death of God as being symbol of deconstruction of moral guidelines that constructed our cultural and social standards and sourced us with psychological means that ushered a sense of stability in times of sorrow, rejoice, conflict, uncertainty, and peace. On the other hand, other scholars have interpreted the death of God as Nietzsche's celebration for the liberation of man (Williams 264), a liberation from moral

³ Note that embracing does not allude to accepting “weakness” as it is, but rather utilizing it as a means whereby change is permitted and accessible.

condemnation and dictation. Accordingly, Nietzsche's emphasis on the individual overcoming nihilism is the hallmark for a civilizational success, the rebooting of individuality and the overcoming of externalities that attempt to hinder its flourishing. As stated by Williams, Nietzsche seeks to dismantle ambiguity and uncertainty through enabling the individual to re-discover and re-shape wisdom that "affirms life and existence as good and pleasurable in spite of suffering" (264), by which suffering is an objective reality that must not be personalized but generalized and embraced by all individuals who seek knowledge to discover truth. Regardless of the interpretation, I argue that Nietzsche's proclamation of the death of God is motivated by Kant's categorical imperative. However, we must first note that the very instance whereby the death of God materializes leads up to some form of *re-conditioning*. Re-conditioning is, simply put, the construction of novel means that allow an individual to discover, adopt, and adapt to new conditions that substitute previous moral imperatives with novel ones.

Nietzsche's definition of objectivity is grounded within a framework that insists that tolerance towards and acceptance of fate's dictations are primary agents for overcoming suffering. He defined it as the *eternal recurrence* (Nietzsche, *the Gay Science* 162), a thought-experiment that defines all means, ends, time, and space as infinitely reproducing themselves, where man has multiple opportunities to seek his own true identity once again by accepting the recurring nature "Dionysian chaos." Truth then becomes clarified, and the *Übermensch* becomes calculably possible (Kain 380). With such processes comes the re-generation of moral standards which continuously re-formulate ethical conducts that one finds to be suitable for not just his settings but also his desires for embracing ascetic ideals and becoming one with them, that is becoming a knowledge seeker that embodies the true spirit of a philosopher (Nietzsche, *on the Genealogy of Morals* 83). However, if there were to exist an ultimate truth, Nietzsche would argue that it would be concealed by a more decadent form of truth, a truth that corrupts the mind and breaks the spirit, that is the desire of *equality*. To put it into perspective, Nietzsche believes that the idea of equality alters one's capacity to master his own efforts in generating self-produced and self-inflicted moral imperatives which not only maintain his own social and cultural status but also grounds his sense of power within a framework that is indisputably influential (i.e., influencing the actions and decisions of other individuals through one's courage and convictions) (Nietzsche, *on the Genealogy of Morals* 61). Novel moral and value structures are the substitutions of a 'dead God', and those who do not manage to produce them are—in Nietzsche's estimation—unfortunate enough to suffer from ongoing malevolence that furthers their failures in liberating themselves because of their self-inflicted subjugation under illusory superstructures (i.e., the power of irrational faith). For Nietzsche goes as far as arguing that "God can exist even less *without* unwise people" (Nietzsche, *the Gay Science* 123), with wisdom being motivated by power and courage to resist such unjust 'immoralization' of what would be a collectivist ethos that resists social structures through its longing for equity.

Although Kant's assertion for the categorical imperative as a vital system for continuously re-asserting and re-defining our moral obligations, which then defeats the purpose of overcoming the advent of nihilism in Nietzsche's case, it could safely be assumed that executing categoricity within one's transvaluation process would assemble a form of self-revival that re-stimulates one's identity. In other words, morals are best judged *a priori* by recurrent actions, and such observation could only be best inferred by that which lies between analytic and synthetic judgements⁴. This

⁴ According to Kant, analytic judgments are ones that subsume the character of the thing that is being judged, or judgments "in which the connection of the predicate is thought through identity". On the other hand, synthetic

allows us to articulate inferences that subsume perceptual and conceptual axioms that differentiate what is desired from the undesired. Judgements are then produced, and knowledge becomes attainable through experience that is dependent on impressions dictated by the senses (Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason* 136). This process is what Kant defines to be practical reason, a form of reason that is dictated by *a priori* cognitions of what “ought to happen” or “ought to exist” (Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason* 585). Judgment could also be seen as that which maintains moral imperatives. For it attempts to familiarize values of different magnitudes that hold different purposes in order to reflect on contexts and relations that influence one's social role (Kemal 36). And according to Kant, good judgment holds accurate discernment of moral values, that is understanding the perspectives “of other subjects in its own scope” (Kemal 36), hence sufficiently, efficiently, and effectively categorizing them.

Accordingly, Nietzsche believed that abstract concepts must be derived from something that was initially observable, and that abstraction is possible via an ascetic way of life that dictates one's route to intellectualism and truth, henceforth embodying the spirit of a true philosopher. On the other hand, Kant's conception of good and evil is centered on the induction of moral values from the concrete to the abstract, one that would allow those moral values to be universalized in the form of ideas about what lies beyond our limited comprehension of reality. Yet Kant notices that his emphasis on universality must be accompanied by a longing for practical justice. That is, laws and regulations cease to exist if human consciousness fails to recognize its own cognitive faculties as being the most salient factor for attributing judgment justly and correctly. Those laws must be grounded in principles that call for the preservation of imperatives so as to stabilize a social structure that regulates the social environment. And such laws could only take shape if individuals acknowledge their own integrity and intrinsic value (as, first and foremost, rational beings). Hence, for Nietzsche, the concept of the death of God could then be attributable to Kant's microcosm analysis for the individual's preservation of personal dignity and self-respect. For if there is no God, then morals are relative, and the nature of relativism contradicts the nature of universality. Henceforth, the death of God is the destruction of self-identity, and the destruction of self-identity denounces one's value and purpose.

The Will to Power as a Byproduct of Transcendentalism?

Schopenhauer's philosophy concerning “the will to live” as being the closest paradigm to illustrate the desire to overcome pain and suffering has become one of Nietzsche's main *criticisms* against Schopenhauerian existentialism. Yet we must note that Nietzsche's theory of the will to power is heavily dependent on Schopenhauer's “will to live” so much so that some historians of philosophy would argue that if it was not for Nietzsche reading Schopenhauer in the first place (and being heavily affected by him), then his thoughts and opinions would virtually cease to exist. Nietzsche's criticism of Schopenhauer targeted the very foundations of the “will to live” simply because Nietzsche insisted that it failed to recognize that, firstly, the will remains to struggle with its host (and not that the host struggles with his/her will) (Vandenabeele 96) and, secondly, it embodies a deteriorating sense of *acceptance* that fails to contend with the idea of suffering. Hence, it is counterproductive and counterintuitive for those who seek some form of self-salvation (Vandenabeele 97).

judgments treat the predicate exclusive from the character of the judgment, or in other words the connection between the predicate and the character lacks an “identity” (Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* 130)

Yet I come to address the following concern: why haven't scholars contributed Kantianism, or more precisely Kant's transcendental idealism, as a potential methodology behind the will to power? Or, in other words, is it possible to perceive Nietzscheanism as a refurbishment of Kantian moral thought and analysis? Having formulated these hypothetical inquiries, I come to identify Nietzsche's will to power—as a psychological narrative—as being the resultant of, *to some extent*, transcendental idealism. As previously argued, Nietzsche does host a tendency to transcend the individual within the parameters of reality (although he does not explicitly state that in his works); that is, the overcoming of life's suffering and pain is the initial and perhaps the most important step for the processing of transcending one's individuality. Consequently, the will to power is the re-formulation of what is essentially good, that is what allows for the heightening of “the feeling of power in man, the will to power, power itself” (Nietzsche, *The Antichrist* 104). With almost everything in sight, consciously interpreted and objectively interacted with, the will to power is considered to be the main driving force for achieving certain events which expectedly supplies us with statuses and achievements that allow one's capacity to transvaluate his moral values.

Accordingly, Kant argues that individuals have the capacity to interpret complex entities (i.e., entities that are constituted by other simple entities that factor into their basic functions) as both *things in themselves* and as *representations*, each of which (1) assigns value unto objects and (2) reaffirms our synthetic *a priori* knowledge about the world (that is, discern what seems, at first glance, indiscernible). Adding substance to his theory, Kant has clarified two distinctive mechanisms that enable us to extract, analyze, discern, differentiate different factors that separate the phenomenal from the noumenal. A *phenomenal* occurrence is one that is perceivable by the senses, be it objects of nature that act in accordance with the laws of nature or incidents that act as direct consequences of action. In other words, a phenomenon is any process that is contingent on substantive (i.e., derived from the word substance or the basic nature that objects/subjects are contingent upon) laws, or as Kant puts it: anything that “which is empirical” (Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* 548). *Noumenon*, on the other hand, is what lies ahead, or outside, time and space; that abstract ideas concerning things that are intuited cannot be observed in the same manner as we observe a phenomenon, or in other words “we have an understanding that extends farther than sensibility problematically, but no intuition, indeed not even the concept of a possible intuition, through which objects outside of the field of sensibility could be given, and about which the understanding could be employed assertorically” (Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* 362).

Although a noumenal idea is unattainable by the senses, and hence is not objective in any shape or form (i.e., the only intuition could grasp a noumenal idea if and only if intellectual thought has been exercised—since it is only through reason, the pinnacle of intellectuality, that abstract ideas can be generated), it is nonetheless vital for producing a barrier between what is *sensed* from what is *thought* (Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* 363). Indeed, if it is the case that there are transcendental ideals outside time and space that truly represent real objects, and by real I am adhering to the direct observations of reality through our senses, then they could be sufficiently identified such that they are not only simply real but also embody ascribable forms (i.e., forms that can be observed, yet I am agnostic when it comes to the particulars of those forms, that is whether they are material or immaterial *prima facie*). This distinction could only form if one is able to train his cognitive skills such that it is strong enough to attribute the proper standards that best fit, and hence properly differentiate, what is observable and what is intuited. Accordingly, given that noumenon is a “boundary concept” that aims to limit sensibility and increase intuition (hence interpretations) (Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* 351), individuals must begin undertaking

necessary intellectual efforts to conceptualize and operationalize their *a priori* knowledge of morals as things in themselves, thus producing the required tools that generate maxims which hold a universalist ethos such that the purification of the “will” becomes a universal duty.

Consequently, transcendental idealism is purely an idealist conception of things as they ought to be, for what is intuited by our senses, and hence the production of ideas that represent the forms and essences of that which is perceived, is sufficient enough for one to directly trust in its existence and representation(s). However, the question still remains, how could this definition for transcendental idealism fit into the paradigmatic nature of the “will to power”? Or, in other words, what is it that precisely motivates the intuition for the will to power? I come to suggest that the answer lies within the very emphasis on the concept of *representations*. Given that Nietzsche's will to power is predicated on what is directly perceivable, one must also produce a set of representations that act as symbols of what constitutes the forms of perceived objects. It is also those representations that generalize what is good as opposed to what is evil, which in turn fall under the guise of influential power. For the more accurate the representation of an object's form is, and hence the more appropriable value structures become relative to an object's form, the more influential one's value structure, rhetoric, belief, and action becomes. And that is how Nietzsche structures his “Zarathustrian” ethos: by providing a categorical basis for one's representations such that what ought *to be* is eventually transcribed into what *is*.

Furthermore, the will, according to both Nietzsche and Kant, functions on *self-autonomy*, the freedom to plan out and execute what is indeed true to oneself. Although it is unequivocally true that Kant's approach to the will is contingent on the principles of reason (Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* 25) while Nietzsche's beliefs concerning the will is predicated on desires, it is nonetheless the case that the Nietzschean conception of the will necessitates the construction of reasonable and justified transvaluation of values such that the beholder begins to truly know (and not merely believe) that his values are sophisticated ideals which have the capacity to express “the complex state of-delight of the person exercising volition, who commands and at the same time identifies himself with the executor of the order who, as such, enjoys also the triumph over obstacles, but thinks within himself that it was really his will itself that overcame them” (Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* 26).

Thus, Nietzsche's extension of Kantian morality lies within the one's required efforts to intuit, cognize, and apprehend the underlying value of an object such that this value becomes explicitly apparent within not just the evaluator's will to live or will to power but, most importantly, his will to act. Nietzsche's Zarathustra requires Kant's theory of duty to act out the maxim as though it shall become a universal law, for an *Übermensch* must maintain a degree of strict conscientiousness and commitment to his rules in an effort to universalize it. Universalization requires legitimacy, and legitimacy is derived from evidence pointing to the existence of the goodness of character and the spirit of the value in itself, all of which—when culminated—inevitably materialize what ought to be consequential goodness. And it is only analyzing Nietzsche's will to power through such means that, in my estimation, makes it a definitive reformulation of Kant's transcendentalism.

Conclusively, portraying the “odd” relationship between Nietzsche's will to power and Kant's transcendentalism could be the following: firstly, for one to prosper in life one must also invest tremendous efforts for discerning the structure of the human mind and its relationship with the external world, be it for morals, ethics, society, physical objects, etc. Secondly, seeking knowledge of one's self-identity reveals his values concerning moral and ethical concerns.

This in turn increases one's "willingness" to act forthrightly in the world by formulating proper duties, that is what one ought to do for the betterment of one's own conditions (which later on trickles down unto society at large). This willingness could only exist if one acknowledges consciousness as being the initiator of opinions, ideas, imaginations and the sustainer of logic as well as reason, all of which work together in order to produce meaningful reasons for one to act. By following one's reason and intuition, one ought to act according to the maxim that has the potential to become a universal law, therefore strengthening his will to power. Finally, Nietzsche's "agnostic" stance on whether the will to power is purely transcendental or natural begs a closer scrutinization behind the "causality of willing", in which Nietzsche further argues that: "Suppose that our world of desires and passions is the only thing "given" as real, that we cannot get down or up to any other "reality" except the reality of our drives—since thinking is only a relation between these drives[...]" (Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* 54). Given that Nietzsche heavily emphasizes on the notion of "being conscious of our own drives," it is safe to assume that such consciousness demands one to think of oneself as is and not ought to be. It is, in other words, to focus on what makes one intelligible to others, a character that others assume to be true of oneself. And what is true is fundamentally transcendent. That is, there is a spirit that must be cultivated so as to overcome the burdens of inevitable suffering. Hence, if such acknowledgment materializes, then one is able to strengthen his spirit and character, therefore actualizing his will to power. As a theory, then, the will to power is a transcendental claim in so far as individuals are able to assign the appropriate means that "distinguish the subjective from the objective." Indeed, the only manner whereby such a process materializes is by realizing that the relationship between "willingness" and "action" is beyond experience as much as it is "mechanistic and organic" in reality (Bailey 278).

Conclusion

This paper aims to uncover Nietzsche's Kantian affiliation by uncovering Kant's influence, primarily his categorical imperative and transcendentalist theorizations, within Nietzsche's proclamation of the death of God as well as his theorization of the will to power. As much as Nietzsche detested Kant's objectivist stance on moral thought, he has nevertheless predicted the eruption and resulting dangers of nihilism as a result of a lack of structural guidance, that is the death of the Christian God through the advents of modern and advanced science as well as ideological (i.e., statism and other alike political notions) affiliations (i.e., statism and other alike political notions, which later on transformed into totalitarian systems as best observed in the interwar period and world war II). Although Nietzsche strongly believes in the goodness of true individuality, that is the liberation of man from overarching moral and ethical imperatives, it is still unreasonable to believe that humans have already established or even figured out the means by which such liberation materializes. Accordingly, he believes that his philosophy is the means whereby individuality is strengthened, therefore the enhancement of our conditions, or our will to shape and determine the circumstances of our environment (and perhaps the conditions of others through our liberated beings and influential ethos), would emerge (Salter 373). Key terms such as transcendence, idealism, and imperatives are considered to be antithetical to Nietzscheanism. However, this paper tries to argue that not all antithetical conceptualizations are useless in re-organizing and influencing critical thought. Furthermore, many of the connections that I tried to lay out between Nietzscheanism and Kantianism are indicative of contemporary postmodern critique; that even the father of postmodernist thought has feared from the outcomes that his own

philosophical tradition asserts. And the only way to reconcile the outcomes of radical postmodern thought (i.e., excessive subjectivism) is by reevaluating its values. These reevaluations are not indicative of man's liberty, rather it is a symbol of responsibility and growth that all people must embrace for their own betterments. And Nietzsche's philosophy could only be rationalized if it is founded on Kantian thought. In other words, Kant's objective stance could be subjectivized through Nietzschean lenses, and Nietzsche's re-evaluative philosophy could be substantiated through Kantian categoricity. For instance, the death of God could be interpreted as the death of universal dignity where all individuals simply denounce each other's presence while still countering life's obstacles and suffering. The death of God is, simply put, the death of purpose, value, and meaning, and it is the reorientation of all things, including oneself, as being means and not ends.

Finally, I come to argue that the will to power is an extensionist paradigm for transcendental idealism, for the will as an aspect of human psychology and phenomenology could only materialize through a cognitive structure that consciously interprets the world through the senses. In this case, the more experienced an individual is in dealing with such phenomenological instances, the more knowledge is acquired, therefore allowing the mastering of one's physiological, psychological, and spiritual elements which in turn enables one to reevaluate moral values properly and competently so as to become the leading cause for change, growth, and prosperity.

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