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The Paradoxical Animal and The Last Man

The Past and Future of Humankind

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A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Philosophy (MA)

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Leuven, 2020

Contents

Introduction

This thesis asks the question, "what have we become throughout history, and where are we heading to?" Within the frame of this question, I aim to juxtapose Nietzsche's and Bataille's anthropologies and expose Nietzsche's 'last man' and his society with the help of Bataille's framework.

The questions which shaped the thesis stems from the disconcerting current situation of the world. After the civilization threatening 20th century, today, we are facing an ecological crisis while authoritarianism is gaining popularity again all over the world. In this context, both philosopher's warning regards to where we might going to end up are highly relevant. As a Nietzschean philosopher, Bataille emphasizes what Nietzsche misses out. While Nietzsche favors individuality and points out his concerns with the continuously proliferating dominance of the herd morality, Bataille emphasizes his concerns with the ever-increasing isolation of the human from all there is. Conjoining their anthropologies ables us to understand the human situation in the world from two converse perspectives. More importantly, it could able us to understand why we are facing current challenges and what lies in the future.

In the first two parts, respectively, I will consider their anthropologies, namely, their answer to the question of "what we are?" In the first two chapters, I will examine each philosopher's conceptions of human through the same steps; firstly, I will tackle their discontent with the scientific approach to ground their way of investigating the human situation. Secondly, I will mention what they present as the fundamental moving force of nature, namely, the "will to power" and the "impersonal cosmic energy."

By building on these two steps, I will mention what made humans differ from other animals. While Nietzsche emphasizes the role of 'intellect,' Bataille focuses on 'the usage of tools.' Utilizing intellect and using tools causes a big leap, which means a substantial change for humans regarding how they relate to reality. Nietzsche calls this new animal as the 'valuating animal;' for Bataille, it is 'Homo Faber.' While for Nietzsche, after the big leap, humans find themselves 'homesick for the wild,' Bataille points out the same situation as 'yearning for the lost continuity.' Lastly, I will mention the history of humanity of each philosopher, based on their unique framework.

In the last chapter, I will draw a comparison between Nietzsche and Bataille. They have seemingly conflicting but substantially complementary explanations that are filling each other's weak spots: While Nietzsche emphasizes the sickening effect of the herd mentality, Bataille emphasizes the alienating effect of feeling isolated. In order to understand the human situation in the world, they should be read together; they both expose the same course of affairs from different perspectives; the conjunction of their philosophies would give us a better view to human's history, psychology, where we end up in the twenty-first century and where are we heading as humanity.

The juxtaposition of two anthropologies reveals the human as the paradoxical animal who is sick: This human always wants two contradictory things: he wants power, but he denounces it; he wants to participate in continuity, yet he escapes from it. This is why history is the history of man's suffering of himself; it is the history of a process of self-alienation; it is the history of his ill-constitutedness; it is the history of a life denying attitude.

I will show how history is a gradual process of deterioration of the sovereignty of man. History of humans contains a series of negations; each negation estranges humans little more from their animality; each negation implies a stronger sickening. By moving from two philosophers, I will define four significant negations. Throughout history, via negations, conditions of possibilities of erotic experiences narrowing down and will to power decrease.

Later, by using the history of the paradoxical animal and considering the direction of his history, I will focus on the last man who is the antithesis of overman. In the last man's society, conditions of possibilities of erotic experiences have vanished; the sacred sphere disregarded entirely. The last man comes out as a coward nihilist who pursues what he calls "happiness," while denying the immeditate participation in the world, he ends up being the sickest and most contemptible version of the human being.

Lastly, I will mention how this last man might actually be the last living man in the Earth. I will connect the course of history as the precursor of existential threats that humanity face today. In other words, I will explain how the historical process might bring humanity to the self-destruction. Even though the fuel of history was the instinct of preservation of life, (paradoxically in a life-denying manner) it might bring humanity to self-destruction. We might end up finishing the life itself. Consequently, last man of Nietzsche might also be the last living man on earth. In this context, both philosophers' agenda gains importance for today's humanity.

I. Nietzsche: The Valuating Animal

In this part, I intend to give an account of Nietzsche's anthropology, i.e., his answer to the questions who we are and what we have become throughout history. To do so, I will first explain his epistemological stance to show why he chooses to make a research on the history of morality. Secondly, I will expose what caused the big leap, which separates humans drastically from other animals. For Nietzsche, the big leap causes humans to turn against their will to power and to deny life itself. Consequently, world history constitutes a continuous regression of will to power and a continuous increase of will to nothingness: I will show this alteration step by step. Nietzsche is warning us that we are moving towards becoming the 'last man.' The individual of the 21st century is the one who stands between the last man and the modern man of Nietzsche.

I.I. A Non-scientific Approach to Reality

> "'There are only facts' - I would say: no, facts are just what there aren't, there are only interpretations."[1]

Nietzsche asserts that "intellect has no further mission that might extend beyond the bounds of human life."[2] He thinks that we overestimate the intellect's value and its meaning in the world. Its sole purpose is survival, and it has the same purpose just like a claw of a lion;[3] It is just a tool. For this reason, Nietzsche claims that we are never after the true knowledge, but the beneficial and pleasurable consequences of those so-called 'truths' for our survival. Nietzsche takes 'intellect' from the heavens and pulls it down to earth; it is just a tool for us to compensate for our physical weakness against other animals and to gain an advantage against other humans. It gives us our greatest strength: dissimulation or lying. While an individual uses his intellect to gain an advantage against other humans, the boundaries of this trickery are formed by the customs and collective decisions of the given society.[4] Consequently, Nietzsche claims that our drive towards truth is really a drive towards pleasant consequences of a belief; we are

[1] Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, Rüdiger Bittner, and Kate Sturge, *Writings from the Late Notebooks*, Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 139.
[2] Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, Raymond Geuss, and Ronald Speirs, *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy (Cambridge, U.K. ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 141.
[3] Nietzsche, Geuss, and Speirs, 142.
[4] Nietzsche, Geuss, and Speirs, 143.

"indifferent to pure knowledge if it has no consequences, ... (we) are actually hostile towards truths which may be harmful and destructive."[5] Hence, Nietzsche takes knowledge as the belief in the truth, not as the true belief. We are not moving from truths to form a belief, but we are arbitrarily moving from our beliefs to form 'so-called truths.'

Moreover, Nietzsche denies the existence of pure knowledge. The means of intellect is language. However, language cannot grasp the reality of nature; it is necessarily metaphorical, subjective, and arbitrary.[6] A word is "the copy of a nervous stimulation in sounds."[7] Our perception of a thing is not that thing itself; when we put it into words, it is actually not our perception of a thing but an imitation of our perception in the form of a sound; when another individual hears those sounds, there is yet again another "translation" occurs.

Consequently, language operates through translation between many spheres, and it is full of metaphors and necessarily, anthropomorphizations. Our language can never correspond to the original entities; they can be only metaphors for us to communicate. Nietzsche states that "truths are illusions of which we have forgotten that they are illusions."[8] Consequently, there is no objective knowledge. What we call knowledge is only an anthropomorphic illusion; the correct perception of things is impossible.

The abovementioned epistemological view of Nietzsche is in the ground of his approach to sciences and his way of doing philosophy; without understanding it, it is not possible to make sense of his anthropology and explanation of what we are. He favors the man of intuition or the artist against the man of reason or the scientist. The man of intuition knows better; he knows the illusions are only illusions; he is not afraid to shake the illusions or create new ones. On the other hand, the man of reason takes illusions as truths, and he is trapped under them. The man of intuition has a free spirit; he knows the reality is unreachable, and he is not aiming to reach something impossible like the man of reason. Consequently, art harbors the righteous illusion compared to the sciences.

Above, I exposed Nietzsche's *On Truth and Lying in a Non-Moral Sense*. In his text, Nietzsche is consistent with his epistemological stance: his work is more like a literary one than being a rigorous, clarified philosophical investigation. For Nietzsche, a style that lacks

[5] Nietzsche, Geuss, and Speirs, 143.
[6] Nietzsche, Geuss, and Speirs, 145.
[7] Nietzsche, Geuss, and Speirs, 144.
[8] Nietzsche, Geuss, and Speirs, 146.

any systematically defined concepts does not deprive the strength of his philosophical convictions, but contrary, it strengthens them. This way of approach in philosophy provides a more precise view, a view that corresponds to reality better than the approach which claims to be scientific. However, Nietzsche does something different in *On the Genealogy of Morals*[9]*;* It is Nietzsche's most conceptually structured text and the leading resource for my research. Therefore, even it can be counted as a betrayal to both Nietzsche and Bataille's way of doing philosophy, I will also take the same structured approach for the thesis. Even though the thesis lacks the literary style, it aims to emphasize historicity, which both philosophers find crucial. Thus, I am aiming not only to use the historical approach but to give anthropological accounts of both Nietzsche and Bataille in a structured form of history of humankind.

Conclusively, Nietzsche's epistemology is a reaction towards an objective understanding of knowledge; he has a skeptic point of view. While Nietzsche believes we can go beyond ourselves in an ethical dimension, we are restricted by nature when it comes to knowledge. His convictions of our weakness regarding knowledge led Nietzsche to emphasize on ethical dimension and a life which is freed from what we call the objective knowledge. When it comes to humans, Nietzsche makes his research on morality; the one which was always in flux throughout history; the one which is always in continuous creation and dissolution; the one which contains the righteous illusions.

I.II. Homesickness for the Wild

For Nietzsche, every human born into some form of morality, a totality of rules which bears many "oughts" and "shoulds" that govern our actions. Actions that are in line with morality are 'good'; the ones which oppose morality are 'evil' (in the earlier period of history, 'bad'). Nietzsche asks the question: "under what conditions did man devise these value judgments good and evil? Moreover, what value do they themselves possess?"[10] These questions are at the heart of his anthropological research.

To dive into "who are we really?" we need to rewind and first dive into the history of all living creatures. The term 'will to power' of Nietzsche derived from 'Will to live' of his "great

[9] Nietzsche writes this text as a clarification of *Beyond Good and Evil.*
[10] Friedrich Nietzsche and Walter Arnold Kaufmann, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Nachdr. (New York: Vintage Books, 2011), 17.

teacher Schopenhauer."[11] For Schopenhauer, 'will to live' is the blind impulse of nature itself, which is behind instinctive behaviors of every living thing. In comparison, For Nietzsche, 'will to live' is only one of the results of 'will to power:' "A living thing seeks above all to discharge its strength -life itself is will to power; self-preservation is only of the indirect and most frequent results.*"*[12] All other instincts can be traced back to will to power.

As I have mentioned before, intellect and its function of conscious thinking only is a tool and a mere instrument. Intellect is under the command of what is unconscious, namely, under the command of our very basic instinct, which is the will to power. 'Will to power' means will 'for' power: The object of the will is power; the thing which all creatures are after is the power: "what man wants, what every smallest part of a living organism wants, is an increment of power."[13] All living things do whatever they do to gain power; the will to power is a source of whatever happens in the organic world.

Nietzsche points out that there was a moment when sea animals forced to become land animals: they were adopted to live at sea and suddenly found themselves so weak on the land; many of its former capabilities became useless obstacles for their survival. The same happened to humans when we find ourselves in society and the state of peace. Since we were physically unable to dominate other creatures as individuals, we had to stay together. Our advantage was our intellect, our conscious capabilities, which was the thing that distinguishes us from all other animals. Unconscious drives were no longer serving us in nature. In the state of peace, humans had to repress their former instincts, the ones they borrowed from their animal past.

When unconscious drives stopped working for us, our unconscious did not lose its effectiveness but found itself new ways. Nietzsche states that "All instincts that do not discharge themselves outwardly turn inward - this is what I call the internalization of man: thus it was that man first developed what was later called his "soul."[14] Besides the 'soul,' internalization is also responsible for the development of 'bad conscience' or 'guilt.'[15]

Above passage from Nietzsche points out the origin of bad conscience and how the internalization of man constitutes a 'big leap' for humans:

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[11] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 19.
[12] Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche and Walter Arnold Kaufmann, *Beyond Good and Evil: Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 21.
[13] Nietzsche, Bittner, and Sturge, *Writings from the Late Notebooks*, 264.
[14] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, 84.
[15] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 84–85.

> "Hostility, cruelty, joy in persecuting, in attacking, in change, in destruction - all this turned against the possessors of such instincts: that is the origin of the "bad conscience." The man who, from lack of external enemies and resistances and forcibly confined to the oppressive narrowness and punctiliousness of custom, impatiently lacerated, persecuted, gnawed at, assaulted, and maltreated himself; this animal that rubbed itself raw against the bars of its cage as one tried to "tame" it; this deprived creature, racked with homesickness for the wild, who had to turn himself into an adventure, a torture chamber, an uncertain and dangerous wilderness-this fool, this yearning and desperate prisoner became the inventor of the "bad conscience." *But thus began the gravest and uncanniest illness, from which humanity has not yet recovered, man's suffering of man, of himself- the result of a forcible sundering from his animal past; as it were a leap and plunge into new surroundings and conditions of existence, a declaration of war against the old instincts upon which his strength, joy, and terribleness had rested hitherto* [emphasis added]."[16]

When our wild drives blocked by our new way of living, i.e., unconscious dominated by conscious, we started to torture ourselves with them. This drastic change is the most crucial element in Nietzsche's anthropology: Our conscious abilities pushed us to form a new way of living, which was at odds with our most robust drives. As a result, unsatisfied drives created unhealthy psychology; humans became sick. This sickening was, for Nietzsche, a disaster which shapes the history; it was not a gradual change or an organic adaptation, it was a significant disengagement from what we really are. Although a similar leap happened for sea animals started living on the ground, they did not start a war against themselves as humans did, and they were not homesick for the wild. Later, I will show the same phenomenon of disengagement (the big leap) and its consequences (man's suffering of himself and the homesickness for the wild), also from Bataille's perspective.

To sum up, Nietzsche states that all unconscious instincts are the manifestations of the will to power, which is the primary moving force of nature. The big leap and its further consequences were precursors to what makes human history interesting for Nietzsche. This disaster was the reason for our psychological sickness that shaped history. Thus the man's suffering from himself, man turning against himself, the 'internalization,' and the feeling of

[16] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 85.

'resentment' began.[17] In this situation we found ourselves in, Nietzsche's anthropology founds its grounds. After the big leap, humans, with their intellect and conscious life, are not animals anymore, but 'semi-animals.'[18]

I.III. Man Turning Against Himself

It is necessary to clarify Nietzsche's 'internalization of man' or 'man turning against himself' (which is the cause of the big leap) to make sense the rest of the history and later on, to make an adequate comparison with Bataille. 'Internalization of man' has two aspects: one is about the relationship between individuals; other is about the relationship between individuals and the state. I will first examine the former.

Nietzsche attributes great meaning to 'forgetfulness'; it is the guaranty of mental health, happiness, and being present; forgetting makes room for new things. The opposite running faculty is called 'memory,' which we use for making promises, to think casually, and to pursue a goal. Determining our future depends on memory: It ables us to say, "I will."[19] Memory is the fundamental faculty which makes us what we are. Making promises is where the 'responsibility' is originated; it allows us to be 'calculable,' 'regular,' and 'necessary;' it secures our future. Through responsibility, humans became sovereign individuals, masters of free will. The one who makes promises is standing as his own guarantor. This mastery over himself also necessarily gives him master over circumstances and nature. Nietzsche names this mastery as 'conscience.'[20] Being able to give promises is what humans do distinctly. Conscience is the will to power in practice through faculties of the intellect. Later, I will expose in the thesis that history is a gradual process of deterioration of the sovereignty of man.

In comparison to 'conscience,' in order to explain 'bad conscience' (guilt), Nietzsche points at the concept of debt. According to Nietzsche, punishment enforced by the ones who were powerful because of a harm or injury which has been made by the punished one. This form of punishment is just like how parents punish their children. If a 'debtor' failed to keep his promise and pay his debt, the 'creditor' feels entitled to be cruel against the debtor.[21]

[17] Nietzsche, Geuss, and Speirs, *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*, 67.
[18] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, 86.
[19] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 58.
[20] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 59.
[21] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 63.

Origin of the guilt is in this relationship between buyer and seller. Briefly, 'bad conscience' or 'guilt' is the feeling of indebtedness towards the creditor. This relationship also means humans are valuating animals: Individuals measure and valuate themselves against one another. Through the debtor-creditor relationship, the 'valuating animal' has been born.[22] This personal relationship between debtor and creditor is one aspect of the internalization of man.

The other aspect of the internalization is the same creditor-debtor relationship between the state and the individuals. To give a clear picture, I first need the focus on the origins of the state. For Nietzsche, the state does not begin with a contract; it began through acts of atrocities.

Strong human beings were the ones who were able to do atrocities. Nietzsche calls them nobles or masters. These powerful ones are not exempt from the weak ones in the sense they also need to live in a community as animals; after all, they do not have the strength of a wild animal. However, compared to lay people, they are physically more powerful. As being valuating animals, these nobles have "knightly-aristocratic value judgments presupposed a powerful physicality, a flourishing, abundant, even overflowing health, together with that which serves to preserve it: war, adventure, hunting, dancing, war games, and in general all that involves vigorous, free, joyful activity."[23] They are the masters and the rulers of the laypeople. As a historian of morality, Nietzsche states that for them, the word 'good' equals noble, powerful, beautiful, and happy.[24]

As I have mentioned before, Nietzsche does his research on the history of morality. He states that the value 'good' first established by the noble ones, they named themselves and their attributes as good. It was nobles' 'pathos of distance (or nobility),' which made them create specific values as 'good' and some as 'bad.'[25] Their pathos of distance comes from the fact that they are the rulers, and they are the ones who exercise violence in however way they wish to whomever stranger they want. Subsequently, nobles as the members of higher-order and the ruling class looked down and named the members of the lower order and ruling class as 'bad,' with all their attributes.[26] Nobles were the dominant class, and their dominance can also be grasped in the fact that they are the ones who first valuated and defined what is 'good' and what is 'bad;' Their use of the language is both a sign and a part of their dominance.

[22] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 70.
[23] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 33.
[24] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 34.
[25] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 26.
[26] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 26.

For Nietzsche, the state is the state of dominance constituted by the nobles over the laymen. The nobles were kind and harmless to each other. However, they were releasing their inner instincts against the weak ones. When they found the stranger people, they were not bound to their social constraints; they were able to discharge their will to power trough atrocities. They were better at applying their intellect's abilities according to their will to power. Consequently, the internalization of man did not happen for them.

The weak ones who were not able to discharge their animal instincts were the slaves or the laymen. The actions of the strong ones set down the preconditions of the appearance of bad conscience in the members of lower-order. Thus, the internalization of man, in other words, the man's turning against itself, started in the sphere of lower-order. Turning back to part I.II., the oppressed ones were the ones who were homesick for the wild: Since they were not able to satisfy their instincts, they were not able to experience joy and happiness. This is why they have become sick; they started to suffer from themselves; they turned against themselves. Consequently, these tamed semi-animals found themselves with the feeling of resentment against their numerically inferior rulers.

Just like the oppression was the precondition of bad conscience, bad conscience stipulated the feeling of resentment in the slaves.[27] Basically, oppression and atrocities of noble ones moved the feeling of resentment in slaves, and this feeling became a creative force; oppressed ones re-evaluated the moral values set forth by masters. Nietzsche reads history as a contest between two evaluative systems: 'good and bad,' founded by nobles, and 'good and evil' founded by the oppressed ones. Nietzsche states that "the symbol of this struggle, inscribed in letters legible across all human history, is "Rome against Judea, Judea against Rome."[28] Rome represents the nobles and their noble mode of valuation, and Judea represents the slaves (who were the subject of internalization and, therefore, subject to a self-torturing) and the slave mode of valuation. In the struggle between Rome and Judea comes from ancient times to our days, Nietzsche claims that the "Rome has been defeated."[29] It is precisely the laymen's victory, which makes human history interesting.

In the process of slaves' feeling of resentment becoming a creative force, they first created the idea that there is a being behind doing. Nietzsche states that slaves had the "demand of

[27] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 86.
[28] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 52.
[29] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 53.

strength that it should not express itself as strength." In other words, they separated "strength from expressions of strength, as if there were a neutral substratum behind the strong man, which was free to express strength or not to do so."[30] For Nietzsche, the idea of the subject behind the action is just a fiction. Separating the lightning from its flash and taking the flash as the action and the lightning as the subject is also another example of it. For Nietzsche, It is not possible to expect the strong to be weak or weak to be strong. Nevertheless, by doing so, slaves claimed that their way of doing things (their weakness) was merely their choice; they were choosing not to act like noble ones. In the meantime, they also falsely claimed: "the strong man is free to be weak and the bird of prey to be a lamb - for thus they gain the right to make the bird of prey accountable for being a bird of prey."[31] Hence they gained the right to blame the nobles for their actions.

Nietzsche calls slave thinking as the sick one since their way of living could not bring them happiness; as I pointed out before, they are continually failing to satisfy their instincts. Those instincts which are not satisfied turned inward, and it became a creative force. Essentially, the slave morality is the product of slaves who lacked the stomach to get hold of what they really wanted, so their resentment moved them to create their own value system.

As I have mentioned, noble ones first looked at themselves and named their attributes as 'good.' It was their first step in creating their value system; it was a step of an affirmation. However, what oppressed ones did was a negation: Contrary to their rulers, they first looked up to the other ones, and later, to themselves. The noble mode of valuation grows spontaneously; in contrast, the slave mode of valuation "always first needs a hostile external world; it needs, psychologically speaking, external stimuli in order to act at all - its action is fundamentally reaction."[32] The feeling of resentment created hatred towards noble ones. Thus, oppressed ones, through examining their enemies, named everything noble as 'evil!'[33] Calling others as 'evil' was a stronger denouncement than calling others 'bad.' Fuelled by their hatred, calling everything related to nobles as "evil," slaves morally despised their enemies more intensely.

Slaves, in their "dark workshop," interpreted weakness as something meritorious; anxious lowliness as humility; misery as a sign of being chosen by God; their retaliation as justice; their

[30] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 45.
[31] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 45.
[32] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, 37.
[33] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 40.

hope for revenge as the victory of God. For Nietzsche, these re-evaluations stink because they are based on two-faced lies. Slaves acted as if they hate injustice; what they really hate was their enemy.[34] The idea of the "kingdom of God" was not related to the eternal love of God, but it was related to slaves' eternal hate of the nobles. Slaves re-evaluated weakness as goodness; submission to the one they hate as obedience; not being able to take revenge as forgiveness; not having sex as purity. They claimed that:

> "the wretched alone are the good; the poor, impotent, lowly alone are the good; the suffering, deprived, sick, ugly alone are pious, alone are blessed by God, blessedness is for them alone -and you, the powerful and noble, are on the contrary the evil, the cruel, the lustful, the insatiable, the godless of all eternity; and you shall be in all eternity the unblessed, accursed, and damned!"[35]

This revaluation caused not because they do not want things that nobles have; it is caused because they were too weak to fight for what they actually wanted. For this reason, Nietzsche sees it as hypocritical and screams: "Bad air! Bad air!."[36] Slave morality values un-egoistic behavior over the egoistic one. However, this view is also based on their hypocrisy; they were unable to pursue their own ends, so they despised who can do so.

Even though Nietzsche distastes the slave mode of evaluation by saying how it stinks, he also states that these humans of resentment are smarter than the noble ones since they were victorious.[37] Slaves pushed by their circumstances, and they are the ones who obliged to develop their intellects in contrast to their masters. They are the ones who really benefited from their intellect. Without them, human history would be too stupid.[38] Through revaluation of their enemies' values, slaves took the "most spiritual revenge."[39] No people ever had a more world-historic mission than them.[40]

In this section, I exposed the internalization of man, the foundation of the state, and the two contesting modes of valuations. One aspect of the internalization realizes through the creditor-debtor relationship between individuals, which is the origin of bad conscience. Another aspect

[34] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 46–48.
[35] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 34.
[36] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 42.
[37] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 38.
[38] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 33.
[39] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 34.
[40] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 36.

is the same relationship formed between individuals and the state. The creditor-debtor relationship shows that humans are valuating animals. I explained the foundation of the state as the oppression of nobles over the laymen. This oppression caused laypeople to feel resentment towards nobles, and it became a creative force: they revaluated the noble mode of valuation. Next, I will explain the history as the contest of two modes of valuations, which symbolized as "Rome against Judea, Judea against Rome."

I.IV. History of Nietzsche

I have pointed out that there is also a creditor-debtor relationship between individuals and the state. Humans live in peace and protected by the state. When they break the laws, they are considered as debtors who failed to pay their debt to their community, and then they are punished.[41] For Nietzsche, when the community's "power increases, a community ceases to take the individual's transgressions so seriously because they can no longer be considered as dangerous and destructive to the whole as they were formerly."[42]

When the power of the tribe increases, it punishes its members less violently; however, members' indebtedness increases with the increase of power of the tribe. Nietzsche states that in very early tribal communities, "the living generation always recognized a juridical duty toward earlier generations."[43] Since the tribe owes its existence to their ancestors and to their sacrifices and accomplishments, living generations also pay their debts to their ancestors through "sacrifices, feasts, music, honors, and through obeying to their customs, statutes, and commands."[44] For Nietzsche, these sacrifices can even contain human blood, the blood of the members of the community. Through time if the tribe becomes more powerful, this indebtedness increases; "then the ancestors of the most powerful tribes are bound eventually to grow to monstrous dimensions through the imagination of growing fear and to recede into the darkness of the divinely uncanny and unimaginable: in the end, the ancestor must necessarily be transfigured into a god."[45] This indebtedness to ancestors is where Nietzsche finds God's origin. In other words, the feeling of guilt, i.e., the bad conscience, presupposes religion.[46] The

[41] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 71.
[42] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 72.
[43] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, 88.
[44] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 89.
[45] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 89.
[46] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 92.

idea of God necessarily related to the creditor-debtor relationship between individuals and the community. As I will show later, Bataille also finds the 'pure aspect' of religion as related to the ancestors.

Nietzsche asserts that the first believers of God were the ones who carried resentment within their souls. The slave mode of valuation is the priestly mode of valuation. In first communities, they become separate from the ones who believe in the aristocratic mode of valuation. Thus, there were two casts: warriors and priests. Priests are the ones who can alter the direction of resentment. While slaves are looking to blame someone for their sickness, the priest is who directs this resentment inward and guide slaves to blame the nobles for their situation.[47] In the context of the war between two modes of valuation, Nietzsche states that the priests are the biggest enemies for warriors; they were unable to fight back in the same physical manner. Consequently, through their feeling of resentment, their hatred grew to egregious proportions. Nietzsche states that the caste of priests first appeared in Ancient Greeks, but for him, the most priestly people were the Jewish people, and they were the ones who re-evaluated the values of their masters.[48]

With the power of the state increases further, the feeling of guilt, the weight of bad conscience towards the divinity (towards the ancestors) continued to grow throughout history. Furthermore, "the advance toward universal empires is always also an advance toward universal divinities."[49] Consequently, monotheistic religions came about through a growing feeling of guilty indebtedness. Jewish people who defeated Rome had their universal God.

Later on, Christianity showed up as the second monotheistic religion. Nietzsche states that "the Christian God, is the maximum god attained so far, was therefore accompanied by the maximum feeling of guilt indebtedness on earth."[50] The Christian idea of 'eternal punishment' means our debt to our creditor has grown so much that it became impossible to pay it; the feeling of guilt is so big that no punishment can be equal to it.[51] Nietzsche differentiates between Christianity and Jesus. Jesus brought 'love' as a new value against the Jewish

[47] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 127.
[48] Lale Levin Basut, "Lecture: Philosophical Texts IV" (Istanbul, 2016).
[49] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, 90.
[50] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 90.
[51] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 91.

'hatred.'[52] Nietzsche claims that Christ was the noblest human being.[53] However, Christian faith and Jesus' followers killed his message before it is even allowed to spread.[54]

Institutionalized Christianity canonized the feeling of pity, unegoistic action, self-denial, and self-sacrifice.[55] For Nietzsche, the morality of pity is the symptom of a turning 'against life' which bespeaks an illness."[56]

All things considered, institutionalized Christianity, was not a rebellion against Jewish values, but it was the next phase of it. It was a stronger regression and stronger self-denial for humanity. The slave mode of valuation became victorious against the Christ itself, and through Christian values, Judea won its victory against Rome. In other words, the slaves, the mob, or the herd won.[57]

For Nietzsche, throughout history, Judea continues to be triumph "again and again over all other ideals, over all nobler ideals"[58] Renaissance was the 'reawakening of the classical ideal, of the noble mode of evaluating all things.' However, the "German and English resentment movement called the Reformation" triumphed over the noble mode of evaluation: Judea triumphed again.[59]

Later on, Judea once again triumphed over the classical ideal via the French Revolution. The slogan of the revolution, for Nietzsche, was the slogan of resentment: "supreme rights of the majority." Nietzsche conceives Napoleon as another noble character: he was the "noble ideal as such made flesh." Napoleon's counter slogan was "supreme rights of the few!"[60]

For the nineteenth century, Nietzsche claims that faith in the Christian God is in decline, which also means a decline in "mankind's feeling of guilt."[61] His famous sentence, "God is dead,"[62] draws attention to this decline. In *Gay Science,* Nietzsche greets this event with

[52] Basut, "Lecture: Philosophical Texts IV."
[53] Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche and R. J. Hollingdale, *Human, All Too Human*, Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 175.
[54] Peter R. Sedgwick, *Nietzsche: The Key Concepts*, Routledge Key Guides (London ; New York: Routledge, 2009), 26.
[55] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, *On the Genealogy of Morals,* 19.
[56] Sedgwick, *Nietzsche*, 27.
[57] Nietzsche uses 'slaves' and 'herd' interchangeably.
[58] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, *On the Genealogy of Morals,* 35.
[59] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 54.
[60] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 54.
[61] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 91.
[62] Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche and Walter Arnold Kaufmann, *The Gay Science: With a Prelude in Rhymes and an Appendix of Songs*, 1st ed. (New York: Vintage Books, 1974), 181.

cheerfulness.[63] After all, it signifies the decay of the Christian value system. Consequently, atheism is on the rise. However, for Nietzsche, this does not imply that the slave mode of evaluation will disappear or disappearing. Our faith in our creditors is still continuing even though it is not under the name of God:[64] Modern men are the heirs of thousands of years of self-torture. After exercising the self-torture for so much time, humans became inseparable from their 'bad conscience.' It seems very hard to break our ties with our past, and what we have become through thousands of years. The absence of God does not change our understanding of the world and our way of living. [65]

However, a reverse attempt might be possible for Nietzsche through a redeemer. This redeemer seems someone like Christ or Napoleon; Nietzsche might also seeing himself or his Zarathustra as this redeemer or the courier of this redeemer:

> "This man of the future, who will redeem us not only from the hitherto reigning ideal but also from that which was bound to grow out of it, the great nausea, the will to nothingness, nihilism; this bell-stroke of noon and of the great decision that liberates the will again and restores its goal to the earth and his hope to man; this Antichrist and anti-nihilist; this victor over God and nothingness-he must come one day."

For Nietzsche, the ascetic ideal, which is the ideal of slave morality, is what humans need to be redeemed. Ascetic living is the priest's way of living ruled by resentment. Through internalization and revaluating values, the man did not only turned against himself, but man also turned against life. Ascetics are not only deniers of bodily pleasures but enemies of life itself.[66]

Nietzsche states that an ascetic does not want to "master over something in life but over life itself, over its most profound, powerful, and basic conditions."[67] This is the reason that their pleasure is felt in "ill-constitutedness, decay, pain, mischange, ugliness, voluntary deprivation, self-mortification, self-flagellation, self-sacrifice."[68] While the redeemer constitutes a yes-

[63] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 279.
[64] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, 91.
[65] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 95.
[66] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 120–121.
[67] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 117.
[68] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 117–18.

saying spirit[69], ascetic constitute a "no-saying" spirit towards life.[70] The ascetic wills nothingness.[71] In this sense, slave morality has a nihilistic nature, and it gets more influential throughout history through defeating Rome over and over.

Even though what they do is saying no to life, ascetic ideal stems from the instinct of preservation of life:

> "the ascetic ideal springs from the protective instinct of a degenerating life which tries by all means to sustain itself and to fight for its own existence; it indicates a partial physiological obstruction and exhaustion against which the deepest instincts of life, which have remained intact, continually struggle with new expedients and devices. The ascetic ideal is such an expedient; the case is therefore the opposite of what those who reverence this ideal believe: life wrestles in it and through it with death and against death; the ascetic ideal is an artifice for the preservation of life."[72]

This is precisely what Nietzsche sees as hypocritical for the laymen: Their hatred towards things related to life itself comes out of their inability to deal with life as the noble ones. This is, by no doubt, a sick and a self-contradictory attitude. Their revaluation of values, turning the values upside down, is their own attempt to preserve their lives, yet they end up despising life. This hypocrisy of humans will be crucial for the third chapter of the thesis.

Nietzsche's epistemological stance that I mentioned in the first part is also in line with his disgust of asceticism. Ascetics impose their own valuation on existence. Deniers of life naturally conceive the physical world as unimportant compared to "the real world" they will end up after dying. They do not want to be in this physical world. For them, life is a bridge, a path to that other existence which is unchanging and eternal.[73] At this point, it becomes clear that Nietzsche's objection towards objective knowledge conjoined with his criticism of ascetic presuppositions. Ascetics claim to have the absolute knowledge of life.

Ascetic priest, i.e., the denier of life becomes the shepherd of the herd: the one who is sick, constitutes oneself as the savior of all other sick, underprivileged and unfortunate humans.[74]

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[69] Dionysus is the representative of this spirit.
[70] Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche and Duncan Large, *Ecce Homo: How to Become What You Are*, Oxford World's Classics (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 73.
[71] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, 97.
[72] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 120.
[73] Sedgwick, *Nietzsche*, 13.
[74] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, 125.

The herd contains humans of resentment who have impotence towards life. The "innocent" means employed by the ascetic priest to fight against suffering are these: "the general muting of the feeling of life, mechanical activity, the petty pleasure, above all "love of one's neighbor," herd organization, the awakening of the communal feeling of power through which the individual's discontent with himself is drowned in his pleasure in the prosperity of the community."[75] There are also 'guilty' means Nietzsche mentions about: Their common feature is that they spike "some kind of an orgy of feeling"[76] through religious music and dances, which at the end does not cure the sickness but makes one sicker.[77]

Nietzsche mentions the need for a redeemer. For him, currently, there is no other ideal who contends with the ascetic ideal and its enormous power. [78] A secular and scientific worldview cannot be considered as a counter ideal. The modern individual still bounds to slave morality. Science is the latest form, i.e., "noblest form" of the ascetic ideal. [79]

Nietzsche states that science as a whole has no goal, a will or an ideal: "Science today is a hiding place for every kind of discontent, disbelief, gnawing worm, despectio sui, bad conscience."[80] Additionally, Nietzsche claims science as being a self-narcosis, a hiding place just as he famously claims Christianity and alcohol also means for the same end. Nietzsche's critique of science also goes hand in hand with his epistemological stance, for those who have a belief in 'truth,' one way or another, participates in the ascetic ideal. Nietzsche goes even saying that modern atheists, anti-Christians, and skeptics, are not liberated from the ascetic ideal. Therefore they do not possess a free spirit; they "still have faith in the truth."[81] Furthermore, the scientific worldview is also a nihilistic one; it continues the nihilistic tradition it borrowed from slave morality through meaningless causalism and mechanicism.[82]

For Nietzsche, science and religion are allies; they are both overestimating 'truth;' they are taking 'the truth' itself as something cannot be questioned. Consequently, replacing astrology with astronomy, or Kant's victory over the dogmatic concepts of theology, actually did not damage the ideal.[83] Likewise, atheism itself is not the antithesis of ascetic ideal but the latest

[75] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 136.
[76] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 136.
[77] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 142.
[78] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 146.
[79] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 147.
[80] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 147.
[81] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, 150.
[82] Nietzsche, Bittner, and Sturge, *Writings from the Late Notebooks*, 85.
[83] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, 155–56.

version of it since it is also after the truth. Connecting to the first section, the mindset of the man of reason is still the ascetic one.

However, there is hope for Nietzsche. As I referred in the first section, Nietzsche put a scientist's worldview and artist's worldview as two opposites: contrary to science, art does not care about the truth, it knows illusions as illusions and nothing more. The hope Nietzsche puts forward against the ascetic ideal is art:

> "Art, in which precisely the *lie* is sanctified and the will to deception has a good conscience, is much more fundamentally opposed to the ascetic ideal than is science: this was instinctively sensed by Plato, the greatest enemy of art Europe has yet produced."

In Ancient Greeks, we see the contrast between the man of science and man of art as Plato versus Homer. Plato was after the knowledge, censoring art and putting it under the service of metaphysics. For Nietzsche, the one who will be the redeemer should be an artist; he should be the one who creates new values and change the course of history. However, for Nietzsche's time, there is no opposite ideal that can fight against the ascetic one.

For thousands of years, there is an ongoing hegemony of the ascetic ideal, which is unchallenged in modern times. The modern scientific worldview is the last form of this ideal but nothing else. The hope is the redeemer or the superman who can create his own values and defeat the ascetic ideal by saying "yes" to life. The opposite of the superman is the last man or the last human (Der Letzte Mensch). The last human is the future type, a type that will be created by the ascetic ideal's future evolution.

In this section, I laid down Nietzsche's understanding of human history. Conclusively, when the power of the state increases, the feeling of indebtedness to the ancestors increases, and ancestors transfigure into God. The believers of God, the laymen, made the slave revolution in morality. Their morality was based on sick, life-denying, and nihilistic understanding, which aims to not fight something in life but to fight against life itself. With the Christianity, French Revolution and Reformation, Judea won victories over Rome over and over. After the demise of Christianity, the slave mode of valuation did not lose power in the time of the modern man but continued through a scientific worldview. Slave morality, with its will to nothingness, updates itself numerous times and becomes stronger throughout history. Even though bad conscience became a part of humans for thousands of years, Nietzsche claims that there is still

hope; a reverse attempt, a revolt against the slave morality is possible. Otherwise, the future evolution of the ascetic ideal and the slave morality will bring humanity to the last man, which I will examine in the third part with detail.

II. Bataille: The Homo Faber

In this part, I intend to give an account of Bataille's anthropology, i.e., his answer to the questions who we are and what we have become throughout history. To do so, I will follow the same steps as the first part. Just like I did for Nietzsche, I will first explain Bataille's distaste for the scientific approach. Secondly, I will expose what caused the big leap, namely the usage of tools. For Bataille, the big leap resulted for humans to feel isolated in nature. Consequently, history constitutes a quest for searching the lost intimacy. However, humans got away from this quest and abandoned it in the course of history. I will explain each step, which brings the archaic men to the modern men who are the "most degraded beings that have ever existed."[84]

II.I. A Non-scientific Approach to Human

Bataille focuses on eroticism as an inner experience while investigating the human condition on earth. His texts on eroticism is a part of Bataille's answer to the same question, "who are we really?" Like Nietzsche, Bataille has a non-scientific approach to human, which considers the historicity. He despises the scientific method when it comes to inner experience. Bataille defends Michel Leiris' idea that eroticism cannot be an object of scientific study but "an object of passion and poetic contemplation."[85] A non-scientific approach could reach into the depts of inner human experiences since "the scientist speaks from outside, like an anatomist busy on a brain."[86]

It is clear that for Bataille, eroticism cannot be an object of objective scientific research. Furthermore, Bataille asserts that the scientific approach is based on the subject-object distinction; it takes objects as things exterior to ourselves. As I will expose below, similar to Nietzsche, who finds the idea of subject is fictitious, Bataille finds the idea of 'subject' as something created later throughout history. Consequently, the scientific approach would be insufficient to examine erotic experiences since the realm called the sacred world in which humans experience eroticism disregards subject-object distinction. In other words, an approach based on subject and object distinction cannot help us to understand the inner experience

[84] Georges Bataille and Allan Stoekl, *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1939*, Theory and History of Literature, v. 14 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), 179.
[85] Georges Bataille, *Erotism: Death & Sensuality*, 1st City lights ed (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1986), 9.
[86] Bataille, 31–32.

because the inner experience surpasses the limits of what science can reveal. Below explanation of Bataille`s framework will show how inner experience contains elements that are out of subject-object distinction.

II.II. Nostalgia of Animality

While for Nietzsche, the main emphasis of what makes humankind unique is on the intellect, Bataille emphasizes the usage of tools. Through making and using tools, humans developed a new and unique relationship with the world.[87] This new way of relationship with the world brings the subject-object distinction. Bataille states that "the developed tool is the nascent form of the non-I."[88] Through manufacturing and using tools, our experience of the world is separated from all other animals, and the distinction between "I" and "non-I" appeared. We have started to create tools; consequently, our sense of exteriority and the concept of the 'subject' and 'object' came about.

Bataille claims that "The tool changes nature and man at the same time: it subjugates nature to the man who makes the tool and who uses it, but it ties man to a subjugated nature. Nature becomes man's property, but it ceases to be immanent to him."[89] Just like Nietzsche, Bataille, from a different perspective, claims that being human in the world constitutes a "big leap." Our way of experiencing the world is altered drastically. This change implies a negation of our own animality; humans differentiated themselves from animals through work; they stopped experiencing life as other animals do; nature stops being immanent to humans.

Consequently, two spheres of different experiences of nature came into existence for humans: 'the limited economy' and 'the general economy.'[90] The limited economy represents our uniqueness in the world, and it refers to 'the profane sphere,' on the other hand, the general economy represents what we still share with other animals, and it refers to 'the sacred sphere.' A key concept related to both of these economies is 'the energy.' For Bataille, There is a circuit of impersonal cosmic energy in the universe. In comparison, the limited economy is

[87] Mark Hewson, ed., *Georges Bataille: Key Concepts*, 1 [edition], Key Concepts (New York: Routledge, 2016), 104.
[88] Georges Bataille, *Theory of Religion* (New York: Zone Books, 1989), 27.
[89] Bataille, 41.
[90] Lode Lauwaert, *Marquis de Sade and Continental Philosophy*, 2019, 68.

characterized by the scarcity of energy, the general economy characterized by the excess energy.

The limited economy and the profane world constitute the secular life defined by work. In this world, humans favor the future over the present and invest their energy for the future. While explaining Bataille's philosophical framework, Lauwaert states that through work, humans became 'Homo Faber;' they started to relate to reality instrumentally: "the things that are available and exist in the world are always part of a chain of means leading to the production of an end. Take the example of metal being used in order to construct a hammer. In the next step, this instrument is used to transform some wood into a piece of furniture, for example, a chair, which helps a human being to sit while, for example, reading the newspaper."[91] In the profane sphere, which humans created by their intellect and work, "things have a meaning or value only insofar as they are useful or instrumental."[92] In this sphere, everything is reduced to their functionality. It is the profane sphere that humans experience themselves as "I" and the world as "non-I." The term for this situation is 'discontinuity.' This sphere constitutes the ordinary life of humans.

In contrast, the experience of the sacred sphere characterized by 'continuity.' In this sphere, humans consume their excess energy, and they favor the present over the future. In the sacred moments, instrumental relationship to the world is suspended, and humans experience continuity between themselves and the world around them; the subject-object distinction is disappeared. This is the sphere that humans share with other animals; erotic experience refers to the affairs that humans experience the world like animals.[93]

While animals live "in the world like water in water," they experience continuity.[94] Humans are the only beings that know themselves as discontinuous beings: They born alone, die alone. There is a gulf between them.[95] This feeling of discontinuity resulted from the big leap, which started with the usage of tools. Bataille states that:

> "We are discontinuous beings, individuals who perish in isolation in the midst of an incomprehensible adventure, but we yearn for our lost continuity. We find the state of affairs that binds us to our random and ephemeral individuality hard to bear. Along with

[91] Lauwaert, 68.
[92] Lauwaert, 69.
[93] Lauwaert, 70.
[94] Bataille, *Theory of Religion*, 23.
[95] Bataille, *Erotism*, 12.

> our tormenting desire that this evanescent thing should last, there stands our obsession with a primal continuity linking us with everything that is."[96]

For Bataille, we are yearning for our lost sense of continuity. Not feeling like water in water gives us pain, we suffer from our isolated being. The desired continuity can only be reached by death. However, it can also be temporarily approached at the moment of transgression. A moment of transgression implies an erotic experience. One can lose the feeling of self (which presupposes the subject-and object distinction and signifies the discontinuity of the being) while having an erotic experience.[97] Losing the feeling of the self through erotic experiences able humans to approach continuity. Since the sense of self is defined in the borders of the profane sphere, erotic experiences constitute the sacred sphere.[98] For Bataille, the nostalgia for continuity is responsible for three forms of eroticism for humans: physical, emotional, and religious.[99]

Bataille states, "Eroticism, it may be said, is assenting to life up to the point of death."[100] The concept of eroticism is the paradigm of the sacred sphere for humans. The relationship between eroticism and death originated in their connection to continuity. Losing the feeling of self, i.e., dissolution of the self is connected to death; thus, there is a side of erotic experience that is overwhelming and frightening; our very existence is at stake: "The domain of eroticism is the domain of violence, and violation."[101] However, we still "desire to bring into a world founded on discontinuity (the profane sphere) all the continuity such a world can sustain."[102] Assenting to life up to the point of death also signifies a challenge and indifference towards death.[103]

Physical eroticism is not the same as animal sexuality since animals are beings already operate only in the sacred sphere. In contrast to animals, humans have their inner life; eroticism is an aspect of humans' inner life. As an example, when one undresses, he gets rid of the clothes which have 'meaning' and 'functionality.' Being naked is the symbol of dispossession; it means a contrast to self-possession, which characterized by continuous existence.[104] In the

[96] Bataille, 15.
[97] Hewson, *Georges Bataille*, 140.
[98] Bataille, *Erotism*, 31.
[99] Bataille, 15.
[100] Bataille, 11.
[101] Bataille, 16.
[102] Bataille, 19.
[103] Bataille, 23.
[104] Bataille, 17–18.

physical erotic experience, we are away from the life of work, and partners lose their sense of self in the continuity. Erotic experience's connection to death makes it destructive. The sexual act for humans, since they are the animals who sexually reproduce, means the destruction of each partner's discontinuity. "Eroticism, always entails a breaking down of established patterns, the patterns, I repeat, of the regulated social order basic to our discontinuous mode of existence as defined and separate individuals."[105] Bataille likens the intercourse to sacrifice: both man as the sacrificer and the woman as the victim lose themselves through the violent act of intercourse. In sexual reproduction, female and male reproductive cells come together; they both die and disappear: they unite. The death of two different reproductive cells also means the death of two animals, the female and the male ones. As a result, sexual reproduction entails a transition from discontinuity to continuity. The French phrase used for orgasm, 'la petit mort' (the little death), implies the same phenomenon of losing self and approaching to continuity.

Emotional eroticism, loving someone, finds its basis on physical eroticism, but it can also be experienced entirely separate from it.[106] Bataille states that "what our human limitations deny, a total blending of two beings, a continuity between two discontinuous creatures." While eroticism aims that continuity, reaching it fully would literally mean death, so the aim of emotional eroticism is doomed to fail. Love promises one if he possesses the beloved one; he will not feel isolated. However, this promise never fully realize.

Another type of erotic experience is the religious one. Bataille uses inner life and religious life, and, sacred and divine interchangeably. God is the "composite being possessed of the continuity."[107] In the case of sacrifice as a religious ritual, spectators watch the victim's death: The victim's death via violence disrupts his discontinuity: after death, he is in the continuous realm. Spectators watch this ritual, and they share what the victim's death reveals.[108] The essence of religion is "the search for the lost intimacy."[109] Intimacy here signifies experiencing the world in a continuity.

To sum up, there is impersonal cosmic energy in the universe. Humans receive this energy all the time. The usage of tools led humans to form a new relationship with nature, and they started to invest their energies for the future. As a result, the profane world which operates

[105] Bataille, 18.
[106] Bataille, 19.
[107] Bataille, 22.
[108] Bataille, 22.
[109] Bataille, *Theory of Religion*, 57.

through work and favors the future is realized, subject-object distinction appeared, and they started to feel isolated from all there is. This isolation, i.e., feeling discontinuous, is responsible for the feeling of nostalgia for the lost intimacy. Even though the desired continuity can only be reached by death, erotic experiences able humans to lose their feeling of self and approach to the desired continuity. The sphere in which humans experience eroticism is called the sacred sphere. There are three types of eroticism; physical, emotional, and religious. Each erotic experience requires a moment of transgression. In the next section, I will examine taboo and transgression, which are critical concepts for how humans operate between profane and sacred spheres.

II.III. Taboo and Transgression

Humans receive cosmic energy all the time. We invest some of it in the profane sphere through work. Extra energy leads to physical growth or production resulting from labor. Nonetheless, growth and production cannot continue in a limitless manner. As a result, non-invested energy accumulates, and erotic experiences are the explosions of this non-invested energy: The person disappears and working stops.[110] Lauwaert states that "the reality is understood as the superhuman flux of impersonal and goalless energy that circulates continuously."[111] While we are living by the aimless energy through erotic experiences, when we are working, we direct and invest the energy through labor.

According to Bataille, pre-historic humans established taboos to regulate their living and to protect the work from being disturbed. The earliest taboos are mainly connected to death (as an example: Burying the dead and do not letting it seen by people). Humans were aware of their mortality, the sight of a dead person was igniting a significant disruption in the viewer, and it was reminding one's own mortality. A corpse is a symbol of violence and also "a threat of the contagiousness of violence."[112] Bataille states that "the main function of taboos is to combat violence."[113] The taboo of murder is the basic one that only exists between the members of a community, and it can be violated towards strangers.[114] Another taboo is the sexual one.

[110] Lauwaert, *Marquis de Sade and Continental Philosophy*, 71.
[111] Lauwaert, 71.
[112] Bataille, *Erotism*, 45.
[113] Bataille, 41.
[114] Bataille, 47.

Sexual activity is a spontaneous impulse that can interfere with work; therefore, it has to be regulated.[115]

Bataille emphasizes the relationship between death and sexuality since they both imply violence. Taboos are essentially operating to limit the violence; taboos are "Man's "no" to nature."[116] By taboos, we refuse and limit the sacred sphere. In other words, we refuse continuity, death, and sexuality. After all, "reproduction demands the death of the parents who produced their young."[117] However, Bataille asserts that man's saying "no," is not a decisive one. This implies the paradoxical nature of human beings: We are both terrified by continuity yet we are also yearning for it.

Wherever there is a taboo (a prohibition), there is also a transgression of it. For Bataille, the transgression does not stand opposite to taboo; it is actually "transcends it and completes it."[118] In other words, "the taboo is there to be violated."[119] Taboos are irrational: Obeying and violating them depends on our emotions. Bataille states that the transgression of taboo is regulated. War as an example of organized violence is not animal violence since transgression itself is bound to rules. War violates the taboo of murder, yet it is permitted, even prescribed in certain situations. Here we see the profane sphere's influence on the sacred one; it regulates how humans are going to experience eroticism. Later, I will explain how the life of order's influence is overgrowing on the sacred life throughout history.

Bataille states that we wanted to shape nature by creating taboos, just like we produce tools. However, our suppressed urges do not cease to be urges; when emotions trigger us, bursts of energy might come up. As a result, suppressed urges might be unleashed, and one can kill without hesitation or can exercise sexual deeds unrestrainedly. Here, we again face the paradoxical nature of man: "Men are swayed by two simultaneous emotions: they are driven away by terror and drawn by an awed fascination. Taboo and transgression reflect these two contradictory urges."[120]

Even though humans deny death and violence via taboos, the ones who feel strong will spend their energies and put themselves in danger willingly. The ones who feel capable will

[115] Bataille, 50.
[116] Bataille, 61.
[117] Bataille, 61.
[118] Bataille, 63.
[119] Bataille, 64.
[120] Bataille, 68.

endanger themselves.[121] Connecting to Nietzsche, the nobles, the strong ones are the ones who can listen to their yearning for continuity and act according to their desires.

To summarize, while humans invest their energy for the future through work, they spend the excess energy by experiencing eroticism through transgression. Taboos are there to limit the sacred world and protect the work. Transgression stands as subsidiary to taboos; it is prescribed in certain conditions. Taboo and transgression represents the two contradictory urges of human beings: They want to approach to continuity, yet they are also driven away from it by fear of death.

II.IV. History of Bataille

The profane world is built on investing in the future, yet in the sacred sphere, priority is the instant moment. While the profane world operates through suppressing and directing the energy, the sacred sphere operates through bursts of energy. In archaic societies, there are several ways of erotic experiences that able humans to release their excess energy in a controlled fashion: the religious rites, namely, the sacrifice and the festival. Through religious rites, humans do not only have erotic experiences, but by releasing the energy, they are also protecting the profane world from contagious violent affairs.[122]

War as the organized violence also a means for release, but in contrast to religious rites, it is an erotic activity turned outward. In a society ordered around a military rule, religious rituals lose their position as being the center of social life; they started to be used as an apparatus to maintain social order. While the sacred sphere of archaic religion aims to satisfy both benevolent spirits (ones associated with the ancestors) and dangerous spirits (ones associated with devil), under the military rule, dangerous spirits lose their importance since they are not serving to maintain the social order as the benevolent spirits. Consequently, the sacred comes to be associated with the pure and the good; God becomes a moral God who has a law-preserving function. This moral religion under military order can no longer serve the same need as the archaic religions.[123]

[121] Bataille, 86.
[122] Hewson, *Georges Bataille*, 165–66.
[123] Hewson, 167.

For Bataille, the religious life is the inner life: "religion is the moving force behind the breaking of taboos."[124] As I have pointed out earlier, God is the composite being possessed continuity. While we are searching for our lost intimacy via erotic experiences, we are searching for God. "At the pagan stage, religion was based on transgression, and impure aspects were no less divine than the opposite ones."[125] For Bataille, as I referred above, there are pure and impure aspects of a religion. Christianity, in contrast to paganism, rejects the impure aspect. In other words, Christianity rejects the devil (angel or God of transgression, revolt, and disobedience) and drives it out of the sacred sphere.[126] This rejection implies another negation of our animality. As I pointed out before, the first negation happened through the usage of *tools.* There is a second negation that happened as humans shifted from paganism to Christianity: Christianity wanted to disregard transgression; therefore, wanted to push erotic experience out of the sacred sphere. In other words, Christianity failed to grasp the nature of the transgression.[127] As Nietzsche also emphasizes, piety was the primary value of Christianity. Through having piety as its fundamental feature, Christianity disregarded violent means: We were no longer performing sacrifices, but the symbol of Cross and the sacrifice of the mass was a reminder of it. However, "in the idea of the sacrifice upon the Cross the very character of transgression has been altered ... the sin of the crucifixion is disallowed by the priest celebrating the sacrifice of mass."[128] Christianity finds law-breaking, i.e., transgression vile; it posits that the deed would not have happened if people would know better.[129] In other words, even though Christianity has the theme of the sacrifice, it condemns the act and blames the Romans for it.

Although Christianity turned its back to the spirit of transgression, it did not lose its religious character. In Christianity, believers reach continuity through the experience of the divine, which is the essence of continuity.[130] Religious eroticism of Christianity is the divine love:[131] "Basically, the wish was to open the door to a completely unquestioning love."[132] For Christianity, God itself is an individual, a discontinuous supreme being, who is separate from other beings. Other beings, angels, demons are also separate from each other. For Bataille, in this ontological system of isolation and atomization, the path that Christianity suggests is the

[124] Bataille, *Erotism*, 69.
[125] Bataille, 120–21.
[126] Bataille, 121.
[127] Bataille, 90.
[128] Bataille, 89.
[129] Bataille, 90.
[130] Bataille, 118.
[131] Bataille, 22.
[132] Bataille, 118.

path of love. In Christianity, "desire for harmony and conciliation in love and submission took the place of the overwhelming wrench of violence."[133]

To sum up, taboo created eroticism in the organized violence of transgression; Christianity "had denied the sacred nature of erotic activity as part of transgression in the first place."[134] Many forms of eroticism become sin in Christianity; Christianity only preserved the pure aspect of religion. It took the emotional eroticism and glorified its promise under the name of divine love.

Later on, Reformation rejected "the principle of good works (charity, pilgrimages, and indulgences) by which the Catholic Church allowed one to "earn" salvation, in substantially the same manner as one carried out any other kind of activity in the world."[135] This rejection means that salvation is only in the hands of God, and it can only be achieved only through faith. Consequently, Protestant theology re-established the radical distinction between the divine order and the world of work by separating economic activity and religious life; an autonomy granted to the economic sphere. In other words, religion excluded from secular life. These alterations created the conditions for the emergence of industrial capitalism.[136] Additionally, the French revolution, which had the purpose of the abolition of the feudal order, was another step for the emergence of the capitalist system: The hegemony of the bourgeois paradigm uses wealth to accumulate productive forces.[137]

Along with the industrial revolution, humans abandoned their quest for lost intimacy; life reduced to the profane world, and they constructed a productive force that only aims to satisfy material needs. As a result, man became "more estranged from himself than ever before." The man became alienated under frightening and uncontrollable capitalism.[138] This situation does not change in communism. For Bataille, the proletariat is also against the feudal world as the bourgeois. Communism also protects the means of production and also aims to accumulate productive forces.[139]

[133] Bataille, 120.
[134] Bataille, 128.
[135] Hewson, *Georges Bataille*, 168.
[136] Hewson, 169.
[137] Georges Bataille and Georges Bataille, *Vol.2.The History of Eroticism. - Vol.3. Sovereignty*, The Accursed Share, an essay on general economy / Georges Bataille; 2/3 (New York: Zone, 1991), 279.
[138] Bataille, *Theory of Religion*, 92–93.
[139] Hewson, *Georges Bataille*, 133.

Subsequently, in modern society, humans do not need God as the authority; "the order of things" is now preserved by the authority of the instrumental reason.[140] This change of authority refers to Nietzsche's death of God. According to Bataille, modern Western humanity is based on reason, logic, and accumulation of productive forces; by beginning from Christianity, they are rejecting the immediate participation in the world in the interest of assuring its preservation. As I pointed out above, throughout history, humans were searching for the lost intimacy, later on, Judeo-Christian tradition distorted our understanding of religion, afterward, we also stopped to search our lost intimacy with the emergence of industrial society. The profane world, which favors the future over the present, is dominated our lives. Even the science has the same mentality of putting future over the present since the 'knowledge' for Bataille is disconnected to the present; "the moment remains outside, short of or beyond, all knowledge."[141] In modern times, our lives reduced to the pursuit of work and self-interest; it regulated in every way for it to be convenient:

> "In past worlds, it was possible to lose oneself in ecstasy, which is impossible in our world of educated vulgarity. The advantages of civilization are offset by the way men profit from them: men today profit in order to become the most degraded beings that have ever existed."[142]

For Bataille, in the modern world, the scope of possible erotic experiences narrowed down drastically. The modern world is a world in which we cannot assent to life up to the point of death; it is a world that cannot be loved to the point of death. The sphere for humans to satisfy their desire for continuity through bursts of energy became narrow.

Against the modern individual, Bataille defends his 'sovereign man' which is at the center of his ethics. Bataille's notion of sovereignty is connected to the feudal paradigm, and it stands against the mindset of the French revolution and communism. The sovereign man is similar to the nobles of the feudal times since they were the masters: Sovereign man is the one who does not see life as work; he sees life as a play. The idea of sovereignty denies the profane functionalist conception of life; 'the man of sovereign art' desires the sacred, and his enjoyments are the ones which do not justify by the utility. "The man of sovereign art is the man who has strength to endure the anguish of death and face the perpetual work of death"[143]

[140] Hewson, 172.
[141] Bataille and Bataille, *Vol.2.The History of Eroticism. - Vol.3. Sovereignty*, 202.
[142] Bataille and Stoekl, *Visions of Excess*, 179.
[143] Hewson, *Georges Bataille*, 126.

Bataille's sovereignty makes itself independent through the gesture of putting life at stake[144]; this is in line with Nietzsche's Zarathustra's advice to man: "the greatest fruitfulness and the greatest enjoyment is to live dangerously! Build your cities on the slopes of Vesuvius! Send your ships into uncharted seas!"[145]

In this section, I gave Bataille's account of history. Conclusively, the military state turned God into a moral God, and the pure aspect of religion gained importance in contrast to the impure aspect. Later on, Christianity tried to deny the impure aspect completely. For Bataille, this was a failure to grasp the nature of transgression, and it implies a negation of animality. Through Reformation, French and industrial revolutions, God's authority left its place to the instrumental reason, and humans stopped searching for their lost intimacy, Bataille's reading of history reveals that the profane world is gradually dominating the sacred world throughout the history. This gradual domination implies a deterioration for man's sovereignty: The modern world is a world in which we cannot assent to life up to the point of death; life is reduced to work, and man became more estranged from himself than ever before.

[144] Hewson, 127.
[145] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, *The Gay Science*, 228.

III. The Paradoxical Animal and The Last Man

In this part, I will show the history of humans by building it on the frameworks of Bataille and Nietzsche. I will define the human as the paradoxical animal and expose the history as a process of continuous deterioration of the sovereignty of man. As I will explain and show with an illustration, history contains a big leap and four major negations. Each negation implies a decrease in the will to power and an increase in the will to nothingness. In the meantime, each negation causes a more forceful denial of animality and life itself. Throughout history, man is becoming sicker and self-alienated with each significant negation, and the scope of possible erotic experiences are narrowing down. Secondly, I will examine Nietzsche's last man, whom he never elaboratively mentions with the help of a conjoined anthropological approach. I will use the conjoined anthropologies of two philosophers to draw conclusions regards the last man. Lastly, I will focus on the 21st century and mention the two existential threats to humanity by putting them as a result of the exposed historical process.

III.I. History of the Paradoxical Animal

Before diving into the last man, it is necessary to compare and comment on both philosophers' anthropologies. One of the arguments of this thesis is that Nietzsche's and Bataille's anthropologies are supplementary to each other. They have seemingly conflicting but substantially complementary explanations that are filling the holes of each other's weak spots: While Nietzsche emphasizes the sickening effect of the herd mentality, Bataille emphasizes the alienating effect of feeling isolated; While Nietzsche favors an individualistic way of living, Bataille emphasizes the torture of feeling discontinuous from all there is. In order to understand the human situation in the world, they can be read together; they both expose the same course of affairs from different perspectives; the conjunction of their philosophies would give us a better view to human's history, psychology and where we end up in the twenty-first century. Through approaching history from different perspectives, both philosophers strengthen each other's arguments in every step of the way. I do not write this paper just to compare both philosophers and draw some conclusions**.** I aim to determine and explain the condition of the human in the twenty-first century. I think juxtaposing Nietzsche and Bataille and reading them together gives us an adequate understanding of what we are, but more importantly, what we have become throughout history.

The first step for us in the thesis for both first parts of the first two chapters is their method, more specifically, their working style about the matter at hand. They are skeptical about the scientific approach regarding the history of morality. Without explaining why it is the case, modern reader who values science might find their arguments as literarily advanced gibberish. At the basis of their non-scientific approach, lies their denouncement of the 'subject-object' distinction. Since this distinction is at the core of scientific worldview and because they are finding this distinction as something created along with the history by humans themselves, scientific approach to human is doomed to fail; scientific studies can be at best complementary to their investigations. For both thinkers who value historicity, 'subject-object' distinction realized as the result of the historical process; therefore, scientific understanding is not able to draw an accurate picture regards to reality. For Bataille, the scientific approach cannot give us clues about the inner life of humans; for Nietzsche, it cannot move beyond being an illusionary explanation since true knowledge does not exist. As one can see, there is a two-way attack on scientific attitude, which makes the non-scientific approach more convincing.

Another elementary aspect is about what they put at the very ground of their worldview. For Nietzsche, the driving force of the universe, i.e., the driving force of all there is, is 'the will to power;' for Bataille, it is 'the impersonal cosmic energy.' These concepts lie in the ground of their difference in reading human history. It might seem as there is a big difference; after all, there are two different concepts at the heart of their philosophies. Instead, I take these concepts as auxiliary ideas to explain about the humans' way of living. Simply, Nietzsche claims that every living thing seeks above all to discharge its strength; on the other hand, Bataille asserts that every living thing receives the cosmic energy all the time to consume it or to invest it. These simple concepts, which are based on simple hard-to-deny common sense observations, give meaning and support for the whole picture; they help the reader to understand what went wrong throughout history.

Our transition from being an animal to being a human-animal or semi-animal implies a big leap rather than a gradual change. The intellect is the fundamental reason for this big leap. Intellect is our biggest tool. It ables us to use language and to create and use physical tools. Nietzsche takes the language, more specifically, 'giving promises' as his starting point. For him, humans use language to lie and dissimulate; by doing so, they seek to dominate other people. Also, by the usage of intellect, humans collaborate and seek dominance over nature. On the other hand, Bataille takes the use of physical tools, in other words, working as his

starting point. When we become animals who give promise to each other and working with tools, we start to do something which other animals never consciously do: we start to invest in the future. In other words, we sacrifice the now for the later; we take present as secondary and future as primary. Since we are the only animals who do such a thing consciously, we become something else; we become a semi-animal. In other words, we reduced to our consciousness. While using the intellect able humans to shape the future and become masters of their free will, working for the future constitutes a drastic change in regards to their relationship with nature.

'The big leap' is the most crucial point in my thesis because it is the cause of a disengagement which makes humans sick; it represents a milestone in which humans started to self-torture. All following phrases pinpoint to the sickness of humans caused by the big leap: man's turning against himself; saying 'no' to life; will to nothingness; internalization of man; man's suffering of himself; despising life; the negation of animality. Another result of the big leap is our hopeless longing for our animal past: Nietzsche calls it 'homesickness for the wild,' Bataille names it as 'yearning for the lost continuity,' or 'longing for the lost intimacy.'

Nietzsche determines the human situation over and over as sickness; for him, this sickness is not the case for every human being; but it refers to the laymen who were the majority. Nevertheless, for Bataille, yearning for lost continuity, or experiencing oneself as isolated and discontinuous is something valid for all humans. For Nietzsche, the main problem is humans' inability to satisfy their wild instincts under the peaceful atmosphere of living in a society. In other words, this great sickness caused because humans reduced to their consciousness. Consequently, our instincts turned inwards; we started to harm ourselves.

On the other hand, Bataille founds that usage of tools created the profane sphere, which alters our relationship with the world drastically; everything becomes meaningful concerning their functionality. Bataille finds the origin of subject-object distinction in this new relation to the world. Nietzsche finds the origin of "subject" separated from the 'deed' in weak people's resentment towards the strong ones; they were not able to be strong; they deceived themselves as if it is their choice to be weak; they made up a 'subject' as if it was free to be weak or strong which abled them to blame the strong ones; they added a fictitious 'subject' behind the 'deed.' Defining oneself as the separate 'subject' is at the heart of the scientific approach; science operates through putting a distance between the subject and the object. Hence, this shows us why science, together with its 'objective' stance being its most important quality, could fail to

explain the course of human existence since it is something only emerged at a certain point along the historical process.

History of humans contains a series of negations; each negation estranges humans little more from their animality. Human history is a gradual process of deterioration of the sovereignty of man. With each negation, humans deny their will to power little more; they move away from what the sacred sphere offers them, and each negation adds more to the self-torture of humankind. I will expose them in chronological order.

Usage of tools made us construct a new way of relating to the world based on functionality. In this world of objects, we found ourselves alone**.** This is the first negation: In the profane world, we found ourselves separate from all there is, and we started to feel isolated; we have lost the privilege of being present and experiencing the world as other animals, just like being water in water. This change of relationship with reality is something that even the noblemen of Nietzsche cannot escape; without doubt, all humans experience this discontinuity. The way we approach the lost intimacy or the lost continuity was through three types of eroticism, which I examined in Bataille's part. Every erotic experience disrupts work and contains the transgression of taboos. The fundamental transgressions are war, religious festivals, and sacrifices. Every human being experiences his discontinuity; not only the strong ones but every human being can experience the dissolution of the self by erotic experiences and approach to continuity.

Assuredly, strong ones, the warriors were luckier when it comes to enjoying erotic experiences. The motto of history for Nietzsche is "Rome against Judea, Judea against Rome," in other words, nobles vs. laymen. At first, strong ones dominated the laymen; they were physically more powerful; they were beautiful; since they were able to exercise their will to power, they were psychologically healthy. In the same breath, they were easily reaching the sacred sphere; they were the ones who wage wars; they were the ones who can satisfy their sexual needs more freely. They founded the state by forcing the majority to submit through organized military action. Strong ones were not obliged to work as the laymen; they were able to reach to the produced goods by conquest or by the subjugation of others.

Consequently, strong ones had free time and more excess energy to exercise transgressions. In other words, investing in the future was less of a worry for them; they were seizing what others produced; they were able to put themselves in dangerous situations and consume their

energies accordingly to the impersonal cosmic energy. After all, erotic experience implies for the one to be able to consume his energy in accordance with one's emotions and instincts.

Nobles were the sovereign people. From Bataille's perspective, sovereignty is connected to the gesture of putting life at stake, and nobles were strong enough to do so. From Nietzsche's perspective, they were free men since they were able to discharge their strength, and they were not bound to the slave morality.

Conversely, weak ones or the slaves were firmly bound to work to assure that they will have the necessary food and security for the future. Consequently, their chance of erotic experiences was limited. However, for Bataille, religious rites, festivals, and sacrifice gives the possibility for every human being to be a part of the sacred sphere. At this point, we come across a significant difference between Nietzsche and Bataille regards to their understanding of religion. For Nietzsche, the concept of God realized out of societies' feeling of indebtedness towards their ancestors and religion itself has a negative meaning: Slaves made their revolution on morality by the name of God. Their religious moral judgments are based on their feeling of resentment against the nobles. Contrary to Bataille, Nietzsche also has a negative opinion of religious rites, festivals, and sacrifices. Nietzsche asserts that these means who give pleasure are only numbing the pain the weak ones have; they offer no solution for their sickness, but they are making them sicker.

Instead for Bataille, religion has a way more inclusive meaning. Bataille takes religious life as the synonym of the inner life. While Nietzsche describes God as 'nothingness,' for Bataille, God refers to a composite being possessed continuity. For religion, he determines two aspects: pure and impure. While Nietzsche takes the feeling of indebtedness to ancestors as the foundation of God, Bataille takes the same feeling towards ancestors and names it as the pure aspect of religion.

On the other hand, the impure aspect is what Nietzsche pushes out of the religious sphere. Since it is the area of transgression, revolt, and disobedience, it is connected to exercising the will to power. Thus, for Nietzsche, the impure aspect of religion has nothing to do with religion. Nevertheless, for Bataille, the impure aspect of religion is no less divine; people get close to continuity by utilizing the impure aspect.

As we can see, the understanding of the religion of Bataille includes what Nietzsche sees as healthy human behavior, which is the behavior that expresses the will to power; the behavior

which is the release of strength under the name of transgression. Consequently, I am not considering two philosophers' different conceptions of religion as an obstacle for juxtaposing them and presenting as a united anthropological view of human history. I think both philosophers are right: archaic religion both has a sickening effect since the feeling of resentment fuels it, and it also has a positive effect since it opens space to enjoy erotic experiences for the sick majority. Bataille catches what Nietzsche misses; he ascribes a positive meaning to what Nietzsche sees as petty pleasures of slaves: Even though religion is a part of man's turning against itself and slave morality, it lets humans approach continuity.

The slave revolution made by the Jewish people represents the second negation. Slaves, with their hatred for their masters, and with their resentment as the fuel of their creative power, revaluated the moral judgments; they cursed everything related to nobles. This was not a rebellion towards something in life, but it was a rebellion against life itself. This is why it is not an expression of the will to power, but an expression of the will to nothingness. In other words, the slave revolution comes to the meaning of saying "no" to life. Slaves hated what they actually want but do not have; they revaluated their own impotencies as 'blessed' attributes. Here, we see the hypocrisy and paradox of the people who turned their back against themselves. This anomaly is the sign of the sickness of humankind. The slaves who were not able to exercise their will to power blamed others who can: Absurd enough, for them, there was a 'subject' behind the 'deed;' the strong one was able and ought to choose to be weak; beasts of prey should have been acting like lambs; lions should have been acting like camels. The ones who choose not to do so were evil; they were going to be punished by God. As Nietzsche asserts, the above reaction of the majority is actually realized out of their instinct of preservation of life. Whereas paradoxically, what they end up doing is saying "no" to life; they end up willing to nothingness. This is the Nietzschean aspect of the humans as the paradoxical animal or the anomalous animal. Humans both want to live, and they both want to die.

The second aspect of this two-faced attitude towards life is the Bataillean one. While humans try to protect the profane world and limit the sacred world by employing taboos, they are saying 'no' to nature, animality, and continuity. On the other hand, humans seek to transgress taboos in each time they have the courage; they yearn for continuity, but since living fully up to continuity means death, humans become terrified and try to protect themselves. The paradoxical and hypocritic animal, in his life and his moral world, always wants two contradictory things: he wants power, but he denounces it; he wants to participate in continuity,

yet he escapes from it. By the reasons above, I claim that human is the paradoxical animal or the anomalous animal. This is why history is the history of man's suffering of himself; it is the history of a process of self-alienation; it is the history of his ill-constitutedness.

Above, I mentioned how the strong ones constructed their dominance on the majority through the military organization. For Bataille, under the military rule, the role of religion started to change towards something which regulates and protects the social order. Christianity implies an intensification of this new role of religion, and it represents the third negation of our history. It is the victory of Judea over Rome. It implies a stronger regression of the noble mode of valuation; it means more insistent will to nothingness, a stronger version of denying things related to the world for the sake of otherworldly hopes. Under the military rule, the impure aspect of religion, which implies transgression was already losing its importance. With Christianity, the impure aspect is condemned as "devil" and banned. Subsequently, humans who already lost the feeling of continuity and already cursed on their own instincts take a step further and try to block the conditions of possibilities of erotic experiences for the majority. This brings us to my main argument: Without doubt, throughout the history, conditions of possibilities of erotic experiences, i.e., the scope of possible erotic experiences, are narrowing down. Throughout history, the will to nothingness becoming more and more insistent, but also humans progressively limit the areas which will to power be exercised.

In the later phase, together with the reformation, industrial and French revolutions constitute the fourth negation. Through Reformation, the economic sphere gains autonomy from the sacred sphere. The new space opened for secular life precludes industrial capitalism. In the same coin, the French revolution, which has the motto of 'supreme rights of the majority,' accelerated the process; nobles lost their power gradually all around Europe. Under the emerging industrial capitalist system, a new hegemony based on the accumulation of productive forces has been born. While the feudal society is in the process of disintegration, Christianity as an element of this society, which helps to maintain its social order, started to fade away. 'The death of God' refers to this phenomenon. Even though the Christian understanding disregards the impure aspects of religion and envisions God, angels, and demons as discontinuous beings, it was able to protect the pure aspect through the discourse of love, which was claimed to be the uniting force of this multitude of sacredness. However, with the demise of Christianity, under the capitalist hegemony, humanity left its thousands of years of quest for the lost intimacy. In other words, we gave up our search for God as the symbol of

continuity. This is the fourth negation. As a result, humans became more estranged to themselves than ever before. The new social order implies the overwhelming dominance of the profane sphere over the sacred one.

For Bataille, in the world that we no longer searching for God or in the world that Christian mentality has vanished, what constitutes the authority is the 'instrumental reason.' The dominance of the profane sphere over the sacred one also means the dominance of favoring the future over the present. Since the 'knowledge' itself is also always beyond or short of the present, the scientific worldview is also has nothing to do with present. On the other hand, for Nietzsche, one who believes in science is the one who believes the latest version of the ascetic ideal; for him, Christianity and science were always in an alliance. Even the atheists are the heirs of thousands of years lasting slave morality; they are the defenders of so-called 'truth,' but for this time not under the name of God, but the name of instrumental reason.

Overall, the above investigation of human history shows that the man is the paradoxical or anomalous animal who harbors hypocrisy within himself. He is willing to power, but he is also willing to nothingness; he yearns for the continuity, yet he is gradually limiting more and more his space to approach to continuity in the course of history. During the historical process, as I pointed out with the four negations of his own animality, his sickness and self-alienation gradually increase; the scope of possible erotic experiences are narrowing down. Consequently, the sovereignty of man gradually deteriorates throughout history.

The above illustration shows the history of the paradoxical animals and the four basic negations that happened throughout history that I mentioned in this section. The next section will be about the possible future of humankind under the name of 'the last man.'

HISTORY

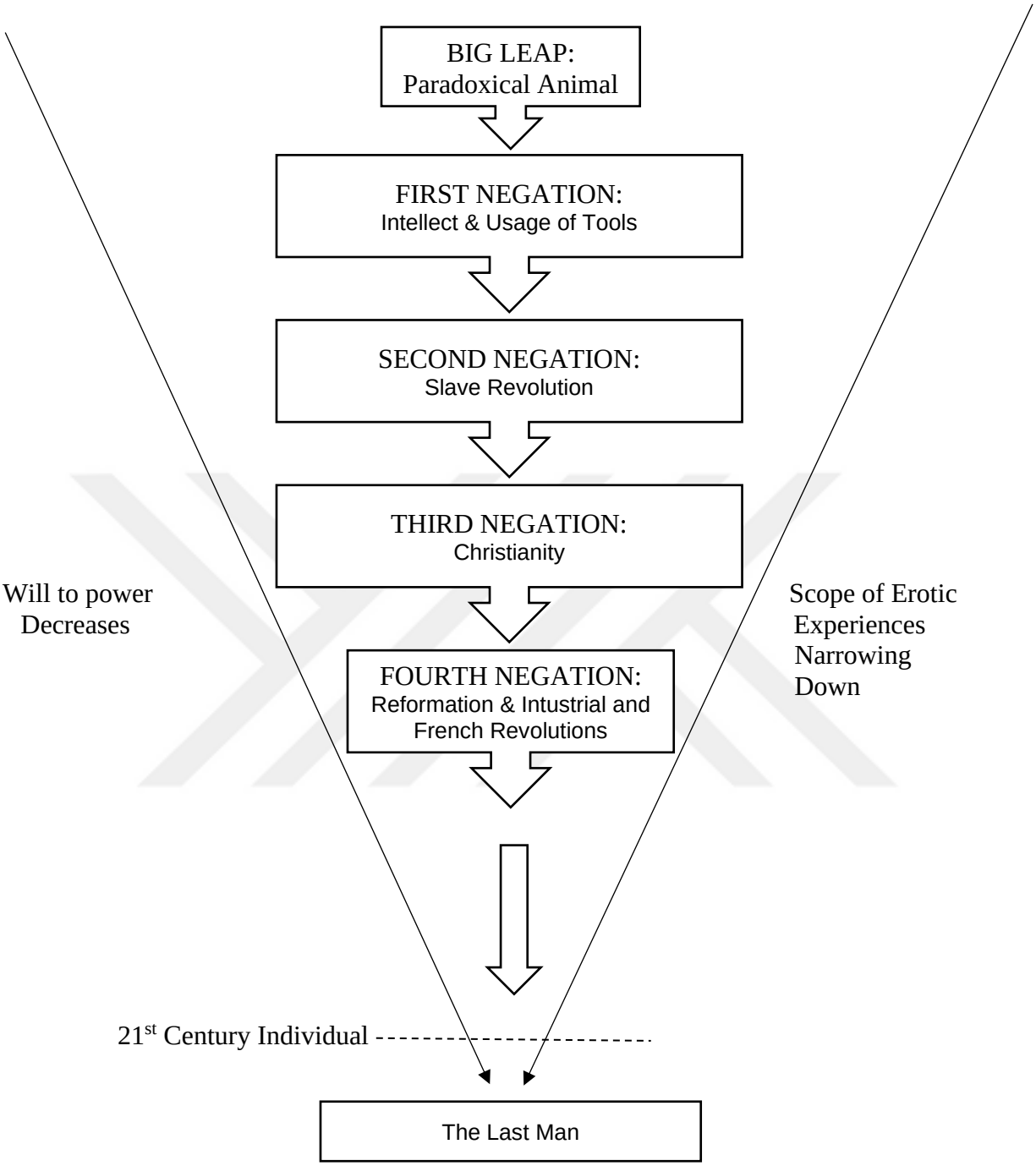

Illustration of History

III.II. The Last Man

For Nietzsche, the historical continuum is bringing us to 'the last man.' He uses the term quite a few times in his works and his unpublished notes. I aim to shed light on the last man by using anthropologies of two philosophers together; in other words, I aim to determine the last man's situation on earth with the help of Bataille's anthropology

Nietzsche claims that "the antithesis of superhumans is last humans."[146] His Zarathustra warns people about the way they are going, yet people do not understand his concerns. The most essential thing in life for the last man is happiness; he has no other goal. His will to power would be so low that he is not able to feel self-contempt. His life is established on conformity; he keeps off anything that might distress him. In his society, everyone wants the same; there are no rich ones or poor ones. If one of them feels different, he voluntarily goes to the insane asylum. He is the man of little pleasures. The last man looks back to history and says: 'Formerly the whole world was insane.' He abandons the regions where it is hard to live; he favors warmth.[147] Last men "measure the value of things in accordance with pleasure and pain"[148] They aim to level and equalize everything about humans as much as possible[149]; they aim to get rid of anything that would be painful for them. In their society, says Zarathustra, "people still quarrel but they reconcile quickly - otherwise it is bad for the stomach."[150]

For Nietzsche, this version of the human would be the most contemptible human being ever existed. He is the ultimate version of the man who says "no" to life; his "no" is the strongest "no" ever said to life. He is apathetic, scared of taking risks, and seeks only comfort. The happiness that the last man finds very important for himself is actually not the happiness but a name for his cowardness. This new naming is just another revaluation, just as his ancestors re-evaluated values thousands of years ago. He is a nihilist in the sense of he also wills to nothingness just as other humans who are the negators of themselves; as I exposed before, this is a sick attitude towards life. Here, we see the hypocritic attitude once again; he believes that a life without struggle, a life that avoids pain at all costs, can bring health and joy. Just as slaves

[146] Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche et al., *Unpublished Fragments: From the Period of Thus Spoke Zarathustra (Summer 1882-Winter 1883/84)*, The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche, volume 14-15 (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2019), 142.
[147] Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, Adrian Del Caro, and Robert B Pippin, *Thus spoke Zarathustra: a book for all and none* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 9–10, https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511812095.
[148] Nietzsche and Kaufmann, *Beyond Good and Evil*, 153.
[149] Nietzsche et al., *Unpublished Fragments*, 218.
[150] Nietzsche, Del Caro, and Pippin, *Thus spoke Zarathustra*, 10.

falsely claimed that there is a "being' behind "doing," the last man invents his illusions as his happiness. He sees superhuman, or anyone different from him as sick, yet he is the sick one.

The morality of the last man is the ultimate evolution of slave morality; it represents the final and the definite victory of Judea against Rome. He is the last man because in a society with everything is equalized, there will be no future evolution. In this society, there is no freedom for man; it is a herd without a shepherd.[151] The last man has no courage to set goals for himself and has no power to overcome obstacles in his life. The last man is the ultimate slave who wills nothingness.

For Nietzsche, Bataille claims that "There was nothing sovereign that the historical world offered him that Nietzsche could recognize."[152] In the last man's society, sovereignty restricted in every possible way for the sake of life-preservation, so it represents the culminating point of the negation of animality. Bataille's viewpoint affirms Nietzsche regarding the way humanity goes, and it helps us to demonstrate the way of living of the last man. For Bataille, "desire for the sacred is essential for the satisfaction of the needs, and it is connected to sovereignty."[153] As I have pointed out before, the sovereign man is the one who has the strength to endure the anguish of death and face the perpetual work of death.

On the contrary to the sovereign man, the last man who pursues only conformity is not free since the freedom lies in the ability to put one's life at risk; it requires to live dangerously to taste the greatest enjoyments. On the other hand, the last man is the one who gave up the sacred world altogether; he has closed himself to the sacred sphere which greatest enjoyments lie upon. The quest for intimacy that we gave up with the 'fourth negation' is something the last man would think only lunatics would pursue. The last man would attempt to go further to deny the idea of intimacy itself since every immediate, intimate participation in the world contains some form of violence.

From Bataillean perspective, in the last man's society, conditions of possibilities of erotic experiences have vanished. Since erotic experiences involve transgression and, consequently, violence, in the last man's society, immediate participation in the world is denied altogether. The last man is the longest living human; his life based upon fleeing from dangerous situations. As I have mentioned in Bataille's chapter, modern society offers nothing to be loved "as a man

[151] Nietzsche, Del Caro, and Pippin, 10.
[152] Bataille and Bataille, *Vol.2.The History of Eroticism. - Vol.3. Sovereignty*, 367.
[153] Hewson, *Georges Bataille*, 126.

loves a woman."[154] The last man's society presumably offers no erotic experience; humans do not or cannot act according to their instincts and emotions; they only act accordingly to instrumental reason, logic, and science. In such a society, noble's activities such as war, adventure, hunting, dancing, war games would be forgotten; any vigorous, free, and joyful activities will not be exercised anymore. In the last man's society, taboos are not there to be violated anymore because every transgression would be a threat in a world in which everything equalized.

It is debatable if the last man would actually be considered human. The last humans' society disregards will to power and the sacred sphere entirely; it is a purely mechanistic society. In other words, animality negationed and disappeared entirely. As I have mentioned before, Nietzsche mentions that slave morality favors the instinct of self-preservation; for Bataille, humanity aims to achieve this goal by means of reducing life to reason, logic, and instrumental functionality. In a life reduced to pure functionality which danger has no place, the wild nature, with its all dangerous aspects, should also be kept apart from humans. In other words, all surroundings should be human-made which has a meaning in the functionalist conception of life.

Both philosophers aim to change the course of history before the last man comes. They are the ones who are at war with civilization as its present-day form. Zarathustra wants men to listen to the chaos within themselves; they still have enough chaos within them to give birth to a dancing star.[155] Men should channel their self-contempt and their dissatisfaction with society to set themselves goals. Only a struggling soul can achieve enjoyment and fulfillment through pursuing their own ends; this is the real recipe for the healthy soul. Nietzsche's goal is to revolt against the ongoing slave morality before the last man arrives. He tries to persuade the strong ones to see the reality with their own eyes; to say 'yes' to life by following their own will to power. He claims:

> "Why there are human beings, why there is "the human," should not even concern us: but why you are there, ask yourself that: and if you cannot find out why, then set for yourself goals, high and noble goals, and perish in pursuit of them! I know of no better

[154] Hewson, 162.
[155] Nietzsche, Del Caro, and Pippin, *Thus spoke Zarathustra*, 9.

life purpose than to perish in pursuing the great and the impossible: animae magnae prodigus."[156]

Just like Nietzsche, Bataille favors the animae magnaea prodigus as the man of sovereign art. He is the one who sees life as a play, just like Nietzsche's child or overman. He rebels against the functionalist conception of life. He is a man who has the artist's soul. He is the one who assents life up to the point of death.

To sum up, the last man represents the sickest human being ever existed on earth who denied life and his animality entirely. He is a slave without a master. He seeks what he calls happiness, which can only be maintained by staying away from danger. He sees the people of the past as lunatics who lived and died like animals. In the last man's society, everything is built upon the instrumental reason which aims to equalize everything. Such a society represents the ultimate negation of animality: Conditions of possibilities of erotic experiences vanished and will to power left its place to will to nothingness ultimately. Emotional and instinctive behavior is precluded for the sake of staying alive. Consequently, there is no freedom left for individuals.

III.III. Existential Threats in the 21st Century

Above, I exposed the historical process and the last man as the possible future of humankind. The individual of the 21st century stands in between the last man and the modern man. Nietzsche famously points out that how Christianity and alcohol served to numb the pain of European people for centuries. In today's society, there is an abundance of numbing instruments. Humans who are not able to enjoy eroticism and exercise their will to power, satisfy themselves by newly created artificial instruments such as drugs, games, and other instruments that create temporal simulative realities. Just like in last man's society, the ones who cannot articulate themselves to life reduced to work voluntarily go to get help from psychologists to fix their unwillingness to participate in today's world. In the 21st century, people who are having problems with the instrumental reason and functionalist conception of life are getting revulsed from society just as if they are a dangerous aspect of nature, which might harm the society through their contagious effects.

[156] Nietzsche's Notebooks, Summer-Fall 1973 29[54]. "The Nietzsche Channel: Friedrich Nietzsche: Popular Quotations," accessed July 28, 2020, http://www.thenietzschechannel.com/quotes/popular-quotes.htm.

Today's society is also slowly becoming a surveillance society. Mass surveillance works as a behavior regulating instrument; people walk on eggs in their daily life because of the feeling that they are always watched. Surveillance society would be a step forward to the last man's world in which every movement is happening according to the mechanistic and regulated conception of life.

However, more important than individual struggles, humans face two major existential threats today. As I have pointed out above, in the last man's society, nature is kept apart from humans with all its dangerous aspects, which might be a reminder of continuity. In such a living place, everything should be human-made and has a function according to the instrumental reason. In today's society, we are already living similarly in cities. Everything in our ordinary life, in our houses and streets, has an instrumental use or a life-preserving attribute.

Our dominance over nature exponentially increased in the last century, and we are continuing to alter nature in the way we please. The negation of our animality reached to a point that it inevitably started to put the existence of whole nature and other creatures' living in danger. Consequently, today, we face the challenges of climate change and the ecological crisis. Earth's geology and ecosystems are under the enormous impact of humanity; for some, we are living in the geological epoch of Anthropocene. The last man's world can be portrayed as the world which is irreparably altered by human actions; today, we are swiftly moving in that direction. For the sake of negation of animality and denying life, in other words, for the sake of limiting nature, which disrupts our way of living, we are moving in the direction of destroying the ecosystem, which able us to actually live on the Earth.

In today's world, human action causes mass extinction of species. We are approaching a state shift in Earth's climate condition. A planetary-scale irreversible critical transition is expected by human influence in the near future.[157] The paradoxical animal who self-alienated throughout history and who shout out "no" to life and to his animality, is not only putting other creatures' existence in threat, but he is also threatening his own living conditions. In other words, the proliferation of the will to nothingness might actually end human existence by destroying the conditions which able humans to live.

[157] Anthony D. Barnosky et al., "Approaching a State Shift in Earth's Biosphere," *Nature* 486, no. 7401 (June 2012): 52–58, https://doi.org/10.1038/nature11018.

Besides the ecological problem, humans face a political threat that might wipe them out from existence. By the beginning of the 20th century, industrial capitalism transformed into monopolistic capitalism. In an atmosphere of declining Christianity, increasingly alienating capitalist system, and under the more substantial influence of will to nothingness or nihilism, societies could not bear the sickening effect of isolation. They hopelessly clung to ideologies that claim to explain the meaning of life and the proper way to move forward. The result was an emergent burst of energy. The sick animal who isolated and repressed appealed easily to ideologies which allegedly promise to heal for them. Inevitably, in the first half of the century, two World Wars erupted. In other words, the will to power and the will to transgress was so repressed; the excess energy created an unprecedented wave of contagious violence, which ended killing millions all over the world.

In the second half of the 20th century, humans came to be on the verge of extinction again and again by the threat of nuclear war. Today, we are living under neoliberal hegemony, and the world is going through a new phase of authoritarianization. In a world in which the urge of continuity and will to power is highly repressed, there is a risk of great bursts of violent energy, which might cause humans to be extinct. Today, we are living in that world, and we are moving to the last man's world, which constitutes greater repression of animality, therefore, a higher risk for self-destruction.

As I have pointed out before, the historical process of deterioration of the sovereignty of man and the life-denying attitude of humans stems from the instinct of preservation of life. The human situation is also paradoxical because this "life preserving attitude" might end up being a life-ending one. The abovementioned ecological and political situations bear the possibility of ending life for humans on earth. In other words, the last man might be the last one not because the evolution of morality stops but because it could be the real end of the existence of the paradoxical animal. The last man might literally be the last man on earth; we could be on the verge of the Great Filter[158]. Under this condition, Nietzsche's and Bataille's warning gains importance for us.

[158] The Great Filter theory, as an answer to the Fermi Paradox, claims that every growing civilization in the universe inevitably comes to a point of self-destruction.

Conclusion

In the first part, I exposed Nietzsche's anthropology. For Nietzsche, the majority of the valuating animal who lives in the state of peace in the society is not able to satisfy their wild instincts. Therefore they end up in the process of internalization; their wild instincts turn inward, and they develop resentment towards the strong minority. For Nietzsche, this process of internalization constitutes the origin of the sickness of humankind. In the historical process, the majority make the slave revolution in morality and revaluate their weak attributes as their features blessed by God. With Christianity, they win a massive victory against the nobles. Later on, ongoing morality becomes the second nature to humans, and they end up getting victory over victory towards the noble mode of valuation.

Consequently, ascetic ideal continues to be the dominant ideal, and even after the downfall of Christianity, slave mode of valuation dominates the society who has a secular and scientific worldview. For Nietzsche, in the latest evolution of the ascetic ideal, there stands the last man and his society. In his society, everything is equalized and leveled. The last man constitutes the man who says the strongest "no" towards life; he would be the most contemptible and the sickest man ever existed on earth. Against the historical drift towards the last man, Nietzsche defends the superman as the redeemer.

In the second chapter, I exposed Bataille's anthropology. For Bataille, humans started to see themselves as isolated beings in nature; they started to feel discontinuous after they start to work and use tools. They invent taboos in order to protect the world of work from the violence and destruction. From time to time, they violated these taboos. Through transgression. they satisfy their nostalgia for the continuity and feel as one with all there is. In other words, through acts of transgression, they enjoy the feeling of intimacy by having erotic experiences. However, Bataille draws a history which the world of work gradually annexing the sacred one. Firstly, under the militaristic state, the role of religion changes: God becomes the moral God, and religion is started to use as an apparatus of the state to protect the social order; the impure aspect of religion loses its importance. Secondly, with Christianity and its failure to understand the nature and use of transgression, humans try to disregard the impure aspect of religion. Later on, with the emergence of industrial capitalism, the profane world again increases its dominance, and the millennial quest for the lost intimacy is abandoned. Bataille states that in the modern world, human life is reduced to the pursuit of work.

In the third part, I start by giving an account of history by uniting anthropologies of Nietzsche and Bataille. They both touch on things that other does not mention. I claim that reading them together provides us a perfected history of humankind. While Nietzsche emphasizes the sickening effect of the herd mentality, Bataille emphasizes the alienating effect of feeling isolated; While Nietzsche favors an individualistic way of living, Bataille emphasizes the torture of feeling discontinuous from all there is. Nietzsche helps us to define the problem of the herd; Bataille helps us to understand the problem of being isolated.

The idea of big leap indicates to the era which cuts off humans from other animals; to the era which man's turning against life and his self-torture began. Origin of the one aspect of it is 'giving promise' by employing the abilities of the intellect; the origin of the other aspect of the big leap is humans starting to work and using tools. Both aspects favor the future over the present. As a result, all events that make human history fascinating started. Throughout history, humans gradually favored the future over the present more and more. The cord is cut, which connects humans to the continuity.

History of humans contains a series of negations; each negation estranges humans little more from their animality. Human history is a gradual process of deterioration of the sovereignty of man. With each negation, humans deny their will to power little more; they move away from what the sacred sphere offers them, and each negation adds more to the self-torture of humankind.

Starting to use tools and forming a new relationship with the world based on functionality represents the first negation. As a result, the profane world realizes, and human finds himself isolated and alone in the universe.

The slave revolution is the second negation. The weak ones who are unable to exercise their will to power revaluate the moral values of the strong ones. Consequently, their will to nothingness, their denunciation of life itself becomes the hegemonic morality.

At this point, human's two-faced attitude towards life reveals itself fully. I define human as the paradoxical animal because of their contradictious attitude. There are two aspects of this sick and paradoxical attitude towards life. First is that while the driving force of the slave revolution is the instinct of preservation of life, they end up denying life itself. Second is that throughout the historical process, humans yearn for continuity, yet they want to stay away from it and limit the sacred sphere. For these reasons, the human is the paradoxical animal or the

anomalous animal. This is why history is the history of man's suffering of himself; it is the history of a process of self-alienation; it is the history of his ill-constitutedness.

Christianity constitutes the third negation: It condemns the impure aspect of religion and comes out as the stronger version of the slave mode of valuation.

Lastly, together with Reformation, industrial and French revolutions come into view as the fourth negation. In the process of the last negation, the nobility vanishes; the life-denier ascetic ideal gains another victory, humans renounce God as the symbol of continuity.

We come across a trend of continual self-alienation and sickening throughout the history of the paradoxical animal by reason of him turning against life and to his animality. Throughout the historical evolution, the will to power leaves its place to will to nothingness more and more, and the conditions of possibilities of erotic experiences narrowing down.

Nietzsche's last man shows up as the latest version of this historical evolution. Since his society is the one in which everything is equalized and leveled, every attempt of releasing strength is precluded. The "no" said by his society to life would be the ultimate and the strongest "no." Consequently, it would mean the full negation of animality.

Nietzsche states that the last man's only goals are comfort and happiness. I claim that what the last man would call happiness is actually a name for his cowardness. Just like how slaves re-evaluated their weaknesses as blessed attributes thousands of years ago (as an example, not being able to take revenge became forgiveness), the last man revaluates his sickness and his denial of life as happiness.

In the society of the last man, there is no sphere of freedom left for the human. Since the latest form of slave morality is in effect, since everything should be leveled and equalized, every kind of transgression and consequently, every kind of immediate participation in the world is denied. As a result, the human appears as a working robot which lives under the command of the instrumental reason. In such a society, taboos are not there to be violated; conditions of erotic experiences have completely vanished; humans cannot experience eroticism. In other words, the sacred world is fully excluded.

In the final analysis, the last man represents the sickest who cannot enjoy life; the ultimate slave who has no freedom; a creature who has no idea about the will to power and the sacred world.

In the last section, I mentioned the two major problems that humanity faces in the 21st century. Ecological and political problems that pose an existential threat came to be realized as the result of the life-denying historical process of the paradoxical animal. Even though the fuel of history was the instinct of preservation of life, paradoxically, it might bring humanity to self-destruction. We might end up finishing the life itself. In this sense, the last man of Nietzsche might also be the last living man on earth. In this context, both philosophers' agenda gains importance for today's humanity.

By waging war against the direction humanity heading to, Nietzsche and Bataille have a world-historic mission. They defend and suggest rebelling against the functionalist and mechanistic conception of life, to have high and noble goals, and to perish and assent up to the point of death in pursuit of them!

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ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to examine the anthropologies of Nietzsche and Bataille to show what humans have become throughout history and what lies in the future. The first two chapters expose their anthropologies. Respectively, I will explain their method, their conception of human, and what humans are yearning for after the major leap which separated them from other animals. I will also mention their own account of human history. In the last chapter, by uniting their anthropologies, I will define the human as the self-torturing paradoxical animal who passed through four significant negations of his animality throughout history. After defining the course of history as a continuous deterioration of the sovereignty of man, I will expose 'the last man' of Nietzsche with the help of Bataille's framework. In the final analysis, the last man represents the sickest human being; the ultimate slave who has no freedom; a creature who has no idea about the will to power and the sacred world. Lastly, I will mention how the last man might be the last one not because the evolution of morality stops, but because it could be the real end of the existence of the paradoxical animal.

Keywords: the last man, Nietzsche, Bataille, history, philosophical anthropology.

Word Count: 19893