

## **Nietzsche on *Décadence* as a Psychic Failing**

Andrew Huddleston

*Birkbeck, University of London*

“Nothing has occupied me more profoundly than the problem of decadence,” Nietzsche writes in his preface to *The Case of Wagner*. The concept of decadence, as he here suggests, indeed has a central place in his work. His earliest book *The Birth of Tragedy* describes the downfall of Greek tragic culture at the hands of Socratism, and it diagnoses the cultural malaise in the Europe of his time. His later works lament, among other things, the manifold ills of Christianity and Judeo-Christian morality, and their various attendant phenomena, in contrast to the noble, life-affirming ethics of the pre-Socratic classical world. In its most general sense, decadence involves a kind of decline from a previous height. That is not to say that things in the past were idyllic, nor is it to deny that the present has certain advantages of its own. But Nietzsche is not, to say the least, someone optimistic that things are improving: “We can see nothing today that wants to grow greater, we suspect that things will continue to go down, down, to become thinner, more good-natured, more prudent, more comfortable, more mediocre, more indifferent, more Chinese, more Christian.” “There is no doubt that man is getting ‘better’ all the time,” he sarcastically adds (GM, I:12).

We also see a more specific sense of “decadence” in Nietzsche’s writings. Especially in his works of 1888, the cognate term “*décadence*” appears with great frequency.<sup>1</sup> Although the precise contours of this concept of *décadence* are not all that clear, it, as I hope to show in this paper, is more than simply a general term of disapprobation or a synonym for decline of all sorts.<sup>2</sup> In the case of individuals, it is a more specific psychic malady. *Décadence* is an affliction characterized by a particular self-destructive pattern in the individual, bespeaking a failure of unity and of proper order in the self. It is Nietzsche’s diagnosis of this phenomenon that I will seek to illuminate in this essay. There remains an interesting question of how this individual decadence is related to broader cultural decadence. But this will need to be left for another time.

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Let’s begin by discussing the terms “*décadence*” and “decadence” themselves. “Decadence” comes from the Latin for “to fall away” and thereby carries the suggestion that there is some historical decline from a past ethical, cultural, or

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<sup>1</sup> Nietzsche, it is often thought, takes the term “*décadence*,” which appears in the works of 1888 with the accent aigu, from the French theorist Paul Bourget, in particular from the latter’s “*Theorie de la décadence*.” Gregory Moore has cast doubt on Bourget as the original source of the term, pointing out a use of the word (though without the accent) in 1877, before Nietzsche first read Bourget. See Moore (2002), p. 121.

<sup>2</sup> Although the concept of decadence is often neglected in the anglophone literature on Nietzsche, two notable exceptions to the general trend are Conway (1997) and Benson (2008). There is also brief discussion of decadence in: Leiter (2002), p. 158, Richardson (1996), p. 58-59, and Hunt (1991), p. 126-30. Leiter rightly fastens on a characteristic symptom of decadence (wanting what is bad for one). Richardson and Hunt rightly note that Nietzsche conceives of decadence as centrally involving a failure of integration within the self. The account I offer here builds on these insights, but aims to offer a more comprehensive account of what decadence involves through situating the condition of wanting what is bad for one and this underlying failure of integration as part of a broader story.

aesthetic height. As already noted, there is this broader notion of decadence running throughout Nietzsche's work, even if he doesn't often label it with that term or the German equivalents. *Décadence*, a term he does often use, is a more specific kind of failing, a manifestation of decadence in the broader sense, but not what it always consists in or is attributable to.<sup>3</sup> In what follows, I will be focused on the narrower phenomenon of "*décadence*."

Of late, the term "decadence" has come to have more positive connotations than it has had in the past. Nietzsche, in keeping with the more critical and pejorative edge that the term often had in the 19th and early 20th centuries, regards decadence not as a weekend extravagance, but as a serious and destructive flaw on the personal and the social level.<sup>4</sup> For many, this will conjure up ideas of a dissolute way of living — one of extreme luxuriousness and licentiousness in food, dress, and sexual practice — of fattened sybarites, swaddled in silk and gorging themselves to the point of gout, with many willing concubines at their feet. Yet in marked contrast to this caricature, the sort of *décadence* Nietzsche has in mind needn't consist in a taste for the pleasures of the flesh; most often, in fact, it involves a fanatical ascetic repudiation of these sorts of sensuous delights.

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<sup>3</sup> We should thus bear in mind that not everything that is decadent in the broad sense is so because it is *décadent*.

<sup>4</sup> Of course, there is also a competing tradition in the second half of the 19th century of taking a less reprobativ attitude toward decadence (e.g., in Huysmans, Baudelaire, Gautier, Wilde) to which Nietzsche does not belong.

Although for Nietzsche the primary bearers of decadence are individuals and, as we shall see, whole cultures too, Nietzsche also uses the term in a more metonymic sense to describe worldviews, as well as the cultural creations animated by these worldviews (e.g., works of art, doctrinal religions, philosophies), which get produced by decadents and are attractive to decadents.<sup>5</sup> Wagner's operas (CW, 5) are thus decadent in this more derivative sense. It is important to bear this in mind, since we often tend to think of things the other way around: To use our colloquial concept of decadence for a moment, we often think in the first instance of things (e.g., foie gras) or worldviews (e.g., sexual hedonism) as decadent, and the people who are drawn to them as decadent derivatively. But according to Nietzsche, we cannot infer a person's decadence from characteristically decadent predilections, since what is decadent for one person may not be so for another. Being drawn to Wagner's music, for example, is typically a manifestation of decadence, but not in the case of one, such as Nietzsche himself, who is able to turn this "questionable and dangerous" music to his advantage (EH, "Clever," 6).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Within this derivative sense, there would appear to be a further divide: some things get to be "decadent" for causal and/or dispositional reasons. They are produced by and/or attractive to decadent people. Others also warrant the title by manifesting the typical stylistic defects of decadence in their immanent qualities. There is often considerable overlap between the two.

<sup>6</sup> Nietzsche's self-description is a bit more nuanced: "Apart from the fact that I am a decadent, I am also the opposite. My proof for this is, among other things, that I have always instinctively chosen the right means against wretched states; while the decadent typically chooses means that are disadvantageous for him. As summa summarum, I was healthy; as an angle, as a speciality, I was a decadent" (EH, "Wise," 2). Nietzsche's point, I take it, is that although he shares certain characteristics with decadents, at core he is not decadent.

These spiritual, intellectual, and artistic expressions of decadence in turn prove irresistibly attractive to decadents. Like hypertensives drawn to salty snacks, decadents, as the result of their condition, come to crave what is bad for them.<sup>7</sup> And going to *Parsifal*, or to church, only serves to make the basic problem worse.<sup>8</sup>

In *Twilight of the Idols* Nietzsche gives us an illustration of how this dynamic of decadence plays out in the person of Socrates.<sup>9</sup> As an account of the historical Socrates or of Plato's character of that name, it is tendentious, to say the least. My aim is not to vindicate Nietzsche's understanding of Socrates on either score. But it will be helpful even so to dwell on this instructive example, for, regardless of whether all of Nietzsche's arrows find their target with Socrates himself, it is Nietzsche's most detailed account of the features characteristic of individual decadence and is worth focusing on to get clear on those features.

One of the distinguishing marks of decadence is a kind of psychological disunity. In the case of Socrates, this takes the form of experiencing his drives (particularly his "lower" appetitive drives) not as truly part of him, but as alien elements needing to

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<sup>7</sup> CW, 5: In cases of decadence, "the instincts are weakened. What one ought to shun is found attractive. One puts to one's lips what drives one yet faster into the abyss. Is an example desired? One only need observe the regimen that those suffering from anemia or gout or diabetes prescribe for themselves."

<sup>8</sup> Nietzsche sometimes seems to think that the predisposition to decadence is a biological characteristic of certain types of people. TI, "Skirmishes," 36: "Incidentally, however contagious pessimism is, it still does not increase the sickliness [*Krankhaftigkeit*] of an age, of a generation as a whole: it is an expression of this sickliness. One falls victim to it as one falls victim to cholera: one has to be morbid enough in one's whole predisposition. Pessimism itself does not create a single decadent more..." (By "sickliness," he means predisposition to illness, and not the quality of being ill, or the degree to which one is ill. After all, one's sickness can get worse, as he himself appears to suggest.)

<sup>9</sup> TI, "The Problem of Socrates."

be subdued by reason. By Socrates' lights, he is his rational, eternal soul; the body, with its unruly appetites, is just a temporary residence.<sup>10</sup> To combat this perceived chaos within, reason becomes predominant above all else, and Socrates develops "a *hypertrophy* of the logical faculty" [*Superfötation des Logischen*] that affects to deliver him from the sway of these disruptive forces. But really, Nietzsche thinks, reason just acts as a tyrant, keeping the other "lower" elements in an unhealthy kind of subjugation (TI, "Socrates," 4).<sup>11</sup> Socrates doesn't just stop with himself either. He tries to convince others in Athens that being "*absurdly rational*" (TI, "Socrates," 10; Cf., BT, 15) is the only route to the good life. But as Nietzsche observes, "The fanaticism with which all Greek reflection throws itself upon rationality betrays a desperate situation" (TI, "Socrates," 10): Socrates becomes so enamored of reason and dialectics because he cannot cope with his own unruly impulses, and the philosophical life of zealous rationality is just his reactive countermeasure.<sup>12</sup> Socrates begins with a kind of decadence, i) because of the disunity attendant upon identifying himself solely with his rational faculty, not with the "lower" aspects that

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<sup>10</sup> Cf., Nehamas (1998), p. 139: "By giving [reason] absolute preeminence, Socrates convinced us not to think we comprise many things, all of them equally part of what we are. Instead, he persuaded us to identify ourselves with this one impulse, to consider it the seat of the self, the mark of the human, and to distrust everything else about us as lower, degenerate, as features simply of the body or our fallen nature."

<sup>11</sup> "Superfötation" is Nietzsche's word here. It is in the spirit of the rest of the section that Kaufmann renders it as "hypertrophied," but this is not actually its scientific meaning. It refers to the condition when a female species is pregnant with multiple fetuses at different stages of development. One possible reading of this curious word choice is that Nietzsche is playing on (and questioning) Socrates' famous claim to be a midwife of thoughts—helping others give birth to their ideas but barren of ideas himself, *Theaetetus* 149a-151a. Socrates, Nietzsche might be suggesting, is much more pregnant with a multiplicity of ideas (one might also say "ideologies") than he affects to be, ideas which he then foists on his interlocutors.

<sup>12</sup> Nietzsche implies as much in TI, "Socrates," 8.

are part of him too and also ii) because of a certain un-remedied disorder among these instinctual elements themselves. But Socrates' way of combatting his decadence — allowing one part of himself (his rationality) to grow wildly out of proportion and to tyrannize the whole — drives him *even further* into decadence.

Continuing with Nietzsche's political language of anarchy and tyranny (TI, "Socrates," 4, 9), we might think of the way in which a self-aggrandizing dictator, vowing to restore law and order, comes to power in situations of political turmoil. The strategy of this domineering drive that comes to power is to scapegoat some aspect of the decadent individual and to blame *that* for the decadent individual's "fallen" state. The "salvation" this drive proposes is to root out the allegedly offending element. Again, the political analogy is helpful. Think of the dictator who blames all the social ills on some minority group and proposes a xenophobic or genocidal plan for their internment or liquidation in the interests of the "true" polis (the conception of which excludes these elements). The decadent individual thus comes to think along these lines: "If only I could eliminate all my 'impure,' 'evil' sexual impulses, then I could be closer to God." "If only I could detach my soul from this copulating, urinating, and defecating animal body, I would attain perfect humanity." "If only I could get past the temptations of this fallen life, I would have the most extreme bliss with God in heaven." And so on.

Notice, though, what is already evident in this way of thinking: The decadent individual starts out with some rift in the self, indicative of the failure of integration characteristic of decadence: He is his soul, *not* his animal body. His real desires are exalted religious ones, *not* worldly sexual ones. His real life is the one that awaits him in heaven, *not* the one he is leading on earth. This failing only gets worse, for there turns out to be a vicious cycle within the decadent person.<sup>13</sup> This domination of the organism by a particular part (the domineering element that comes to power) happens as the organism's defense mechanism in response to its preexisting decadence (the disunity and disorder in the self). Yet in the very process of trying to correct for this decadence, it grows *even more* decadent. Whereas at first there was anarchy, now there is tyranny.<sup>14</sup> One failing is just exchanged for another, one brand of decadence for a different and in some ways worse brand. In this respect, it is like the case of a moderate smoker, who in order to quit entirely never touches another cigarette, but to do so must cover his body in progressively more Nicoderm patches, so that he is getting more nicotine than he was before. The "cure" perpetuates the problem in the very process of trying in vain to cure it. Nietzsche writes:

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<sup>13</sup> Leiter (2002) rightly notes that Nietzsche takes decadent individuals to be those who, characteristically, have lost their instincts and want what is bad for them, p.158.

<sup>14</sup> Nietzsche here alludes to Plato's regimes of the soul from the *Republic* in seeing democracy (which, for Plato, is a kind of anarchy) as preparing the ground for tyranny (562c5-6; 563e3-4). Nietzsche plays with this Platonic image by interpreting Socrates as the democratic man (the second-worst soul for Plato) who turns into the tyrannical man (the worst soul). Despite Nietzsche's criticism of Socrates as the archetypal decadent, there are interesting affinities here between Nietzsche (especially the political metaphors employed) and Plato. On Plato's view, in democracy freedom reigns supreme (562b-c), resulting in a kind of anarchy. "Horses and donkeys are in the habit of proceeding with complete freedom and dignity, bumping into anyone they meet on the road who does not get out of their way. And everything else is full of freedom, too" (563c6-d1).

It is a self-deception on the part of philosophers and moralists if they believe that they are extricating themselves from decadence when they merely wage war against it. Extrication lies beyond their strength: what they choose as a means, as salvation, is itself but another expression of decadence; they change its expression, but they do not get rid of the decadence itself. Socrates was a misunderstanding; *the whole improvement-morality, including the Christian, was a misunderstanding*. The most blinding daylight; rationality at any price; life, bright, cold, cautious, conscious, without instinct, in opposition to the instincts — all this too was mere disease, another disease, and by no means a return to “virtue,” to “health,” to happiness. To *have* to fight the instincts — that is the formula of decadence: as long as life is *ascending*, happiness equals instinct (TI, “Socrates,” 11).

Nietzsche in this passage uses “instinct” [*Instinkt*] in both its singular and its plural form, two times each. He is not always consistent with his terminology, and in this context, “instinct” (singular) and “instincts” (plural) make most sense when seen as referring to different things: “Instincts” are animalistic drives (though shaped somewhat as well by one’s social context). “Instinct” (as it is used in the singular here) is being able to act in a way that comes as second nature. Acting with instinct (in this

sense) is not a matter of just letting impulses (instincts in the former sense) take their course; it is an ability one develops or achieves through painstaking work (Cf., BGE, 188). The non-decadent person is thus not someone just living out his impulses with wild abandon and happy in doing so. He is someone who has made a careful effort to cultivate these impulses in a particular way:

He guesses what remedies avail against what is harmful; he exploits bad accidents to his advantage; what does not kill him makes him stronger. He collects instinctively [*instinktiv*]<sup>15</sup> from everything he sees, hears, lives through, *bis* sum: he is a principle of selection, he leaves much to fall through [*lässt Viel durchfallen*]. He is always in his own company, whether he associates with books, human beings, or landscapes: he honors by choosing, by admitting, by trusting. (EH, "Wise," 2)

When Nietzsche complains about tyranny in the self, his brief is not against any imposition of dominant order whatsoever. Tyranny involves domination, but it is not merely that.<sup>16</sup> The key features in making it tyranny are that the ruling element is (by Nietzsche's lights) an inappropriate ruler and that the domination achieved tends

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<sup>15</sup> It is not clear in which sense that I distinguished that Nietzsche is using "instinctively" here. Is it an innate capacity one has or a capacity acquired through some (and maybe a great) degree of painstaking cultivation? Or perhaps some combination of both?

<sup>16</sup> For one proposal for marking off tyranny from non-tyrannical domination, see Reginster (2003). The mark of a tyrannical drive, on his reading, is that it refuses to allow other drives expression, p.76-7.

to be unstable. Because of the first feature, tyranny cannot be understood in wholly neutral, non-normative terms. For this reason, it is not sufficient to escape decadence that one simply have a dominant “master drive” in the self. (This is one—I think not wholly satisfactory—suggestion sometimes offered for what it is to be a healthy Nietzschean individual.<sup>17</sup>) It matters crucially *what the dominant element is* and whether it is a good one to be occupying the dominant role. Whereas Socrates wants reason (a particular form of it anyway) to rule, Nietzsche presumably wants a more creative, form-giving capacity to be at the helm of the soul—or at least whatever capacity he takes to be responsible, in place of reason, for the (perhaps largely unconscious) process of self-cultivation described above.<sup>18</sup>

Nietzsche’s opposition to reason as the ruling element in the self might seem to lend support to the familiar charge that Nietzsche is an irrationalist. But we must bear in mind that what Nietzsche would seem to have in his critical sights is not rationality *per se*. It is instead an overzealous sort of rationality, the sort that seeks, in the relentless way that Socrates does, to keep the appetites and competitive drives in check and dialectically to justify virtually everything that he believes and holds dear.

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<sup>17</sup> On the related point that a single dominant drive is not sufficient for Nietzschean unity, see Katsafanas (2011), 96-100, criticizing Richardson (2009) and others.

<sup>18</sup> Though Nietzsche takes Socrates to task, Socrates would seem on some level actually to be doing just what Nietzsche recommends, spiritualizing or deifying a craving, rather than trying to “castrate” it—which Nietzsche takes to be the typical Christian (or, in this case, proto-Christian) solution. (See TI, “Morality as Anti-Nature,” 1-2). He takes his agonistic and erotic impulses (of the sort, as Nietzsche says, that would be more healthily discharged in a “wrestling match between young men and youths”) and presses them into the service of a respectable rational activity suited to his overgrown logical faculty—dialectical argument (TI, “Socrates,” 8). I suspect the issue for Nietzsche, however, is that Socrates doesn’t acknowledge these bodily impulses as part of what he fundamentally is.

Nietzsche sees this as perverse and futile (TI, “Socrates,” 5). But Nietzsche is not advocating that one behave *irrationally*, ignoring all considerations in favor of doing or believing things, nor is he suggesting abandoning oneself wholly to blind impulse. He simply wants to challenge reason’s autocratic claim to power.

The second feature of tyranny is that the regimentation achieved is potentially unstable. Because the decadent’s characteristic emphasis is on extremes — extirpation, castration, repression — the suppressed elements, allowed no outlet at all<sup>19</sup>, roil beneath the surface, growing in intensity, like a mob of outcasts demonized by the government and ready to riot on the slightest provocation in order to make their voices heard. In Socrates’s own case, this is less a threat, since there is more effort at sublimation. But in the case of the fanatical Christian, danger is always being courted. Contrasting his own position with that of the Christians, Nietzsche writes, “The church fights passion with excision in every sense: its practice, its ‘cure,’ is castratism. It never asks: ‘How can one spiritualize, beautify, deify a craving?’ It has at all times laid the stress of discipline on extirpation (of sensuality, of pride, of the lust to rule, of avarice, of vengefulness)” (TI, “Morality as Anti-Nature,” 1). The alternative strategy of self-mastery that Nietzsche proposes involves finding a useful place within the self for certain central and inescapable elements, rather than trying to “purify” the self of them entirely — a strategy likely doomed to failure anyway. In

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<sup>19</sup> Reginster (2003), 76-7.

the Nietzschean ideal self, the emphasis is more on incorporation instead of elimination, channeling impulses to productive goals instead of trying to eliminate them entirely.

I have so far focused mainly on the case of Socrates, but, as what I have said about the Christian would suggest, we see a similar dynamic (although with some differences too) in the case of others Nietzsche brands as decadents: Christians (A, 19), Schopenhauerians (CW, 4), Wagnerians (CW, 5). I cannot explore these fully here for reasons of space, but let me offer a brief potential characterization of each, in line with the construal of decadence given here. Actual cases would be far more varied; this will be an attempt at an archetypal sketch.

The Schopenhauerian's disunity comes in being unwilling to accept life as the package that it is. He valorizes as the highest form of life one that repudiates some of the most salient and inescapable aspects of life as such: desires and the suffering they bring in tow.<sup>20</sup> He fervently seeks, as his ascetic goal, not that his desires be moderated, but that they be extinguished, either temporarily — as happens during the activity of aesthetic contemplation — or more extremely through a form of saintly resignation in which he can (allegedly) cease to will. The irony is that, even if one is not *intentionally* setting out to rid oneself of desires, as Schopenhauer thinks one cannot, this condemnation of the desires and praise for the ascetic ideal is

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<sup>20</sup> See Reginster (2006) for a discussion of Nietzsche's criticisms of Schopenhauer.

ultimately premised on a tenacious background desire to be free from all suffering (GM, III: 6). This desire comes to play the tyrant, trying to get its way by having first-order desires extinguished. Matters would be all right, on the desire satisfaction calculus, for the person who could eliminate willing entirely, for then the background desire would ultimately be satisfied. But desiring creatures that we are, this ideal is unreachable for us. Those who set such an ideal for themselves end up even more dissatisfied, not just because of their first-order desires, but because of their (probably unfulfillable) ascetic background desire that these first-order desires be rooted out. The Schopenhauerian is then beset not just with unsatisfied sexual urges, for instance, but also with the intense unsatisfied desire that these urges be entirely eliminated.

With Wagnerians, Nietzsche leaves many of the details of their condition hazy. His remarks about their “weary nerves” and exhaustion with life (CW, 5), coupled with the insatiable taste for the “sublime, the profound, and [the] overwhelming” (CW, 6) that they develop, suggests one explanation, though. The Wagnerian is dissatisfied with life, because he can’t accept that life is mostly prosaic — family dinners and walking the dog. “Real” life for him is a life of grand Romantic Wagnernian passion, of the sort that he experiences in the theater alone. The only moments he casts off the exhaustion and takes himself really to be alive are those when he is immersed in Wagner’s music dramas and the exalted, heroic way of life

they depict. Since the Wagnerian denies that most of life counts as genuine living at all, he more and more comes to sustain himself on the (in Nietzsche's final verdict) ultimately fraudulent illusions (CW, "Postscript") that Wagner presents as the locus of true life. These illusions, working like a drug bringing a high, stimulate the nerves of Wagnerian decadents who are unable to cope with life without the help of this addictive medicine. Like other addicts, the Wagnerian is tyrannized by his addiction, living for the next dose of *Tristan*.

The Christian combines various features of these other decadents described: the Socratic identification of the self with the soul, the Wagnerian aim to escape from this life and repair to another, the Schopenhauerian project of rooting out the desires for sex, power, and other worldly goods. Many decadents will combine various of these features. Cases of decadence, I submit, can be understood as typically hewing to the following pattern: (a) One refuses to countenance some important aspect of the self or of life as properly part of the ideal form of that self or that life (the disunity this bespeaks is already a mark of decadence); (b) One perceives this aspect of the self or of life as a serious flaw to be remedied; (c) And one institutes an unhelpfully extremist plan for remedying this problem, or alleged problem, that leaves one in a more decadent position than that in which one began.

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What, then, is healthy flipside of decadence, we might ask in closing? Outlining the details would take us too far afield. But suffice it to say that Nietzsche's important (if not sole) ideal is one of *achieved* unity at the level of the whole. Nietzsche, in particular, praises great individuals for their unity in *multiplicity*—they are something “capable of being as manifold as whole, as ample as full” (BGE, 212). Unity is thus not uniformity, but is instead a successful weaving together of disparate elements within the self. In the Nietzschean great individual, “even weaknesses delight the eye” insofar as they are integrated into a beneficial role in the “artistic plan” of the self (GS, 290). The decadent individuals needn't be categorically different from the healthy ones.<sup>21</sup> The healthy ones will often have managed better to integrate various elements of themselves into a stable and unified totality.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> I owe this observation to Ken Gemes.

<sup>22</sup> I'm grateful to the participants in the Axs:son Johnson Declinism seminar on Decadence at Trinity Hall, Cambridge in September 2014 for discussing this paper with me. I'm grateful as well to audiences at Princeton University, John Cabot University, and the Technische Universität Berlin, where I presented earlier versions of this material and received helpful feedback.

### **Bibliography**

Works by Nietzsche are cited by section number using the following abbreviations and translations, which I have modified where I have thought appropriate.

A= *The Antichrist*, trans. Walter Kaufmann

BT= *The Birth of Tragedy*, trans. Ronald Speirs

CW= *The Case of Wagner*, trans. Walter Kaufmann

EH= *Ecce Homo*, trans. Walter Kaufmann

GM= *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Walter Kaufmann

GS= *The Gay Science*, trans. Walter Kaufmann

TI= *Twilight of the Idols*, trans. Walter Kaufmann

For the German I rely on the *Kritische Studienausgabe*, ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari (de Gruyter, 1967). Citations of Plato are by the standard Stephanus number.

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