Schopenhauer's Compassion and Nietzsche's Pity

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I

Beginning with *Morgenröthe* and Nietzsche's self-conscious divorce and opposition to Schopenhauer, the problem of *Mitleid* became a recurring theme in Nietzsche's writings.[1] Although he borrowed freely from Kant, Spinoza, and LaRochefoucauld, Nietzsche's analyses of the psychological dynamics and moral value of *Mitleid* transcended the more modest work of these theorists. Especially fecund and illuminating were the connections Nietzsche drew between the cultural success of *Mitleid* as a moral value and the general problems of cultural decadence, pessimism, and nihilism. When Nietzsche bothered to identify the theoretical loci of the advocates of *Mitleid*, he named two sources: Chistianity, the *Religion des Mitleidens*, and Schopenhauer's moral philosophy, the *Mitleids-Moral*.[2] He even viewed Schopenhauer's atheistic philosophy in general, and his ethical theory in particular, as psychologically and intellectually continuing the life-denying projects of Judeo-Christian morality and furthering the moral perspective of the weak, common, and herd.[3]

In this paper I will concentrate narrowly on a part of Nietzsche's criticisms of Schopenhauer's *Mitleids-Moral*, ignoring the greater cultural problems which served as a basis for a number of Nietzsche's polemics against Schopenhauer. I shall argue that, despite the correctness of Nietzsche's critique of *Mitleid*, the reasons he uses to criticize Schopenhauer's *Mitleids-Moral* fail. I will show that this paradoxical situation results because Schopenhauer and Nietzsche refer to two different emotions by the German noun *"Mitleid"*; that it is best to understand Schopenhauer's conception of *"Mitleid"* as "compassion" and Nietzsche's as "pity". I shall argue that compassion is significantly (and morally) different from pity in ways that make Schopenhauer's *Mitleids-Moral* immune to this element of Nietzsche's critique.

II

Compassion and Pity

The German noun *"Mitleid"* has an etymological structure analogous to the English nouns "sympathy" and "compassion", with each conveying the notion of "suffering with another". Thus it is not uncommon to find *Mitleid* translated by these nouns as well as by the noun "pity".[4] The major English-language translators of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche have used all three nouns, although each has a favoured translation. For example, R. J. Hollingdale and Walter Kaufmann show a decided preference for "pity", but also used "compassion" and, rarely, "sympathy" in their translations of Nietzsche. E. F. J. Payne preferred "compassion", but also used "sympathy" in his translations of Schopenhauer. R. B. Haldane and J. Kemp used "sympathy" in their translation

of *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, while T. Bailey Saunders employed "sympathy" and "pity" almost equally in his translations of selections from Schopenhauer's *Parerga und Paralipomena*. After determining the primary rendering of *Mitleid* into English, one might expect that secondary translations were selected due to a sensitivity to the different contexts in which the term was used. Careful observation will reveal, however, that this is not the case. Rather, the guiding principles for deviating from the primary rendering appear to be stylistic and grammatical and not due to some change of basic meaning. Thus these translators seem to follow a convention in English of using "pity", "sympathy", and "compassion" as synonyms — as if the sentences "Eric has compassion for Walter", "Eric has sympathy for Walter", and "Eric has pity for Walter", each means the same thing.

Although there is a convention to treat "sympathy", "compassion", and "pity" as synonyms, there are equally strong conventions for not doing so. It is probably due to the latter, among other considerations, that lead these translators to favor one translation of *Mitleid* over another. In the case of Hollingdale and Kaufmann, their preference for "pity" for Nietzsche's *"Mitleid"*, and Payne's selection of "compassion" for Schopenhauer's, are wonderfully apt. For "pity", "compassion", and "sympathy", have different connotations and uses in English, which justifies the decision to translate Nietzsche's notion of *"Mitleid"* as "pity" and not "compassion" and Schopenhauer's as "compassion" and not "pity". It is also the case that these nouns name emotions that are morally different in ways that show why Schopenhauer could correctly praise *Mitleid* and Nietzsche could correctly condemn it.

The convention to treat "sympathy", "compassion", and "pity" and their grammatical derivatives, e.g.,"to sympathize", "to compassionate", and "to pity", as synonyms is parasitic on the practice of viewing them as simply fellow-feelings, feelings which involve participation in another's emotional life. Sympathy is more general, however, than either compassion or pity. Although each may be directed towards another's suffering, sympathy may be directed towards another's joy *(Mitfreude)*. In an even wider sense, sympathy suggests simply a state of affairs in which individuals are "with like feelings," due to some connection or commonality between persons, e. g., Fritz and Arthur both grieve about the state of academic philosophy. Pity and compassion are always directed specifically towards another who is, in some sense, judged to be suffering. If I have pity for the heroin addict who sits passively in a fog of drug induced euphoria, it is not because of the joy experienced by the junky that I feel pity: I pity the junky for his or her miserable existence and the ultimate harm that this pursuit of bliss engenders. Unless we provide an analysis of another's situation which ultimately refers to some harm, misery, suffering, or misfortune, it does not make sense to pity or compassionate another's joy, well-being, or happiness. Because sympathy is more general than either pity or campassion, and since both Schopenhauer and Nietzsche emphasized that *Mitleid* involves our suffering because another suffers, I shall ignore the English concept of "sympathy" as an equivalent to their concepts of *"Mitleid"*.[5]

In addition to being directed towards another's suffering, pity and compassion provide incentives for an agent's beneficence and dispose the agent to help

the sufferer by relieving his or her distress. Thus it appears as if it is a matter of indifference if we describe Joan's feeling for Richard's suffering as either pity or compassion if she apprehends Richard's suffering, feels sorrow for Richard, and is disposed to render aid by relieving his distress. However, there are good reasons for this not being a matter of indifference. "Pity" has an emotive significance fundamentally distinct from that of "compassion". Informing others that you pity them is a way of expressing contempt. When I storm out of the room after a heated quarrel with a colleague I slam the door saying "I pity you". I thereby inform him that I regard him as beneath me: I am superior. I offer my hand to a student confined to her wheelchair. "I don't want your pity", she intones. My offer of help is rejected because it is humiliating. My daughter laments her woes to me and I offer misplaced solace; "I pity you, you poor thing". A gentler situation, but still one that suggests something basic — a lack of respect for the object of my pity. To describe something as "pitiful" is to describe the thing as not good for its kind. "I pity you, you poor wretch." "He is pitiful" means "He is a wretch." Philip Mercer has noted a revealing relationship between pitiers and their objects; "the use of the word 'pity' in a particular context seems to imply that the speaker is in some way better off than the person who is pitied. The king pities the subjects; the judge pities the prisoner; the sane man pities the idiot; mankind pities the beasts".[6] The pitier is superior in status to the pitied. We do not pity those we respect or those we judge superior to ourselves — unless we wish to level them by devaluing their status. Then I feel sorry for them. They are miserable, contemptible. By pitying them, I elevate myself. I boost my feelings of self-esteem by lowering them. The same is true when I pity someone who is suffering. I boost my own feelings of self-esteem by exercising my pity; that I am able to relieve this misery emphasizes dramatically my superiority. The sufferer is helped, but helped in order to enhance my feelings of superiority. In these regards, pity is self-regarding. If we have general duties to respect others, pity incites their violations. If the moral goodness of beneficence is due to a desire to pursue another's well-being, the help rendered out of pity is not morally good. If enhancing one's feelings of self-esteem is worthwhile, boosting them out of pity for others leads to false feelings of self-esteem. It is like feeling smarter by associating with idiots. In reality, nothing changes which would warrant such enhanced feelings of pride.

Additional undesirable dimensions of pity are revealed by examining self-pity. We are counselled not to pity ourselves and are criticized for so doing. We describe self-pitiers as "wallowing in" self-pity, suggesting that this is a "filthy" indulgence. It is a useless passion. Unlike pity, which may masquerade as a concern for another's well-being and appear as if the pitier is simply interested in relieving the other's pain, it is clear that unchecked self-pity robs its agent of natural incentives to solve one's own problems. Self-pity is thus debilitating. We feel sorry for ourselves instead of facing that which generates our problems. Self-pity, however, becomes even more insidious. Just as pitying others may express contempt or a lack of respect, self-pity may lead to a loss of self-respect. "I am unfortunate and miserable." Self-pity involves self-blame; "I deserve what I get." I lose feelings of self-esteem; I am worthless. By the agent losing his or her feelings of self-respect and esteem, the agent becomes passive. Self-pity may

generate a vicious, self-building cycle. My being miserable is why I feel sorry for myself. The less I do, the more miserable I become. The more miserable I become, the stronger becomes my feeling of self-contempt and worthlessness. If you criticize my self-pitying behavior, I agree. "I am so worthless, I pity myself."

Our linguistic practices concerning compassion lack the pejorative tones associated with "pity". We do not use it to express contempt or to insult others. Nor do we hear of recipients rejecting another's compassion. We praise individuals for being compassionate and criticize those who lack this feeling. We prescribe compassion and suggest that "one ought to be more compassionate". Unlike pity, it is not self-reflexive. We do not talk about individuals who are self-compassionate or who have compassion for themselves.[7] Like pity, it is directed towards another's suffering. It is also conative by proving an incentive for relieving the other's misery. It is because the other suffers that one pursues the other's well-being. Insofar as others have interests in not suffering, compassion is an incentive in which the agent adopts the same interests as the other. Compassion, however, has as its ultimate end another's well-being. It is ultimately other regarding. If we have duties to respect and to help others, compassion is a motive that leads to the fulfillment of these obligations. Pity is ultimately self-regarding insofar as its ultimate end is the enhancement of the pitier's own feelings of superiority of self-esteem. Although compassionate agents help willingly, may enjoy assisting others, and are in a relative position of superiority to the sufferer insofar as the agent is both free from the other's misery and may be able to do something for the other that the other cannot, it is an altruistic motive because its ultimate end is another's well-being. Thus it leads to acts of beneficence for the right sorts of reasons. It involves a recognition of suffering as an evil, whether it is one's own or another's. In this sense compassion signifies a morally desirable attitude towards evil, a desire to eliminate it.

III

Schopenhauer's Mitleids-Moral

Schopenhauer's ethical theory is purely descriptive. Rather than prescribing what we ought to do, how we ought to do it, and the moral ideals we should adopt for a good life, his ethics is designed to answer the question, "What moves individuals to perform actions of a particular moral value?" By answering this question he claimed to have uncovered the "foundations of morality [Fundament der Moral]" (B, 130; E II, 195). Actions have one of three particular moral values, according to Schopenhauer. They are either morally indifferent [moralisch indifferent], morally reprehensible [moralisch verwerflich] or possess moral worth [moralischen Werth] (B, 145; E II, 210). Schopenhauer argued that all human actions are intentional and directed ultimately to something that is either in agreement with the will or contrary to the will. Since he believed that those things which are agreeable to the will are good, and those contrary to the will are bad, actions ultimately are directed towards an end that is either good or

bad.[8] He also identified "good" as well-being [Wohl] and "bad" with misfortune [Wehe]. Because our actions may involve someone else's well-being or misfortune, Schopenhauer deduced four possible ends of our actions, i. e., another's well-being, our own well-being, another's misfortune, and our own misfortune.[9] Desiring or willing these four separate ends become four different motives or incentives [Triebfedern] for actions directed towards these four ends: *Mitleid*, a desire for another's well-being; egoism [Egoismus], a desire for one's own well-being; malice [Bosheit], a desire for another's misfortune; and an unnamed incentive, a desire for one's own misfortune. Schopenhauer concluded that *Mitleid* is the motive for morally worthwhile actions, egoism for morally indifferent actions, and malice for morally reprehensible actions. He never discussed the moral value of the unnamed incentive.

Thus we find that Schopenhauer viewed compassion as the motive for morally valuable actions. He also saw it as the only motive which conferred moral worth on an action. The ultimate end of *Mitleid* is another's well-being. One of the problems that Schopenhauer's *Mitleids-Moral* faced was to explain how it is possible for me to pursue another's well-being given the central significance of egoism in his analysis of human behavior. Schopenhauer had argued that egoism is our "chief and fundamental incentive" (B, 131; E II, 196) in the sense that our self-regarding interests motivate most of our actions; that humans are such that "egoism is most ultimately connected with their innermost core and essence. [...] As a rule, therefore, all human actions spring from egoism, and we must always first try to explain a given action with this in mind" (B, 131; E II, 196). Schopenhauer provided two answers to the problem of egoism. One is based on his metaphysics and the ultimate unity of being. That is, *Mitleid* is possible because the separation between individuals is only apparent; metaphysically we are *Wille*. For the purposes of this paper, his second answer is more important. How does *Mitleid* occur? His answer to this question reveals his conception of *Mitleid*.

Schopenhauer argued that *Mitleid* as a desire for another's well-being is possible only if another's misery becomes directly the same sort of incentive as my own misery. That is, just as experiences contrary to my will are painful and move me in ways to relieve my pain, in having *Mitleid* towards another's misery the other's misery assumes the same status as my own by moving me to relieve it. Since Schopenhauer had a negative theory of well-being, to act to relieve misery is identical to acting to secure well-being.[10] Thus in individuals disposed to *Mitleid*, the apprehension of another's suffering involves "[...] the immediate participation [Theilnahme], independent of all ulterior considerations, primarily in the suffering of another, and thus in the prevention or elimination of it; [...] As soon as their compassion [Mitleid] is aroused, the weal [Wohl] and woe [Wehe] of another are nearest to my heart in exactly the same way, although not always in the same degree, as otherwise only my own are. Hence the difference between him and me is no longer absolute" (B, 144; E II, 208). Because we *leiden mit* others, we have an interest in pursuing the good of another.

Thus Schopenhauer's concept of *Mitleid* corresponds to our notion of compassion.[11] It is an emotion that is directed towards another's suffering, such

that it provides an incentive for the agent to pursue the other's well-being by relieving this suffering. *Mitleid* for Schopenhauer is altruistic; its ultimate end is another's well-being. It puts individuals at par insofar as it is an incentive that recognizes that others have vital interests in not suffering and that these interests warrant concern in their own right. Thus *Mitleidige* are disposed to render aid.

IV

Nietzsche and the Problem of Mitleid

One of the central projects of Nietzsche's critique of *Mitleid* was to show that it was not an altruistic, disinterested, or other-regarding motive for actions. To demonstrate this, Nietzsche employed two types of reductions. Many of his analyses in *Human, All Too Human* through *Dawn* focus on the "immorality behind morality", with morality understood as the Kantian/Schopenhauerian notion that morally good actions are not performed out of self-interested motives. If this is a requirement of morally good actions, there are no morally good actions, Nietzsche argued, since all actions are egoistic. Thus showing the immorality behind morality became Nietzsche's attempt to show the egoism behind reputedly altruistic actions.[12] Beginning roughly with *The Gay Science* through his later works, Nietzsche focused on the power dynamics of *mitleidig* relationships in order to show how these valorized power relationships were expressions of weakness and generative of life-denying attitudes and perspectives. Elements of both these reductions are relevant to Nietzsche's conception of *Mitleid*.

Schopenhauer maintained that the reason *Mitleid* moved an agent to desire another's well-being was that in *mitleidig* relationships another's suffering is regarded as if it were one's own. To explain this, Schopenhauer declared that "[...] we feel the suffering [of the other] to our grief and sorrow. We suffer w i t h him [leiden m i t ihm] and hence i n him; we feel his pain as h i s, and do not imagine that it is ours" (B, 147; E II, 211–12). Nietzsche rightfully challenged Schopenhauer's claim that *Mitleid* involved the actual experience of another's misery and that it was this suffering which led to the desire for another's well-being; "It is misleading to call the *Leid* [suffering] we experience at such a sight and which can be of very varying kinds, *Mit-Leid* [pity], for it is under all circumstances a suffering [Leid] which he who is suffering [Leidende] in our presence is *free* of: it is our own, as the suffering [Leid] he feels is his own" (D, 133). It is then the relief of our own suffering that may lead us to perform an action out of pity, Nietzsche observed. This is not an altruistic action even if we relieve the others suffering, since the end is our own well-being, relief of our pain.

This, however, may not be the only self-regarding end to our acts of pity. Because *Mitleid* involves our *Leid*, we normally avoid sufferers, Nietzsche believed, unless we have other ends; that is, we may seek sufferers out to "present ourselves as the more powerful and as a helper, if we are certain of applause, if we want to feel how fortunate we are in contrast, or hope that the sight will relieve our boredom" (D, 133). Likewise, if we happen upon sufferers,

"we might render aid because the other's suffering" [...] offends us: it would make us aware of our impotence, and perhaps, of our cowardice, if we did not go to assist him. Or it brings with it a diminution of our honor in the eyes of others or in our own eyes" (D, 133). Thus Nietzsche concludes that *Mitleid* is self-regarding. It does not aim at the well-being of others; "For in pity at least two (maybe many more) elements of personal pleasure are contained" (HAH, 103).

Already Nietzsche employed the idea that *Mitleid* may be an emotion through which we can cultivate a sense of our own power. However, exercising our power through *Mitleid* aims at pleasure [Lust] in these analyses, e. g., "[...] it [Mitleid] is [aimed at] the pleasure of our satisfaction in the exercise of power [Macht]" (HAH, 103). Nietzsche's reversal of this order begins with *The Gay Science,* in his emerging theory of the will-to-power. Pleasure is viewed as a secondary value and power as the primary. His analysis of *Mitleid* now begins to reflect the motivational priority of power; "When we see somebody suffer, we like to exploit this opportunity to take possession of him; those who become his benefactors and pity him, for example, do this and call the lust for a new possession that he awakens in them 'love'; and the pleasure they feel is comparable to that aroused by the prospect of a new conquest" (GS, 14).[13] That is, we exercise our power and heighten our feelings of power [Machtgefühl] by being able to benefit another. *Mitleid*, Nietzsche argues, is a relatively weak expression of power, since sufferers are "easy prey" for our beneficence. That is, someone who is suffering stands in great need of help and is more than willing to accept our aid. Thus it is easy to benefit them. It is far more difficult to benefit someone who is faring well, since they are less disposed to accept our help. Its accomplishment, however, is a greater expression of power and, as such, is something to take pride in accomplishing. Conversely, "Pity [Mitleid] is the most agreeable feeling among those who have little pride and no prospects of great conquests; for them easy prey — and that is what all who suffer are — is enchanting. Pity [Mitleid] is praised as the virtue of prostitutes" (GS, 13).
In addition to the ways in which Nietzsche regarded *Mitleid* as self-regarding, he also emphasized how *Mitleid* expressed contemptuous attitudes towards sufferers, e. g., "To offer pity [Mitleid] is as good as offering contempt" (D, 135). In the same work Nietzsche also noted that "[...] there is something degrading in suffering and something elevating and productive of superiority in pitying [im Mitleiden] ..." (D, 138). The dynamics of *Mitleid* as a vehicle for enhancing the agents' feelings of power or superiority and decreasing the patients' feelings of power and self-esteem are dramatically presented in the famous "*Von den Mitleidigen*" section from the second book of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. *Mitleid* awakens feelings of shame in sufferers since there is something humiliating in having another observe your misery. That is, suffering provides a sufficient incentive for a person to change his or her present condition. For another to see us suffer is, in part, to have them realize that I am currently unable to change my condition. In this sense, it is as if some flaw or defect is revealed in my character. Thus, I am ashamed; I suffer a blow to my pride. If the *Mitleidiger* offers help, I am humiliated. The other judges that I am incapable of taking care of my own problems. This judgement provides the

Mitleidiger with a basis for feeling superior to me. Worse, if the other performs an action out of *Mitleid*, and I have to accept this benefit, I acknowledge the other's superiority. The other has the upper hand. The *Mitleidiger* thereby gains my recognition of his or her superiority. Further, I am now indebted to the other. If my sense of debt becomes too great, I may seek revenge on my benefactor; "Great indebtedness does not make people grateful, but vengeful..." (Z, "Von den Mitleidigen").[14]

Although there are numerous aspects to Nietzsche's critique of *Mitleid*, I believe that I have elucidated it sufficiently to justify my claim that Nietzsche's conception of *Mitleid* is best understood as pity.[15] Nietzsche details *Mitleid* as a self-regarding emotion that we have towards others who are suffering; one that involves both a lack of respect for another and serves as a strategy for augmenting one's feeling of self-esteem and superiority by devaluing others.[16] Further, Nietzsche's analysis of *Mitleid* provides some good reasons for denying positive moral value to *Mitleid*. Indeed, while Nietzsche may not agree with our reasons concerning why pity is morally undesirable, his judgement that *Mitleid* is morally undesirable squares with our judgement concerning the moral desirability of pity.

<div align="center">V</div>

<div align="center">Mitleid/Pity/Compassion</div>

If my analyses of Schopenhauer's and Nietzsche's concepts of *Mitleid* are correct, it is plausible to conclude that Schopenhauer is best understood as claiming that compassion is the basis of actions possessing moral worth, and that Nietzsche is concerned, in part, with showing the undesirable dimensions of pity. Schopenhauer's ethics, then, describes an emotion that serves as an incentive which has as its end another's well-being. The emotion Nietzsche discusses is an emotion that has as its end interests of the agent. He argued, further, that this emotion is morally undesirable insofar as it expresses contemptuous attitudes towards others and relegates some of the most vital interests of others to interests that are of dubious worth to the agent. Schopenhauer, on the other hand, emphasized the moral value of this emotion because of the ways vital interests of others are promoted. Insofar as the conception of *Mitleid* is employed in Schopenhauer's ethics, it is not the emotion Nietzsche detailed. Although both are directed towards another's suffering, may provide an incentive to relieve another's misery, and both occur in the same sorts of circumstances and lead to the same sort of actions, it is here that the similarity ends.

It may be objected that I have missed Nietzsche's point; that what he was arguing was that compassion really is pity. After all, one of his charges is that Schopenhauer lacked psychological acumen and misobserved *Mitleid*. Thus Nietzsche claimed that Schopenhauer described *Mitleid* "so badly" (D, 133). Had Schopenhauer observed closely the phenomena he called *Mitleid*, Nietzsche wanted to claim, he would have agreed that it is that which Nietzsche detailed as *Mitleid*. So to argue that they are analyzing different emotions is to ignore the power of Nietzsche's critique.

It would be wrong to deny that this was one of Nietzsche's projects. In general, it is his claim that altruism is impossible, if altruism entails that we perform actions only for another's sake; "If only those actions are moral which are performed for the sake of another and only for his sake as one definition has it, then there are no moral actions" (D, 148). However, this is not what Nietzsche was able to show. All that he did in this regard was to show that pity could take place in situations in which compassion was possible. Insofar as an agent may help a suffering other for the self-regarding reasons that Nietzsche detailed, Schopenhauer could reply that if Nietzsche is correct, these actions are egoistic and lack moral worth. Further, simply showing that an agent may derive pleasure, relieve feelings of sorrow or grief, feel self-satisfied, or better about oneself for helping another, is not to show that the action was self-regarding. In the same regard, simply arguing that in one sense all interests are mine, in the sense that I possess them, does not show that this is a self-regarding interest.[17] What he had to show was that the end of the action was the agent's pleasure, feelings of self-esteem or superiority, etc. After all, this is the point of Schopenhauer's distinction between egoistic and compassionate action. The former has the agent's own well-being as its end and the latter has the patient's well-being as its end. Nietzsche's critique of *Mitleid* and his attempt to reduce compassion to pity is open to the sorts of problems Bishop Butler formulated concerning Hobbes' version of psychological egoism.[18]

Indeed, the best that Nietzsche could do on this point was to argue that Schopenhauer's conception of *Mitleid* has no instances or application to human behavior. Schopenhauer realized that there are sceptics; "And when Arnold von Winkelried exclaimed, 'Comrades, true and loyal to our oath, care for my wife and child in remembrance thereof', and then clasped in his arms as many hostile spears as he could grasp, some may imagine that he had a selfish intention, but I cannot" (B, 139; E II, 203). Nietzsche, in reply to Schopenhauer's example, wrote that he could; "Actually, all he cares about is the release of his emotions; to relieve his tension, he may gather together his enemy's spears and bury them in his own heart" (HAH, 138). Who is correct here is, perhaps, not decided by philosophy.

Notes

¹ I shall employ the following key to refer to Schopenhauer's and Nietzsche's writings. For Schopenhauer:

B = *On the Basis of Morality*, trans. E. F. J. Payne (Indianapolis: the Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1965).

W I or II = *The World as Will and Representation*, trans. E. F. J. Payne (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1969) 2 volumes.

P I or II = *Parerga and Paralipomena*, trans. E. F. J. Payne (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974).

Citations following the reference to English translations are to the following volumes and page numbers of the third edition of Arthur Hübscher's *Schopenhauer: Sämtliche Werke* (Wiesbaden: F. A. Brockhaus, 1972), 7 volumes:

E II = Volume 4, *Ueber die Grundlage der Moral*,

W I = Volume 2, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, Bd. I,

W II= Volume 3, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*, Bd. II,

P I = Volume 5, *Parerga und Paralipomena*, Bd. I,

P II = Volume 6, *Parerga und Paralipomena*, Bd. II.

For Nietzsche:

HAH= *Human, All Too Human*, trans. Marion Faber and Stephen Lehmann (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984),

D = *Daybreak*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982),

GS = *The Gay Science*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, 1974),

Z = *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. Walter Kaufmann, in *The Portable Nietzsche* (New York: The Viking Press, 1968),

BGE = *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, 1966),

T = *Twilight of the Idols*, trans. Walter Kaufmann, in *The Portable Nietzsche* (q. v.),

A = *The Antichrist*, trans. Walter Kaufmann, in *The Portable Nietzsche*, (q. v.).

Reference to Nietzsche's work will be to section numbers. Reference to Nietzsche's German is to *Nietzsche, Werke: Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, eds. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari (Berlin, de Gruyter, 1967–78), 30 volumes. I shall follow, with minor exception, the English translations listed above.

² For example, see Nietzsche A 7 and "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man", T, 37.

³ See, for example, Nietzsche GS, 358 and "The 'Improvers' of Mankind", T, 21.

⁴ *Mitleid* is from the German *mit*, "with" and *leiden*, "to suffer." Sympathy is from the Greek *sympatheia*, *syn*, "with", and *pathos*, "suffering", "passion". Compassion is from the Latin, *com*, "with" and *pati*, "to suffer". Pity has an etymological structure dianalogous to *Mitleid*, sympathy, and compassion. It is from the Latin *pius*, "pious". Nietzsche would have enjoyed the irony behind the etymology of "pity", given his identification of Christianity as the religion of *Mitleid*.

⁵ Both Schopenhauer and Nietzsche use the noun "*Sympathie*" in the sense of a fellow feeling that I mention above. For example, see section 279 of Nietzsche's *The Will to Power* and the end of chapter 47 of the second volume of Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Representation*. Following the lead of Kant, Nietzsche used the noun *Mitgefühl* for "fellow-feeling", and characterizes our fellow-feeling for another's joy as *Mitfreude* and our fellow-feeling for another's suffering as *Mitleid*, see sections 34 and 35 of the second part of Kant's *Metaphysik der Sitten* A 456–458 and Nietzsche's GS, 338 and BGE, 284. The only *Mitgefühl* we can have, according to Schopenhauer, is *Mitleid*. There is no *Mitfreude* in the sense that there is *Mitleid* because Schopenhauer believed there is no *Freude* in the sense that there is *Leiden*. This followed from Schopenhauer's negative theory of pleasure, i. e., pleasure or happiness is simply not being in pain or not suffering B, 96, 146 (E II, 161–2, 210–11).

⁶ Philip Mercer, *Sympathy and Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 18.

⁷ In chapter 67 of the first volume of *The World as Will and Representation*, Schopenhauer uses *Mitleid* in a self-reflexive sense. Weeping [*Weinen*], he claimed, is "*Mitleid mit sich selbst*". Although *Mitleid* is directed towards one's self, Schopenhauer argued, we are moved to tears when we weep not because of our suffering, but because of another's which we either imagine as our own or we apprehend as signifying the fate of all humans and, subsequently, our own. Because of the sensitivity and natural affection that underlies weeping, Schopenhauer claimed that we regard it a sign of good character.

⁸ See, for example B, 204 (E II, 264–5) and W I, 360 (W I, 425–6). In these passages, Schopenhauer distinguishes between bad [*schlecht*] and evil [*böse*] by their denotation. Both share the same connotation as things contrary to an individual's will. Evil, however, refers to conscious entities (humans, animals) and bad to unagreeable nonconscious entities (roads, food, etc.).

⁹ For reasons of systematic consistency, Schopenhauer mentions the fourth incentive at W II, 607 (W II, 697) and explains why it was not discussed in *On the Basis of Morality.*

¹⁰ See B, 146 (E II, 210–11).

¹¹ Since it is not necessary for my argument, I have not tried to rigorously flesh out Schopenhauer's concept of *Mitleid,* mention all the reasons why he considers it morally significant, and evaluate his position. I have done some of this in my "Compassion", in: *Zeit der Ernte. Studien zum Stand der Schopenhauer-Forschung. Festschrift für Arthur Hübscher zum 85. Geburtstag,* ed. Wolfgang Schirmacher (Stuttgart-Bad Cannstatt: Frommann-Holzboog, 1982), pp. 60–69, and in my "Scheler's Criticisms of Schopenhauer's Theory of '*Mitleid*'", in: *62. Schopenhauer-Jahrbuch* 1981, pp. 144–152.

¹² Nietzsche also denied that Schopenhauer's conception of malice [*Bosheit*] described a possible motive (HAH, 103).

¹³ Nietzsche may have written this passage with Schopenhauer in mind, since Schopenhauer had argued that "All love (αγαπη, *caritas*) is Mitleid" (W I, 374; W I, 443). Nietzsche also argued that "[...] all great love is even above all its *Mitleiden* [...]" (Z, "*Von den Mitleidigen*"). Nietzsche's point is at least threefold: *Mitleid* is a valorized form of power-seeking, and a relatively poor one at that; genuine love does not involve *Mitleid,* even if the beloved suffers; and suffering itself may be beneficial. (See GS, 338.) For an insightful discussion of this last point, see Richard Shacht's *Nietzsche* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983), pp. 458–61.

¹⁴ *Mitleid* is connected to the death of God in Z in two ways. In "*Von den Mitleidigen*" (BK, 2) and in "*Außer Dienst*" (BK, 4) he reported that God died out of his pity ["an seinem Mitleiden"] and that God choked ["ersticke"] on his all-too-great *Mitleiden.* However, in "*Der häßlichste Mensch*", (BK, 4) the most hateful person is said to have murdered God because of God's *Mitleid* for humans. Nietzsche here is suggesting that *Mitleid* is an emotion that is dangerous for its agent, that it is pathological; and that it is not welcomed by its patient.

¹⁵ I have explored Nietzsche's conception of *Mitleid* and the greater issues involved in his critique of pity in my "Kant, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche on the Morality of Pity", in: *Journal of the History of Ideas,* XLV, No. 1 (Jan.-March 1984), pp. 83–98.

¹⁶ Joan Stambaugh has also argued that Nietzsche "[...] did not make in terms of meaning, a distinction between pity and compassion", "Thoughts on Pity and Revenge", in: *Nietzsche-Studien I* (1971), p. 29.

¹⁷ Nietzsche suggests that in *Mitleid* we may be thinking of ourselves not consciously but "doing so *very strongly* unconsciously [unbewußt]", (D, 133) and that "[...] the whole concept of 'selfless action', if carefully examined, evaporates into the air. Never has a man done anything that was only for others without any personal motivation. Indeed, how *could* he do anything that has no reference to himself, that is, with no inner compulsion (which would have to be based on a personal need?). How could ego act without ego?" (HAH, 133).

¹⁸ See, Bishop Butler's *Fifteen Sermons Preached at the Rolls Chapel* (New York: Bobbs-Merrill, 1950), especially the first footnote to Sermon 5, "Upon Compassion". For a careful analysis of this note, see C. D. Board's *Five Types of Ethical Theory* (Paterson, NJ: Littlefield, Adams, & Co., 1959), pp. 63–69.