Philosophical Genealogy: A User's Guide

MPhil Stud

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I, Victor Braga Weber, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

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Victor Braga Weber, August 28, 2019

Abstract

In what way might our past effect our current philosophical outlook? More particularly, is there any philosophical value in investigating the contexts from which our philosophical outlooks originate? Analytic philosophy has historically responded antagonistically to the suggestion that looking to our past for answers is valuable. Yet some philosophers argue that the search for the origins of our philosophical outlook can be a source of great (meta-)philosophical insight. One such strand are the so-called genealogists. The purpose of this thesis is to understand what the promise of philosophical genealogy is, and whether it can be fulfilled.

A challenge for my project is that the term 'genealogy' has been used to describe very different kinds of things (Section I). As such, I propose to develop a taxonomy of conceptions of genealogy (Section II), identify what the distinctive features of its members are (Section III), and what kind of insight they can give us (Section IV). In the final section (Section V), I return to the question of whether there is any non-trivial claim we can make about what features are shared by the disparate conceptions I identify. I argue that there is, but not at the level of a common philosophical method. This is illustrated by the fact that each conception possesses a distinct object of study, methodology, and explanatory aim, and that each conception provides a different argument for the relevance of investigating the contingent contexts from which our philosophical outlooks originate. Nonetheless, I claim that the three conceptions share a common question—'to what extent should we be concerned that our current outlook is dependent upon contingent features about our past?'—and that each conception should be understood as offering both a different interpretation of this question, and a distinctive set of tools with which to address it.

Impact Statement

This thesis presents a hypothesis about what it means to call something a 'genealogy'. The term is used in different ways throughout the philosophical literature, and a central goal of my project is to prevent philosophers from talking past each other when discussing the methods of genealogical works.

I aim to do so in two ways. First, by categorising examples of genealogies within the literature into different conceptions of genealogy and analysing their structures and methodologies so as to distinguish the ways in which those conceptions operate. There is currently no such an analysis available in the genealogical literature.

Second, by identifying a general problem which I think all the conceptions are concerned by: namely, 'to what extent are the concepts and practices through which we organise our philosophical outlooks *contingent*, and what is the philosophical importance of this fact?' I contend that, at root, what distinguishes conceptions is that they are concerned with different kinds of contingency. Thus, we can think of each as a framework from which we engage with this common problem. We can use different typologies of genealogy to attend to different questions regarding that central problem, for example: 'to what extent does my socio-cultural background undermine my beliefs?'; 'to what extent are my practice functionally justified?', 'to what extent should I think of practices which are not functionally justified as rationally contingent?'. Each question identifies a different kind of contingency which might affect how we think about the effects of the past on our current outlook. Distinguishing the different ways in which our past effects our current outlook helps us to adjudicate on the aptness of our philosophical perspectives. In so doing, genealogies move us as best we can towards a system of ideas that, whilst not free of historical contingencies, is not philosophically threatened by the contingencies of our past. The ramifications of this conclusion is a topic which I would like to explore further within my forthcoming PhD.

Finally, I think that the distinctions I draw between conceptions of genealogy can provide a new perspective through which to examine what conception of genealogy Nietzsche operated under in the most renown example of a genealogy in the literature – his *Genealogy of Morality*. In my final section, I outline the textual support for attributing—as many have done—disparate conceptions of genealogy to him in that work, and discuss the problems involved in claiming any one of them to be Nietzsche's own.

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Contents

Introduction

How does our past affect our current philosophical outlook? Earlier generations of analytic philosophers were antagonistic about looking to our past for answers. This antagonism might stem from Reichenbach's (1938) warnings against conflating a theory's origins—where it comes from: its *context of discovery*—from the reasons we defend it today — its *context of justification.* Amia Srinivasan argues that "Reichenbach's distinction serves as a pre-emptory defence of analytic philosophy's general lack of concern with the contingent contexts from which philosophy itself emerges" (2019, 3).

Nowadays, such antagonism is waning. Many philosophers think that searching for the origins of our philosophical outlook can be the source of great (meta-)philosophical insight. One such strand of philosophers is interested in 'genealogy'. The term has been associated with a broad and influential set of philosophers who believe that philosophy can learn from its own context of discovery. The purpose of this thesis is to understand the promise of genealogy for philosophy, and whether it can be fulfilled without neglecting Reichenbach's warnings.

One complication is that it is unclear to what kind of philosopher genealogies appeal. Perhaps genealogy is concerned with explaining our outlooks through a steadfast naturalism that reveals the all-too-human origins of our concepts and practises, as per the evolutionary-ethicist explaining the origins of our moral judgements. Or perhaps genealogies primarily interest intellectual historians, who isolate the historical foundations on which contemporary practices, identities, and institutions are built, as Foucault did in identifying *madness* as a concept invented in the seventeenth century. Or, different still, perhaps genealogy primarily informs epistemologists wondering whether the circumstances under which our beliefs were formed imputes their reliability.

This thesis attempts to answer two questions that can help to adjudicate on the promise of philosophical genealogy: 'in virtue of what may we label something a genealogy?', and 'what functions do genealogies play within philosophical argumentation?' Put differently, I will have achieved my aims if:

(Objective 1) - I provide the reader with a rubric through which to identify something as a genealogy,

and

(Objective 2) - I enable the reader to articulate the reasons why a (good) genealogy can assist philosophy.

A natural first step is to outline what sorts of things philosophers have in mind when they talk about genealogy. Faced with an audience that is unfamiliar with the concept of a philosophical genealogy, one could certainly do worse than to begin by saying that genealogies are origin-stories that purport to explain how we came to think in the terms that we do, or respond to our environments in the ways that we do.

Thus, it is true of Hume's genealogy of justice, Engel's genealogy of the family structure, Nietzsche's genealogy of morality, Foucault's genealogy of madness and Craig's genealogy of knowledge that they present origin-stories about their subject matters. Of course, by itself, this does not tell us much. Although each are examples of 'genealogies',[1] and present origin-stories, there is much to distinguish the kind of 'story' those authors tell.

This brings us to an initial methodological challenge viz. our two desiderata: the things that have been labelled 'genealogies' seems comprised of heterogenous objects, so how can we speak informatively about genealogy *simpliciter?* For example, both Hume and Engels provide an origin-story about a set of internalised social values by which we organise communal rules related to the concept of private property. Yet whereas the explanatory potency of Hume's story rests on a psychologically situated account about our development of the artificial value of justice, Engels provides a material history of wealth distribution that has critical implications for our mores surrounding familial social-structures. Both seem different to Nietzsche's account in the *Genealogy of Morality* (hereafter, GM), which claims particular importance to the study of philology for genealogical inquiry (GM I:17).

Moreover, genealogists have made disparate claims about the relationship between history and genealogical explanation. Hume describes his genealogy of justice as providing a *state of nature* that is a "mere philosophical fiction, which never had, and never cou'd have any reality" (Hume, 2014, Book 3, Part II, Section 2). The appeal of state of nature accounts for genealogical thinking is shared by several authors such as Rousseau, Hobbes, Williams, Fricker, and Craig. In contrast, Foucault and Geuss have understood genealogy to be "grey, meticulous, and patiently documentary" (Foucault, 1977, 76) — that is, they understand genealogical analysis to be predicated upon close examination

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[1] Some authors discussed in this thesis might not have considered themselves to be doing something called 'genealogy', but have had the term retrospectively applied to their work.

of historical evidence. These differences suggest there is no one-size-fits-all description that pertains to all genealogies. Proposing otherwise would mean arguing the case that none of the differences described above are pertinent to understanding what makes something a genealogy, despite what some of the authors of those genealogies themselves thought.

This conclusion might be contested as too hasty. Foucault's and Hume's genealogies are inarguably methodologically distinct, yet this does not disprove that they may share a common philosophical function. Were it possible to assimilate both genealogies in this way, it might point towards a compelling definition of genealogy. As an analogy, suppose I were to try and reach the concept of *desire* by considering examples of the different kinds one might experience: a desire for food, a sexual desire, a desire to lead a meaningful life. These present different modes of desire, and it is not clear that they share any phenomenological commonality. But this in no way disproves that desire is not a univocal concept.

So perhaps we can similarly uncover univocality in the function of genealogies. To do so, a natural next step is to provide a further uncontroversial description of the kind of role genealogies play in philosophical argumentation. The problem is that, here again, there is no obviously similarity of purpose in the way genealogies are employed. Some, like Hume's genealogy of justice, *vindicate* certain social behaviours; others, like Nietzsche's genealogy of morality, *undermine* them. It is not evident that these genealogies share a common function. One could reply that the same methodology can to lead to vindicatory results in one case and debunking explanations in another. If my friend and I believe we are descendants of Darwin and undertake a DNA test to verify, the results produced by the same method could vindicate one of us in our belief, but destabilize the other. However, what here justifies our claim that DNA testing played the same function for both of us is that the same method was applied. For Hume's and Nietzsche's genealogies, our question is precisely whether they are instances of a common type of inquiry. Thus, while the fact that some genealogies are vindicatory and others critical does not imply that they do not share a common function, on the other hand the fact that genealogies can not only look different, but deliver different kind of results, also leaves us with scant justification to continue speaking of 'genealogy' as a univocal concept.

As such, any attempt to provide a *unified* definition of what genealogies look like, or what their function is, seems under threat. An approach that insists too strongly on the univocality of genealogies risks triviality. Although we might agree that all genealogies are origin-stories, such a claim doesn't seem to say much about what, if anything, makes a genealogy a genealogy. Worse still, were we to claim that being origin-stories is all that can be said about genealogies we would need to call

genealogies many things that do not seem to be. In telling you that I took the bus to the bouldering centre, have I really given you a genealogy of my trip?

These preliminary considerations suggest that the best way forward is to provide a taxonomy of genealogical typologies that exist in the literature, and ask what relationship they share. Of course, there is no guarantee that anything substantive can be said about why such different philosophical exercises have come to be called 'genealogies'; after all, there is nothing inherently philosophically valuable in the act of providing taxonomies. Consider the set of things that are called a 'genealogy' in the literature; call it set G. If members of G are conceptually unrelated, we may not learn anything more from the enterprise of partitioning members of G than the fact that each of them are members of G. Providing a rubric to identify whether something is a member of G could turn out to be as pointless as providing a rubric for identifying the members of the set {[Cats], [Donald Trump], [The colour orange]}. The issue is not that one could not give a disjunctive set of conditions that exhaustively identifies each of its members, but that there would be little philosophical merit in doing so. Why think a taxonomy of genealogies has more merit?

To answer this, it is helpful to distinguish between different levels of similarity that might connect the objects referenced by the term 'genealogy'. On the lowest level, one can hold that the word describes several modes of enquiry that share only trivial resemblances. Defenders of this first view would hold that there is no significant commonality between the different conceptions of the genealogical that are found throughout the history of philosophy. If this were the case, then the best result this project could hope to give is to disambiguate the unrelated meanings which the term has been given in order to prevent philosophers from talking past each other.

An opposite position is that a univocal characterization of the genealogical method can be given. Such a position needs to provide a unified account of what is philosophically distinctive about genealogies so one could come to understand on what basis any genealogy is a genealogy, and deduce the philosophical function of genealogy. As we have seen, I think there is reason for scepticism that such an account can be given.

The position I want to defend is different to both, inhabiting a middle-ground. In common with the first position, I do not think that we can provide a univocal description of the genealogical method. Some differences between genealogies are too substantial to warrant the claim that they are members of the same method of inquiry. However, this leaves the possibility that these different methods of inquiry are all concerned with the same general problem. To foreshadow my concluding analysis, understanding how genealogical typologies differ can help us understand that the term

'genealogy' picks out a family of methods that seem concerned with the same two central questions. Namely, to what extent are the concepts and practices through which we organise our philosophical outlooks *contingent*, and what is the philosophical importance of this fact? However, the methods are not interested in the same *kind* of contingency, and, because of this, they predicate their investigations upon different kinds of questions about contingency, such as: 'to what extent does my socio-cultural background undermine my beliefs?'; 'to what extent are my practices functionally justified?', 'to what extent should I think of practices which are not functionally justified as rationally contingent?'. Each question is concerned with a different way in which contingency in our past affects our outlook. I will argue that we can associate each concern with a distinct conception of what genealogies are, and what insights they deliver, but that, nonetheless, it makes sense to describe each of them as concerned by the same central problem.

My thesis subdivides into five sections. The first two set-out my project's parameters. Section I provides seven case studies of works that have been called genealogies which, taken together, represent the literature. In each case, I try to point out the salient features that distinguish these genealogies from each other. Section II sets out the rubric by which I propose to differentiate typologies of genealogy. I propose three components to this rubric: its object of study, its explanatory aim, and its methodology.

The next two sections apply this rubric to the philosophical literature to identify the underlying typologies of genealogies involved. I discuss three conceptions of genealogy: the *Revelatory Causal Narrative* conception (RCN), the *Histories of the Present* conception (HoP), and the *Situated Psychological Explanations* conception (SPE). Section III introduces each, before analysing them in terms of the three components of my suggested rubric. This will satisfy (Objective 1) at the level of individual conceptions and leaves an analysis of (Objective 2) for Section IV. Here, I investigate how the three conceptions respond to the well-known challenge that genealogies commit the *genetic fallacy*.[2] In understanding how each responds, we come to understand how genealogy under that conception can contribute to philosophical knowledge.

In Section V, I return to whether anything can be said about genealogy *simpliciter*. I argue that although our taxonomy of genealogical typologies shows us that genealogies do not share a unified philosophical method, the three conceptions outlined are united by a concern for our relationship to contingency in our past. I think this provides a higher-level answer to (Objective 1)

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[2] For reasons still to be discussed, I consider the genetic fallacy to be closely tied to Reichenbach's context conflation warning.

and (Objective 2). I conclude that, collectively, genealogies help us move as best we can towards a system of ideas that, whilst not free of historical contingencies, is not philosophically threatened by the contingencies of our past.

Section I

In this section, I summarise seven examples of genealogies in the philosophical literature in order to familiarise the reader with the kinds of things that have been called 'genealogies', and to highlight what seem to me to be the most significant differences between them. Understanding the ways in which these genealogies differ is the first step to understanding why one cannot speak of a unified genealogical method.

The Case Studies

(I) Xenophanes: Genealogical Argument on Greek Theology

Amia Srinivasan (2019) highlights the following passage of Xenophanes:

"Mortals suppose that the gods are born (as they themselves are), and that they wear man's clothing and have human voice and body. But if cattle or lions had hands, so as to paint with their hands and produce works of art as men do, they would paint their gods and give them bodies in form like their own—horses like horses, cattle like cattle" (1898, fragments 5-6).

According to Xenophanes, certain Greek theological projections are not best explained by positing some felicitous metaphysical aptitude of humans for correctly divining the form of the gods, but rather through a form of narcissistic anthropomorphism that shows itself in the assumption that the divine must have all-too-human features. For Srinivasan, the passage exemplifies a certain format of argumentation which she thinks will be familiar to us; and although a precise formulation of why we should find the theological belief ascribed to the Greeks in this passage deficient is difficult to articulate,[3] many of us will intuitively grant it some argumentative force. Not so much force as to conclude that Xenophanes' thought entails Greek theology to be false, but enough to convince us that thinking about the causal origins of our interpretations will, at least sometimes, "undermine, destabilise or cast doubt on the legitimacy or standing of those representations" (Srinivasan, 2019, 2). Her discussion of Xenophanes suggests that whatever is distinctly genealogical about this kind of

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[3] Contemporary Epistemologists would explain it through contemporary epistemological concepts which clearly cannot be ascribed to Xenophanes.

reasoning has at least something to do with the familiar form of its argument, as well as the intuitiveness of its force.

(II) Experimental Philosophy

Srinivasan's discussion of Xenophanes suggests one way of thinking about genealogies that has a long pedigree. However, as Srinivasan herself points out ((2015, 326-327), (2019, 2-3)), it is an argumentative strategy to which the Analytic tradition was deeply critical within the early twentieth century. The kernel of this criticism was that genealogical arguments are deficient because they commit the *genetic fallacy*.

Yet despite its historical antipathy to genealogy, Srinivasan contends that the tide is shifting on Analytic Philosophy's scepticism towards genealogical reasoning. She points (2015, 326) to a number of contemporary philosophical works—across such diverse topics as morality, theism, metaphysics, math, logic, naturalism and epistemology—that make central use of genealogical scepticism. Srinivasan thinks this is at least partly explained by the newfound availability of genealogical arguments from fields of inquiry which Analytic Philosophy tends to consider less speculative than those around which genealogical argumentation in the twentieth century centred (2019, 3-4).

Perhaps the most illustrative of the contemporary genealogical arguments is that presented by so-called *Experimental Philosophy*. Unlike the case of Xenophanes, this kind of genealogical argumentation is deeply empirical. Experimental Philosophy utilises experimental evidence to undermine the validity of appeals to intuition in philosophical argumentation by showing that "people's judgements about epistemology, ethics, philosophy of language and metaphysics systematically vary with culture, gender, socioeconomic status and extent of philosophical training" (Srinivasan, 2015, 326). As an example, consider Srinivasan's discussion of what she calls "an exaggerated version of the result claimed by Weinberg, Nichols and Stich (2003)" (2015, FN 9):

> *Experimental Gettier:*
> Suppose there was empirical evidence that supported the thesis that it is possible to partition philosophers into two groups—Westerners and Easterners—such that members of either group share the same philosophical judgements with other members within their group, but opposite judgements to members of the other group. In particular, when confronted with instances of Gettier cases, all the Westerners share the judgement that Gettier's Jones does not know, while all the Easterners take the opposite view. Suppose also that group membership demonstrates a remarkably strong correlation to facts about a particular philosopher's upbringing which we traditionally thought of as irrelevant to their capacities for forming philosophical judgements. The new evidence suggests that people's judgements

about Gettier cases are caused by their cultural upbringing rather than by the truth about those cases.

As Srinivasan suggests, the actual evidence provided by experimental philosophy does not allow for such strong conclusions. However, on the assumption that we were in possession of such evidence about the origins of our beliefs, that evidence would give us reason to doubt our judgements about Gettier cases, and to do so without committing the genetic fallacy.

(III) Hume: A Treatise on Human Nature

The examples of Xenophanes and Experimental Philosophy present genealogy as an undermining form of inquiry. However, not all genealogies are like this.[4] In fact, the purpose of some genealogies—dubbed 'vindicatory' by Williams (2002)—is precisely to legitimate a social practice.

An example is David Hume's account of the origins of justice. Hume's discussion of justice begins with the proposal that what makes an act virtuous is the fact that it is motivated by a virtuous principle. For example, a parent's act of caring for their child's wellbeing is virtuous, according to Hume, because it is motivated by *natural affection* which is the duty of every parent. The fact that parents have a natural duty of care towards their offspring provides a principle in virtue of which acts motivated by this principle are to be considered virtuous. Hume argues that to qualify as an appropriate principle for virtuous action, the principle must be distinct from the sense of the action's morality. He gives the example of the man who, although devoid of feelings of gratitude, acts gratefully because he views acts of gratitude as moral — that is, the man's principle for action was not provided by a principle that is independent to the sense of the action's morality, and this negates its virtuousness. Having established this axiom, Hume goes on to consider the case of a person who has been lent a sum of money, and asks what principle is supposed to guide her in the obligation of repaying the debt so as to make her actions virtuous. He considers various 'natural' reasons—i.e. reasons that are immediately accessible to Reason, as opposed to artificial reasons, which require the intervention of thought and reflection—such as the regard for public interest, or a natural love for mankind. Having rejected each of these out of hand, Hume concludes that insofar as mankind has come to consider justice (construed as respect for property rights) a virtue, it has done so artificially. The virtue of justice, unlike the virtue of showing natural affection to one's progeny, required a formation process before it could be appreciated.

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[4] Srinivasan (2019, 2) explicitly agrees that genealogies can come in vindicatory form.

The formation process—i.e. the origin-story—Hume provides for the artificial value of justice is best thought of in model-like terms; in particular, it is a model given in terms of a particular psychology-type that Hume thinks attributable to mankind generally, and an environmental situation to which that psychology-type is responsive. Amongst the environmental features lies the fact that humans live under conditions of relative material scarcity and that they live in family units. Whereas the psychological features Hume attributes to mankind include people's self-interest, their limited capacity for sympathy, and their capacity to learn the benefits of mutual cooperation in a familial setting.

Hume claims that reflection on the psychological and environmental variables he describes motivate the establishment of conventions regarding property rights. For example, paying back one's debts will come to be considered a virtuous act because its overall effect is beneficial to all, as it promotes peaceful coexistence and economic security. Hume explains that while the initial normative force of these conventions would have derived from the 'natural' normative force of self-interest (one pays back money because it is in one's interest to maintain one's reputation), eventually these conventions become so inveterate that they are considered binding by agents independently of their own self-interest. That is, the conventions become 'moralised' in the sense that respect for property rights comes to be viewed as a good *in itself*. The outcome of this formation process is a new, collective, reason for action: the moral value of justice.

Hume's account possesses several interesting features. Firstly, his account offers a clear example of a vindicatory genealogy. According to Hume, we have developed the practice of justice because it is a reasonable response to situations we, as humans, commonly find ourselves in. A substantial part of the account's vindicatory force comes from its model-like characteristics: the practice of justice is reasonable *given such-and-such psychological and environmental constraints*.

Secondly, Hume claims the state of nature is *not* a reference to a particular moment in human history. Another example of such a genealogy is Rousseau's origins of injustice, which Neuhouser (2012) argues was not meant describe an earlier state in mankind's history, but an idealised environment. This puts both Hume and Rousseau in the company of recent thinkers such as Williams, Fricker, and Craig who see genealogies as having explanatory value despite the fact that the origin-story they provide is fictional.

Finally, Hume's genealogy of justice can fruitfully be described as utilitarian. Prinz provides a helpful characterisation of what it means to call a genealogy *utilitarian:*

"Utilitarian accounts have some characteristic features. First, they present morality as beneficial. Second, in these accounts, the initial function of morality is continuous with its present function. Third, they collapse the question 'Why are we moral?' and 'Why be moral?'" (2016, 181)

Prinz contrasts these utilitarian genealogies with materialist genealogies; he has in mind works of Feuerbach, Marx and Engels.

(IV) Engels: The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State

The defining feature of materialist genealogies is that they present material factors—such as technology, economic systems, and labour conditions—as the major factors driving societal change (Prinz, 2016, 184). In materialist genealogies, high-level psychological analyses play a much less vital role than they did in Hume's genealogy, relying instead on materialist descriptions of key stages in society's development. Prinz notes that another important difference between utilitarian and materialist genealogies is that the latter "make an effort to provide evidence for the histories they offer" *(Ibid.)*, for example by relying on ethnographical research about societies that evidence one of the 'prior' stages of material development. This is supposed to contrast with the genealogical speculations of Hobbes and Hume that were inspired by reports about life among 'primitives' or 'savages' (Prinz, 2016, 185) that were woefully uninformative by comparisons to the standards that would develop in the subsequent century. Prinz sees this difference as correlating to the emergence, in the nineteenth century, of history as its own field of study.

As a counterpoint to the utilitarian genealogies of Hume and Hobbes, Prinz (2016, 185-187) discusses Engel's work on the origins of private property, whose real focus is the changing fate of women within society. According to Engels, familial organisation in early societies—called the consanguine family—existed within a social-structure where there were no stable romantic bonds between individual men and women, and where the only taboos were intergenerational. The absence of monogamy meant that tracking parentage was difficult for males, which gave women a systemic advantage that resulted in a matrilineal social organization. Due to the lack of incest taboos, these societies were speculated to be biologically unsustainable, thus leading to the development of a new form of familial organisation—the punaluan family—wherein bonds between siblings and first cousins were restricted, but romantic bonds were commonly not monogamous. This retained the women's structural advantage concerning parentage. However, as technology progresses, this system becomes unsustainable given economic change precipitated by animal domestication that was thought to have removed the need for nomadic lifestyles, and allowed for greater accumulation of material wealth which could be passed down throughout generations. Males are thought to have played a more

prominent economic role in this new environment, giving them a greater share of the accumulated wealth. This introduces a new asymmetrical factor between the sexes, which moved society towards a patrilineal system of inheritance. Under this new system—called the pairing family structure—asymmetric kinship relations arose, with men taking multiple wives. The men's desire to distribute their wealth solely within their own lineage led to restrictions in female sexual access. However, this male-centric polygamy still led to material tensions based on inheritance disputes amongst the offspring of the multiple wives. The system shifted into a differentiated polygamy, where a primary bride is selected, and eventually evolved into the modern practice of asymmetric monogamy, in which women's sexual indiscretions are treated more severely because they introduce uncertain paternity.

I do not discuss materialist genealogies much throughout this thesis. However, there are two features of Prinz's interpretation of Engels' materialist account that are useful for framing GM within the context of other nineteenth century genealogies. Firstly, Engels' account privileges materialist analyses which tend not to posit hidden motives behind human behaviour. The motives we find in Engels, such as the desire for power and profit, are explicitly extolled by capitalism. Prinz's highlighting of materialist genealogies is interesting because there is scarce discussion of vindicatory genealogies that de-emphasizes psychology in the genealogical literature. It is doubly interesting because Prinz links this facet to what he sees as the unique advantages of Nietzschean genealogies. Although Prinz (2016, 192-193) provides his own—slightly idiosyncratic—six-featured conception of Nietzschean genealogy, what interests me here is his depiction of Nietzschean genealogies as presenting a middle-path between utilitarian and materialist genealogies that does not require us to subscribe to all of his contentions about Nietzsche. According to Prinz's middle-path argument,[5] utilitarian genealogies provide due consideration of how our psychology effects changes in our morality, but they tend not to provide due consideration of historical particularism. Conversely, materialist genealogies are based on strong empirical evidence and historical detail, but tend to lack serious consideration of psychology. Whereas the singular advantage of Nietzschean genaelogies is that they marry due consideration of both.

Secondly, materialist genealogies like Engels' help illustrate what Bevir calls the developmental conception of history to which he (Bevir) thinks that the Nietzschean conception of genealogy is supposed to break from. According to Bevir,

> "Nineteenth century historicism was almost always developmental. It conceived of history
> as guided or structured by certain principles. While the principles varied from thinker to

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[5] The point is made by (Chaudhri, 2016, 204).

thinker, the most commonly accepted ones included liberty, reason, nation, and statehood. These principles give a progressive direction to history" (2008, 266).

In Engels' genealogy, this progressive directionality is illustrated by the Marxist analysis of the different stages of societal material development that account for the structure of familial organisation at any one time. According to Bevir (2008, 266), there is no developmental principle in GM which is supposed to account for the history of developmental change. Instead, GM portrays history as discontinuous and contingent (Bevir (2008, 268), see also Koopman (2009), Geuss (2001, *xii-xiii*)).

Thus, Prinz and Bevir provide distinct suggestions for the way in which Nietzsche's genealogy differs from its eighteenth- and nineteenth-century predecessors. Prinz frames the difference in terms of the appeal to arguments from moral psychology, whereas Bevir locates the difference in a reaction to a developmental conception of history.

(V) Geuss: Private Goods, Public Goods

Bevir describes Nietzschean genealogy as a *radical historicist* form of enquiry that takes historical development to be a product of contingent clashes of historical forces (ideas, movements, material conditions, etc.) whose outcome is accidental rather than guided by predictable historical principles. This description of genealogy gained traction in the twentieth century following Michel Foucault's reading of Nietzsche (especially Foucault (1977)). A good example of such a genealogy is Raymond Geuss' *Private Goods, Public Goods,* that provides a genealogy of the distinction between 'private' and 'public' as it appears in traditional liberal theory. Focussing on Geuss' work is advantageous in that his explication of the Foucauldian conception of Nietzschean genealogy are more lucid than Foucault's own. As such, I use Geuss' work to illustrate the relationship between genealogy and radical historicism.[6]

Geuss' genealogy begins by discussing two founding figures of European Liberalism—Constant and Humbolt—who wrote about the advantages of societies that privilege an individual's 'private existence' and 'private life', respectively, over their public counterparts. In part due to their work, the notion that there is a *private sphere* to be contrasted with "a public world of law, economics, and politics" (2001, 5) became influential in traditional liberal theory, and was paramount for establishing the way we think about what should be allowed—and indeed encouraged—in individuals'

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[6] We must be careful in ascribing the label of 'radical historicism' to Geuss as this is Bevir's term. Geuss explains his understanding of History in his genealogy's preface (2001, *xii-xiii*). In calling Geuss a radical historicist, I am claiming that this understanding of history is substantively the same as Bevir's. A claim that is further substantiated throughout this thesis.

existence in the private and public spheres. By contrast, Geuss' central thesis is that there is no singular distinction that captures everything we mean by 'public' and 'private'. This distinction, Geuss thinks, conflates three conceptions of 'public' and 'private' from different historical periods. Now, we might assume that having identified a conflation, the natural course of action is to untangle it through conceptual analysis. However, a correlate part of Geuss' thesis is that the private/public distinction has become normalised by Liberalism to such a degree that only a genealogy that traces its historical origins, and in so doing demonstrates what the conflated concepts 'looked like' when employed separately, could help us understand why current liberal usage is illegitimate. The three conceptions of public/private form the next three chapters. I will here only summarise the first two, which suffice to illustrate the general strategy of Geuss' book.

In the first chapter, Geuss considers the case of the Athenians' objections to Diogenes of Sinope's act of masturbating in a 'public' place (the agora). According to Geuss, the Athenians' were offended by this act for three reasons. Firstly, it violated the principle of *civil inattention*, according to which individuals who find themselves in a locale where they can expect to be observed by people they do not know personally must act in such a way as to avoid being systematically obtrusive (13). Secondly, Diogenes' onanist act is thought to violate the principle of avoiding near occasions of envy, according to which it is "thought to be inappropriate to exhibit the satisfaction of certain basic, imperative human needs in the presence of others if that satisfaction is problematic, precarious, or otherwise not to be taken for granted" (15) — for example, eating in public in a society where food is scarce, or sexually gratifying oneself in a society where social or other factors restrict the possibility to do so. Thirdly, it is thought to be connected with the production of a pollutant — in this context those associated with human bodily excretions and secretions. Importantly, the Athenians' disgust is not with the onanist act in and of itself, but with the context in which it occurs. Although one tends not to feel disgust when relieving oneself in the privacy of a toilet, one might feel revulsion at the spectacle of public micturition. Geuss theorises that the difference between these situations is linked to the notion of intimacy that alters the social boundaries of an acts shamefulness and offensiveness. Thus Diogenes' third offence is his lack of shame about masturbating in an insufficiently intimate context.

Although conceptually distinct, the Athenians' three reasons for objecting to Diogenes' act relate through an amalgamated conception of the difference between the 'private' and the 'public' sphere. The applicability of all three objections is mediated by the social context in which an act occurs. The principle of civil inattention does not apply in contexts where one is only liable to be seen by people whom would generally not mind being obtruded upon. Likewise, in sufficiently intimate

contexts, a larger selection of satisfying acts will not risk causing envy, or risk causing disgust or shame at the production of 'pollutants'. (Although these contexts might not be identical: one's close friends might not mind one's prominent display of wealth, but they might not want to come into contact with potentially infectious bodily secretions, etc). Due to this correlation between the circumstances in which Diogenes' act would or would not cause offense, we can say, accurately, that the wrong caused by Diogenes was that he "did 'in public' what we (and the Athenians) think ought to be done only 'in private', despite the fact that the Athenians did not have individual words for our concepts of 'public' and 'private'" (31).

In the second chapter, Geuss considers the reasons for which the Roman senators found Julius Caesar, as an elected representative of Rome, to have failed to fulfil his duties to the *res publica.* The senators were concerned by Caesar's refusal to give up his troops and return to Rome as a 'private citizen' in order to stand trial for various political irregularities, and argued that his refusal to do so posed a threat to the *res publica.* Under Roman usage, the term *res publica* is "systematically ambiguous" (36) denoting: (i) a sense of property (originally the property of the army, and later shifting to denote the property of the whole population); (ii) the status quo of power relations in Roman society; (iii) matters of common, or collective, concern to all Romans; and (iv) the common good of all Romans.[7] Geuss explains, further, that

> "[a]lthough the Romans had a clear notion of the common good, they had no concept of 'the state' as a separate abstract structure of powers distinct from an actual set of people who held those positions of power" (41-42).

The semantic ambiguity invoked by *res publica* illustrates the difficulty encountered by the Roman senators in Caesar's case: as a holder of a public office, the distinction between *priuatus* and *publicus* leaves ambiguous whether the good for Caesar was a public or a private matter.

The ambiguity came to a head once Caesar arrived with his troops to the Rubicon: he knew that crossing the river into Italy would *ipso facto* mean the declaration of civil war, leading to the potential destruction of the Roman *res publica.* On the other hand, not doing so would result in a diminution of his standing. In choosing to cross the Rubicon, Caesar "chose to put his private interest before the common or public good" (46); this was understood to be the case by the Romans because, despite lacking a concept of the State, in crossing the Rubicon Caesar broke with the expectations of how holders of public office *ought* to behave. The case of Caesar, Geuss argues, helps us understand

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[7] The ambiguity being facilitated by the semantic ambiguity of the term 'res' which shifts from denoting the concrete (property, land, objects), to the abstract (matters of common concern, or the common good).

how the sense of 'public' included the common good of all (48), and that Caesar acted against the public interest insofar as he allowed "his private interests, that is, an interest he has as a non-office holder… to influence a decision that ought to have been based on what was best for the *res publica*" (50).

The Roman conception of one's public and private duties is predicated on a completely different set of concerns than those described in the case of Diogenes. However, Geuss argues, these two distinctions between 'private' and 'public' have become conflated within liberal theory, such that when Liberals use the distinction to demarcate a sphere of private interests, they do so only in a highly ambiguous manner. Consider, for example, the coherence of claiming that both the question of whether it is permissible for the state to regulate access to pornographic content within one's home, and the question of whether the President of the United States should be obliged to reveal his tax returns before he is eligible to take office, rest on the same conception of 'public' and 'private'. Geuss concludes that the fact that liberal usages of 'public' and 'private' do not track a single distinction

> "does not *in itself* mean that any particular thing… that is now valued as a special public or private good is unimportant. It does suggest, however, that it would be a good idea for us to think again before appealing unreflectively to 'the public/private distinction' in justificatory contexts" (106).

That is, we should seek a clearer, more individuated understanding of what this purported distinction is for, and when it is legitimate to appeal to it.

Two points warrant emphasis. Firstly, Geuss' project has critical ambitions: he wants his genealogy to challenge what he sees as an uncritical assumption made by Liberalism about the distinction's coherence. His end-goal is to change the "way we think about the good in various public and private contexts" (6). Doing so requires an understanding of genealogies as possessing normative power, such as legitimating the claim that Liberals *ought not* to employ the distinction in the way that they have. Secondly, Geuss' genealogy makes reference to a highly specific set of events to which we can attribute specific people, places, and dates. This lends Geussean genealogy a particular historiographical texture that is not shared by the previous examples, and which I think is closely correlated to his conception of genealogy.

(VI) Williams: Truth and Truthfulness

It is enlightening to compare the historiographical texture of Geuss' genealogy to that of Bernard Williams' (2002) genealogy of truthfulness, which discusses both how our conception of truthfulness could be imagined to have come about, and how aspects of it did come about.

Williams' genealogy begins by identifying two currents in modern thought: a reflex against deceptiveness, and a pervasive suspicion about truth. Both are connected in that the desire for truthfulness drives a process of criticism that weakens our assurances about unqualified truths; for example, in the worry that all our historical narratives will turn out to be biased or self-serving. However, Williams questions the extent to which truthfulness is sustainable if one does not believe in truth (he has Rorty 'Ironist' in mind, in particular). He proposes that to truly understand our own attitudes toward truthfulness, we need genealogy.

Williams' genealogy proceeds as follows. He first describes a set of very basic human needs and limitations that define a state of nature. For example, Williams notes that there is a need in human societies to share information — e.g. some members will possess knowledge about local threats or opportunities by virtue of the fact that they found themselves in the right place at the right time, and need to communicate this to others. He calls this a need for a division of epistemic labour (41-45). He proceeds to deduce two characteristics—Sincerity and Accuracy—that will be considered virtues of truthfulness by individuals in the state of nature, given the functional role that the division of epistemic labour will play in their lives. In brief, in order for the division of epistemic labour in the state of nature to prove effective, individuals in that society need to be able to trust that their interlocutors will not be inclined to pass on false or misleading information,[8] and that they can trust their interlocutor to have undergone reasonable efforts to ensure that the information they pass on is correct.

The establishment of the motivations behind treating Sincerity and Accuracy as virtues of truthfulness marks the end of the *fictional genealogy* portion of Williams' book. He claims to have established, through a naturalistic account, what it is for something to possess intrinsic value:

> "I suggest that it is in fact a sufficient condition for something (for instance, trust-worthiness) to have an intrinsic value that, first, it is necessary (or nearly necessary) for basic human purposes and needs that human beings should treat it as an intrinsic good; and, second, they can coherently treat it as an intrinsic good" (92).

However, Williams does not consider these explanations to exhaustively justify our practices. Instead, he thinks that an imaginative genealogy of truthfulness can help us find the values we see in truthfulness intelligible, without losing hold of the fact that other features of our conception of truthfulness developed in a contingent way through the vicissitudes of history.

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[8] Barring extenuating circumstances, like the interlocutor being their avowed enemy.

Thus, in the remaining four chapters Williams turns to examples taken from 'real history' in order to elucidate substantive modulations that have occurred in our valuations regarding Sincerity and Accuracy. For example, Chapter 7 discusses Thucydides' distinction between the modes of history and myth, which resulted in the invention of historical time and a consequent revaluation of what constitutes Accuracy in history. Whereas Chapter 8 discusses—through the thought of Rousseau and Diderot—the coexistence of two opposing conceptions of Sincerity, and their differing responses to how authenticity and the construction of a stable sense of self relate to that virtue.

Throughout the book, Williams defends the thesis that truth is necessary for understanding our valuation of truthfulness, as we cannot coherently derive truthfulness as an intrinsic good from the state of nature without it. In the book's end-note Williams provides a brief etymological study of archaic Greek vocabulary surrounding the concepts of truth and truthfulness. Williams argues that the ancient Greek connotations for these terms relate to the basic requirements of human communication outlined in his state of nature.

Williams' genealogy shares some aspects with Hume's and some with Geuss'. Hume and Williams both appeal to a state of nature to derive a vindicatory genealogy of a social phenomenon. Yet Williams' discussion of the ways in which the modern connotations borne by truthfulness are derived from the idiosyncrasies of particular historical moments closely resembles Geuss' own task of using historical case studies to discombobulate our current usage of the public/private distinction.

(VII) Nietzsche: Genealogy of Morality

I deal with GM last because the meaning of 'genealogy' in that work is disputed. Many claims have been made about it, not all of which are easily reconcilable. The following summary is intended to highlight the richness of the text, and gesture towards the difficulty of extrapolating exactly what Nietzsche's genealogical method consisted in. Hopefully, the reader will draw connections to the features invoked by the previous examples.

GM's central expository objective is to explicate what Nietzsche saw as the contemporary hegemonic conception of morality—Christian morality—in terms of three concepts that he thinks accounts for its most salient features — *ressentiment* (GM: I), *bad conscience* (GM: II), and the *ascetic ideal* (GM: III). Nietzsche discusses these concepts in order to contrast Christian morality with an antecedent conception of morality—the Nobleman's morality—that he thought was overlooked by the moral genealogists of his time. Throughout GM, Nietzsche outlines the basic dynamic of how these two conceptions have confronted each other throughout history, and, in my opinion, argues

that the Nobleman's conception is pragmatically preferable because it leads to healthier societies and a higher conception of mankind.

Nietzsche begins the first treatise by criticising the English Psychologists' approach to writing a genealogy of morality (GM I: 1-3; 8) as lacking in "historical spirit" (GM I: 2). By 'English Psychologists', Nietzsche is referring to several philosophers, not all of whom were English (Kail, 2011, 215-216). Although the English Psychologists' genealogical accounts substantially differ, they all share the view that our moral history has followed some universal developmental principle, that its consequences have always been beneficial to society, and that, for these reasons, our conception of morality should be encouraged.

In contrast to such accounts, Nietzsche emphasises the importance of historical accuracy for a genealogy of morality. He gives particular emphasis to the relevance of philology, through which he thinks we can come to identify a since forgotten—and perhaps not previously conceived—Nobleman's conception of morality, which is manifestly distinct from the Christian conception (GM I: 4-6; 17). The possibility that earlier societies operated under a conception of morality that was discontinuous with—i.e. not merely an earlier stage of—our own had not been considered by the English Psychologists. Nietzsche's thesis relies on etymological evidence which he claims shows that early usage of the terms 'good' and 'bad' held different connotations. The evidence he discusses can be dated to relatively specific historical places and periods (GM I: 5). However, as Nietzsche proceeds to characterise the two conceptions further (GM I: 6-7; 9-13; 16-17), the references to particular historical periods becomes looser, and eventually the reader's grasp of the Christian/Nobleman's morality distinction becomes primarily informed by psychological descriptions of the Slave and Noble character-types.

Although Nietzsche makes some allusion to historical moments in these later passages, his discussion is not specific enough to identify particular events. A good example is his discussion of the *slave revolt of morality* (GM I: 7; 10-11). Nietzsche alludes to the fact that this revolt was critical in Jewish history (GM I: 7), and seems to suggest that it began under the Roman occupation (GM I: 16). However, he does not provide enough detail for the reader to identify any particular set of events to which he refers. There is some suggestion that the revolt is evident from the fact that slaves were the first to convert to Christianity (GM I: 9), however the account does not explain how the morality spread beyond the slaves. It is also worth noting that Nietzsche's claim that early conversion to Christianity occurred primarily with the lower classes is contested (Stark, 1996).

Arguably, the strongest evidence for his claim that the Slave revolt in morality did occur comes from a psychological analysis of the dynamics between the powerful and the powerless that is predicated on the concept of *ressentiment* (GM I: 10-11; 13-14; 16) — a psychological notion that references the resentment felt by the Slaves because they were too physically and spiritually weak to mirror the life-affirming Nobleman's morality. Nietzsche claims that the Slaves' resentment is spurred by the Priests, who invert the Nobleman' system of moral valuation by relabelling the Nobles' conception of 'good' as 'evil', and redefining 'good' to mean that which is opposed to 'evil' (GM I: 11). The Priests claim, further, that the Nobles' commitment to evil acts is born out of free-will (GM I: 13), and therefore open to moral criticism. Nietzsche describes the origins of the Priestly conception of free-will as partially linguistic (concerning a feature about subject attribution in Indo-European grammar) and partially psychological (loosely, Nietzsche claims the idea was invented by the weak in order to save face). Although it remains correct to call the account historical in nature, his theory is largely predicated on the character-types of Slaves and Nobles. Moreover, he says that the battle between Slave and Noble morality reoccurs throughout history, having so far always led to the defeat of the Nobles (GM I: 16), which I think indicates that the particular historical context of the slave revolt is at least partly superfluous to his overriding thesis.

In the second treatise, Nietzsche develops a history of conscience, and claims that the Slaves' resentment eventually turns inwards (GM II: 16) and become *bad conscience* — the feeling of guilt felt by the Slaves that the Priests claim underlies all questions concerning moral action. This feeling of guilt is exploited by the Priests who convince the Slaves that their guilt is an inalienable feature of the human moral condition, culminating in the Christian doctrine of original sin (GM II: 21-22). In contrast to the Slave's account of morality, Nietzsche describes the development of conscience—on which bad conscience is predicated—as an historical development, closely linked to the Noble's psychological characteristics (GM II: 1-2), and claims that Nobles did not experience bad conscience because they are not encumbered by the burden of ressentiment (GM I: 10).

Bad conscience is also used to link the development of the Slave's mentality to a wider history of pain and the debtor-creditor relationship which Nietzsche thinks is foundational to Christian morality. The importance of pain is originally attributed to its efficacy as a mnemonic technique (GM II: 3), but Nietzsche believes its importance became widespread because the instrumentalization of pain is a necessary pre-condition for man's development of the conceptual world of "'debt', 'conscience', 'duty', [and] 'sacred duty'" (GM II: 6). Nietzsche suggests that moral philosophers' ignorance about the history of pain evidences their refusal to face the problem of morality face-on, and that they have only ever dealt with a sanitised history of how Christian morality came to develop (GM II: 6).

In particular, Nietzsche's excerpts on the role of pain in our moral history and its influence in the development of our conceptions of justice (GM II: 8-11) and punishment (GM II: 12-15) provides some of the most well-discussed examples of his treatment of moral history as an anti-teleological interaction of contingent, local forces. For example, he argues that our conception of the morality of punishment is a by-product of Greek and Roman antecedents, noting that the there is no functional continuity between the original and current role played by the concept of punishment in society. That said, Nietzsche explains other features of our moral history in fairly generic terms: bad conscience as a method of saving face (GM I: 13), his theory of the State (GM II: 17), or the origins of certain religious views in the primeval tribal acknowledgement of a legal obligation towards earlier generations (GM II: 19).

Finally, bad conscience is also linked to a pragmatic evaluation of Christian morality as leading to a particular kind of nihilism that he defines in the first treatise:

> "[W]ith fear of man we have also forfeited the love of him. What is nihilism today if it is not that?… We are tired of man…" (GM I: 12).

Early in the second treatise, Nietzsche claims that life on earth under the Nobleman's morality was more *cheerful* (GM II: 7). He claims that the internalisation of resentment that occurs under bad conscience makes the Slaves re-interpret their sense of powerlessness and repressed animal instincts into guilt before God (GM II: 22), and to seek spiritual guidance about this godly debt from the Priests who convince man that his burden can be alleviated by valuing the herd before himself (GM III:18), and lead him to a life of self-denial centred around "poverty, humility, chastity" (GM III: 8). Nietzsche describes man's choice to lead such a life as a "sickness" (GM II: 22) — as a sign of his forfeiting his love for himself.

GM's third treatise discusses the *ascetic ideal* — the multiple forms of moral valuation expressed by people of bad conscience. Expressions of the ascetic ideal appear differently in different kinds of people. For artists (GM III: 1-5) the ascetic ideal means "so many things that it is tantamount to nothing" (GM III: 5). Philosophers (GM III: 5-10; 24) see in the ascetic ideal the ideal conditions under which to develop intellectual endeavours (GM III: 8). Whereas for Priests the ascetic ideal comes to embody *seriousness* (GM III: 11).

Nietzsche claims that these differences in how the ascetic ideal is expressed itself has a history. The earliest philosophers had bad conscience and felt their guilt was caused by not responding to the world as it really is (GM III: 10). Philosophers sublimated these instincts through practising cruelty towards their worldly bodies (e.g. self-castigation; self-mortification). In doing so, they gained fear

and respect from non-philosophers who were suspicious of their ascetic drive to contemplation. He claims, further, that in its earliest generations, the philosophical spirit had to disguise itself in the previously established types of contemplative man such as the Priests. Nietzsche notes that the Priests do not breed, but pass on their power through the propagation of the ascetic valuation, and that their desire for influence over the Slaves is a manifestation of the will to power: the ascetic ideal "becomes more self-assured and triumphant to the same degree as its own condition, the physiological capacity to life, decreases" (*Ibid.*).

Nietzsche goes on to detail the strategies used by the Priests to alleviate the effects of ressentiment, all of which are explained through situated psychological explanations, and distinguishes the distinctly Slave-like form of the will to power that these strategies serve to the conception of will to power held by the Nobles (GM III: 18). In the two subsequent sections (GM III: 19-20) Nietzsche refers to himself as a psychologist, rather than a philologist of morality, and claims that GM II suggested that the Priests utilisation of bad conscience as a technique can be explained as "a piece of animal psychology, no more" (GM III: 20). On the other hand, Nietzsche' claims that Christian morality has had a detrimental effect in impeding the will to power from flourishing in Western society (GM III: 20-21). This seemingly contradicts his earlier statements that the Priests' embracement of bad conscience as a cure for the Slaves' suffering is itself subject to will to power (GM III: 18).

In the book's closing sections, Nietzsche claims that the ascetic ideal offers an explanation for mankind's suffering that gives it meaning: "[I]t brought all suffering within the perspective of *guilt*", which was really nothing more than "a *will to nothingness*, an aversion to life… but it is and remains a *will*! … And, to conclude by saying what I said at the beginning: one still prefers to *will nothingness*, than *not* will…" (GM III: 28).

I will postpone discussion on the meaning of genealogy in GM until I have established what I think are the three central typologies of genealogy in the literature. I return, in Section V, to argue that the differences between authors' interpretations of GM can be explained by these typologies and that, moreover, each typology can itself be correlated to a different interpretation of what I call *The General Problem of Genealogy*, that asks to what extent our philosophical outlooks are the product of contingencies in our past, and to what extent such contingency should concern us.

Section II

Proposed Methodology

The Introduction considered the difficulty of providing a univocal definition of what genealogies are and what they do. This was exemplified by the previous section's description of the differences between a series of narratives dubbed 'genealogies'. As we have seen, there are several dimensions through which genealogies can be contrasted: they can differ in the onus they place on historical evidence; on the types of outcome they seek to achieve; and on the kinds of objects which are open to genealogical inquiry.

Given the substantive differences between these narratives, it seems unjustified to assume that they share any non-trivial commonalities. Instead, I suggest it is preferable to identify typologies under which these examples can be subsumed, so as to better understand their distinguishing features. Once we have a better understanding of how each typology works, we can then adjudicate on whether there are any significant commonalities between them. I will call such typologies 'conceptions of genealogy' to emphasise that we are not only comparing different objects, but, more specifically, how different authors have conceived of genealogy's defining features.

Picking a framework for comparison requires us to commit to one particular way of categorising genealogies. There are innumerable frameworks under which we could divide up the examples of genealogies in Section I. The one I propose was chosen because I believe it allows us to investigate the 'nitty-gritty' of how different genealogies operate; i.e. its goal is not to find new terms by which to categorise genealogies—e.g. 'critical' or 'vindicatory'—but to provide an accurate description of how any one particular (critical or vindicatory) genealogy works. It is also worth sign-posting here that, despite the relevance of such operational differences, I ultimately defend the view that all genealogies are concerned with our relationship to the existence of contingencies in our past that inform our current philosophical outlook. Importantly however, different kinds of genealogies are interested in different kinds of contingency, and these differences, I argue, correlate to differences in how the conceptions operate.

My chosen framework treats genealogical 'conceptions' as *complex objects* that can be analysed from different perspectives. In particular, I propose a rubric for analysing conceptions that is composed of three components, each of which aims to investigate a different distinctive features of its typology.

Characteristic	Question Addressed
Object of Study	What kinds of things are amenable to genealogical study?
Explanatory Concern	What kinds of explanations do genealogies provide?
Methodological Description	What methods do genealogies employ?

The answers we give to each of these questions are conceptually independent: two people can agree on what things are amenable to genealogical analysis, but disagree about what genealogies do; or they might agree about what they do, but disagree on what they look like. My contention is that if two scholars agree about how they would describe genealogy's relationship to each of these characteristics, then we can speak of them sharing the same conception of genealogy.

GM's Typology of Moralities

I do not claim that this framework cannot be improved upon. Given the in principle inexhaustible number of frameworks one could choose, there is no *a priori* method for establishing what its ideal components are. I merely hope to show that mine is a compelling enough framework through which to approach our task. On the other hand, whilst the specific characteristics I propose are unavoidably stipulative, I think the general method of treating 'conceptions' as complex-objects has precedent. Indeed, I think GM fruitfully utilizes an analogous approach in distinguishing the Noble and Slave *conceptions* of morality.

One of Nietzsche's biggest aims in GM is to challenge the English Psychologists' claims that our current conception of morality is homogenous with that of all humans throughout history. To succeed, Nietzsche has to convince his audience that there are certain differences that humans have presented throughout history in their moral behaviour that are predicated upon a different conception of morality to our own. To show this, I think Nietzsche attempts to distinguish between these conceptions based on at least three characteristics:

Characteristic	Question Addressed
Paradigmatic Subject	What kind of subject can possess a given conception of morality?
Values	What kind of thing did that morality value?
Psychological Motivation	What is driving the subjects of those moralities to uphold those values?

Paradigmatic Subject

According to Nietzsche, the Christian and Nobleman moralities naturally pertain to different types of people: Slaves (and Priests) in the former case, and Nobles in the latter. Although GM makes many allusions to historical examples of each group throughout history, these types of people are primarily distinguished descriptively. For example, Nietzsche claims that the Noble morality's system of moral valuation was reflective of the physical and psychological characteristics of the Noble's themselves — i.e. their possession of "a powerful physicality, a blossoming, rich, even effervescent good health that includes the things needed to maintain it, war, adventure, hunting, dancing, jousting, and everything else that contains strong, free, happy action" (GM I: 7). In contrast, the Slave morality is described in terms of the intelligence, jealousy, and vengefulness of the Priests who created it – these are all characteristics lacked by the Noble (GM I: 10).

Values

Nietzsche stresses that the Christian and Nobleman's conceptions of morality develop from antipodal understanding about what kinds of actions contain moral value. Nietzsche describes the Nobleman's morality as having grown out of a "triumphant saying yes to itself" (GM I:10); Nobles value a cheerful stance towards life, and think that their own vitality signifies their moral goodness. The Slaves' valuation of morality is based on the reversal of the Noble's conception (*Ibid.*). It is predicated on a valuation of everyone that is different to themselves as 'evil'; a valuation from which the Slaves develop their ideological commitment to thinking that "[o]nly those who suffer are good" (GM I: 7).

Nietzsche also provides distinct explanations of what drives the subjects of these moralities to value those things. The Noble is motivated by a healthy form of the will to power, displayed by his demonstrations of power and vitality to the world, and by his trust that his desires will lead him to a fulfilling existence. By contrast, the slave is motivated by *ressentiment*, which explains his motivation to invert the Nobleman's system of moral valuation. The psychological mechanisms driving the Slaves is complicated, however Nietzsche claims that the Priests employ a number of specific strategies (GM III: 18) to dull the pain of bad conscience, and to motivate the Slave's desire to maintain their system of moral valuations.

How GM's typological analysis can inform our current project

For Nietzsche, then, the task of understanding the distinction between the Slave and Nobleman morality was primarily an exercise in understanding the structure that underlies their conceptions of morality. This involves understanding those conceptions as *complex objects*, comprised of a series of characterisations of the subjects of those moralities, which, taken together, compose holistic explanations of one's moral conception.

To make his readers appreciate the existence of different historical conceptions of morality, Nietzsche approached his task by *describing* the various ways in which these moralities differed. What Nietzsche *is not* doing, is providing a univocal definition of morality that implies the Slave's and the Noble's conceptions of morality are instances of the same kind of thing. Such a task is not impossible: to borrow Williams' phrasing, it seems fair to say that both conceptions describe different versions of human-beings' capacity to

> "live under rules and values and to shape their behaviour in some degree to social
> expectations, in ways that are not under surveillance and not directly controlled by threats
> and rewards. Call this, begging many questions, (the minimal version of) living in an ethical
> system" (Williams, 2002, 24).

However, would doing so (leaving aside issues of anachronism) have helped Nietzsche's project? I think not. This would be to approach the topic of morality by asking what the univocal function shared by all conceptions of morality is. This approach has its uses, but a downside is that it can obscure the scale of the differences between conceptions; it contains a trap which Nietzsche thought the English Psychologists' genealogies had fallen into, and that culminated in sanitised accounts of our moral history. My claim is similar: the only way to avoid oversimplifying the question of what

genealogy (*simpliciter)* is, is to first understand the differences between how each conception understands the structure and goal of genealogical investigation.

Section III

The last section outlined my reasons for seeking a taxonomy of genealogical conceptions. In this section, I introduce what I think are the three main conceptions of genealogy in the literature. Part (A), introduces each conception through the work of the thinker whom I think best represents it. My goal is to contextualise the conceptions in terms of the problems that occupy each thinker, and to provide examples of genealogies that can be subsumed under that conception. In part (B), I analyse the conceptions through my rubric.

(A) Introducing the Conceptions

<u>Histories of the Present (HoP)</u>

In an 1984 interview, Foucault described his approach to composing a genealogy:

> "I set out from a problem expressed in the terms current today and I try to work out its genealogy. Genealogy means that I begin my analysis from a question posed in the present"(Kritzman, 1988, 262).

Although every historian must heed the dangers of anachronistic reasoning, Foucault's concern was not with garden variety anachronisms, such as describing *The Tales of Robin Hood* as a Socialist work. Instead, he thought that genealogy revealed the existence of anachronism where one least expects it — just as Nietzsche had done in claiming that the concepts of 'good' and 'evil' were historically rooted in a plebeian mode of evaluation that had only become hegemonic after the advent of a—*since forgotten*—slave-revolt in morality (GM I). Foucault coined a term for his kind of historical inquiry: histories of the present. I think the term characterises a broad conception of thinking about what genealogies are, and what they do.

Yet although Foucault was the most influential author of the HoP conception of genealogy, I think Geuss' work on genealogy provides a more lucid examination of Foucault's genealogical methodology. As such, I use Geuss' work to explicate the HoP conception, which I think is instantiated in several genealogical works, including his own *Private Goods, Public Goods,* Foucault's *Madness and Civilization* and *Discipline and Punish*, Skinner's *Liberty before Liberalism*, and De Beistegui's *The Government of Desire.*

This list is not exhaustive. It is difficult to say how many genealogies have been inspired by Foucault, given his breadth of influence across several academic disciplines. Bevir claims that "[t]he humanities and social sciences are awash with genealogies. Many of the authors cloak their genealogies in pious invocations of Foucault" (2008, 264). Of course, it would be inadvisable to assume that all Foucauldian inspired genealogies share the same conception, much less that attributed to him by Geuss. Nonetheless, it is worth noting some of the authors that have been associated with Foucault's conception of genealogy.[9] Foucault has been particularly influential on self-described genealogical works on sex, gender, and sexuality, such as Butler's *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, Mc Whorter's *Racism and Sexism in Anglo-America*, West's *Prophecy Deliverance! An Afro-American Revolutionary Christianity* and Tremain's *Foucault and the Government of Disability* (Prinz, 2016, 195). A Foucauldian-like interpretation of Nietzschean genealogy is also visible in the works of "critics of liberalism such as Charles Mills and Uday Mehta; critics of Eurocentrism such as Edward Said and Chandra Mohanty; feminists such as Simone de Beauvoir, bell hooks, Angela Davis, Catharine MacKinnon and Judith Butler; and intellectual historians such as Quentin Skinner and Samuel Moyn" (Srinivasan, 2019, 10). There are of course differences in the methodologies employed by these authors: Geuss himself describes his genealogy as a modified form of the genealogies of Foucault and Nietzsche (Geuss, 2001, *xvi*). Nevertheless, I think my rubric identifies an important level of methodological continuity between them.

Finally, Geuss' conception of genealogy resembles that of authors who associate genealogy with critical theory, such as Owen (2002), Hoy (2008), and Saar (2002). Although these authors provide different explications about what is distinctive about the genealogical method, central to their understanding of genealogy is the employment of a *problematizing* mode of critique. Geuss explains that problematisation means putting into question "the apparently self-evident assumptions of a given form of life and the (supposedly) natural or inevitable and unchangeable character of given identities" (2002, 211). His statement is composed of two conjunct claims. The first is that in problematizing we re-examine where our beliefs about deeply entrenched social practices, institutions, concepts and social identities came from, and find them to possess a more complex and ambiguous history than we previously supposed. I might not realise that in claiming something belongs to the private sphere, I am tacitly invoking influences from Hellenic, Roman, and Christian culture. The second part of Geuss' statement claims that in problematizing I discover new possibilities in how I can respond to these identities. For instance, Geuss suggests in *Public Goods, Private Goods* that the purpose of writing his genealogy is to "change" (2001, 6) how we think about and use the public/private

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[9] I am familiar enough with these texts to know that they plausibly share the Geussean conception, but not enough to claim this with any certainty.

distinction in everyday political contexts. I think Geuss has a specific kind of 'change' in mind, as suggested in a different passage:

> "The [object of the genealogy] in question also presents itself as having a single, clear unitary rationale, on the basis of which one can come to a relatively straightforward evaluation of it. Thus, members of the society are invited and strongly encouraged to adopt one of a rather small range of evaluative attitudes towards the phenomenon in question. These will form a spectrum of strong endorsement (democracy is a *good thing* that we must try to defend against all comers), through wary indifference (the attitude of most enlightened people in the West in the twenty-first century towards Christianity, Islam and Judaism), to mild calls for improvements in a system the basic features of which are not called into question (prison reform), or finally strong, categorical rejection (the attitude of *écrasez l'infame*)." (2001, ix)

Although Geuss does not refer to the concept of 'problematization' explicitly in this passage, I think it captures something key about what kind of things are 'problematizable'. Namely, items that are so deeply entrenched in our everyday existence that we have developed a set of automatic responses towards them which, as critical scrutiny shows, perpetuate inaccuracies in our representation of those objects, and leaves us vulnerable to certain risks. The 'inaccuracies' will relate to the unexamined assumption that a relatively unitary and coherent history can be given that would vindicate our present evaluative attitudes. The 'risks', according to the above examples, might be something like discounting more expansive—and possibly beneficial—possibilities in our public policy and ethical-political self-conception because they present too radical a break from the status quo.

Situated Psychological Explanations (SPE)

While the potency of the HoP conception only gained prominence in the late twentieth century, the prominent connection between genealogy and situated psychological accounts precedes Nietzsche. SPE's pedigree lies in the state of nature accounts of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century philosophy, amongst which are Hobbes' genealogy of the *State*, Hume's genealogy of *Justice* and Rousseau's genealogy of the *Social Contract*. Indeed, Kail (2011, 216) argues that Nietzsche thought of authors, such as Hume, who attempted a naturalistic explanation of the emergence of moral practices and beliefs as 'genealogists', whose work, although defective, was fundamentally of the same kind as his own. Namely, as presenting:

> *Genealogy as a Situated Psychological Account*
> A genealogy is "primarily an explanatory account of the emergence of some distinctive set of beliefs, practices and associated phenomena, involving agents with a particular psychology in a social-cum-environmental situation to which that psychology is responsive" (Kail, 2011, 214).

Despite the existence of early examples of SPE genealogies, it is Williams' *Truth and Truthfulness* that most accurately revealed the theoretical basis behind the SPE conception. In that work, Williams elucidates the relationship between the structure of state of nature accounts and the distinctive kinds of insights which SPE genealogies provide. As we have seen, a central part of Williams' strategy is to argue that it is a *sufficient* condition for something to be an intrinsic good that it is necessary for basic human purposes that they treat it as such, and that they can coherently do so. This is exemplified in his attempt to understand the current functionality of our concept of truthfulness through an investigation of its structural origins. In this, Williams' method is similar to those of Craig's *Knowledge and the State of Nature*, and Fricker's *Epistemic Injustice* — all are texts that anchor genealogy in root needs which we can be confident apply in a state of nature.

The focus on explaining our practices through a situated psychological account is shared by the state of nature theorists (old and new), the English Psychologists, the metaphysical non-representationalists,[10] contemporary psychological genealogists of morality,[11] as well as Materialist genealogists.[12] For this reason I have named the current conception the *Situated Psychological Explanations* conception, to which Williams' (2002) state of nature inarguably belongs. However, what is perhaps unique to Williams' genealogy is his discussion of particular historical modulations of our concepts to which we cannot provide a situated psychological explanation. He argues that an analysis of our understanding of the virtue of truthfulness would be reductive without such a historical addendum. Yet the importance he gives to such historical investigation is arguably not fully articulated in that work. The central task of *Truth and Truthfulness* is to defend the view that we cannot decouple the value we place in truthfulness from a belief in objective truth. Most of the argumentative force for this task came from the situated psychological account in the book's first half; the historically contingent modulations Williams discusses in the second half are important for a detailed understanding of our concept of truthfulness, but the normative status these values are meant to possess is unclear insofar as they are not underwritten by functional necessity. By contrast, Williams' *Philosophy as a Humanistic Discipline* provides a more thoroughgoing discussion about the normative status of values that are not necessary for basic human functions:

> "Philosophy has to learn the lesson that conceptual description (or, more specifically, analysis) is not self-sufficient; and that such projects as deriving our concepts *a priori* from universal conditions of human life, though they indeed have a place (a greater place in some

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[10] Blackburn (2009, 39-40), (2015, 851) and Price (2011, 14) describe their own pragmatic methodology as 'genealogical'.
[11] E.g. Joyce (2006), Prinz (2007), and Kitcher (2011).
[12] For example Marxist historians, cultural materialists in anthropology, and cross-cultural psychologists (Prinz, 2016, 187-188). All of whose work fits with Kail's description — they merely de-emphasizes the importance of the psychological variables.

areas of philosophy than others), are likely to leave unexplained many features that provoke philosophical enquiry" (Williams, 2000b, 192)

"We and our outlook are not simply in the same place at the same time. If we really understand this, deeply understand it, we can be free of what is indeed another scientistic illusion, that it is our job as rational agents to search for, or at least move as best we can towards, a system of political and ethical ideas which would be the best from an absolute point of view, a point of view that was free of contingent historical perspective." (Williams, 2000b, 193-194)

Williams' comments are indicative of why *Truth and Truthfulness's* second half goes beyond mere situated psychological explanations. His concern with the conceptual contingency of the non-functionally-necessary aspects of our notion of truthfulness is not that distant from Geuss' reasons for thinking that genealogy should be interested in historical contingency. I will return to this thought. For now, it is worth emphasizing that the focus of Williams' conception of genealogy is in distinguishing functional necessity from historical contingency in our social phenomena. We might still think of this conception as shared by authors such as Craig or Hume, as long as we interpret them as either arguing that our concepts of knowledge and justice lack these sorts of contingent features, or, perhaps more plausibly, that the purpose of their genealogies had been fulfilled without discussing them.

Revelatory Causal Narratives (RCN)

Perhaps the most significant recent development in the genealogical literature is the position presented by Srinivasan (2015; 2019). For her, the adjective 'genealogical' refers primarily to a worry about the contingency of thought that has existed throughout the history of philosophy (2015, 325). Srinivasan thinks Philosophy's concerns with genealogy spans back to antiquity, and that it has been a "preoccupation of the European intellectual tradition since the mid-18th Century" (*Ibid.*) that further developed in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Indeed, she goes so far as to claim that

"the 'two cultures' of the modern intellectual world are no longer, as C.P. Snow once suggested, the humanities and the sciences, but rather the culture of those on one hand who think that everything must be genealogised, and on the other, those who think that there is nothing to be learned from genealogy" (*Ibid.*)

In particular, Srinivasan claims genealogical thought is growing in influence within contemporary Anglophone philosophy, citing (2015, 326-327) a series of contemporary authors' work about the evolutionary origins of our moral and metaphysical beliefs; in genealogically-motivated arguments against realism in math, logic, theism and naturalism; and in the new sub-discipline of experimental philosophy.

Given the difficulties we have discussed in finding a univocal description of genealogy, the breadth of influence Srinivasan attributes to genealogical thought is striking. It is worth asking how she is able to cast the genealogical net so wide as to include so many historical and contemporary figures, without rendering her definition vacuous.

Under Srinivasan's description, 'genealogical thinking' does not describe a particular method but a subject matter. (This was not the case for Williams and Geuss). Indeed, the term 'genealogy' is never explicitly defined in her work: the reader's grasp of what the term and its derivatives (e.g. genealogical) mean is based upon her definition of the sister concepts: *genealogical scepticism* and *genealogical anxiety.* Genealogical scepticism proceeds from the worry that the judgements and concepts through which one understands the world "are contingent features of whoever it is who is doing the philosophising: her or his particular history, culture, language, education, gender, character" (2015, 325). Whereas genealogical anxiety is what we suffer from "when we worry that the contingent origins of our representations, once revealed, will somehow undermine or cast doubt on those representations" (Srinivasan, 2019, Abstract). From these two descriptions—the reader is left to deduce—it follows that genealogies are causal narratives that disclose some contingent feature about the origins of our representations that generate worries about their reliability. It is not immediately clear whether the set of representations that arouse genealogical scepticism and those that arouse genealogical anxiety are identical, or even whether Srinivasan thinks that they are. What is clear is that Srinivasan's conception of genealogy is remarkably Pyrrhonian, both in the sense that genealogical scepticism challenges the possibility of knowledge, and that this concerns us because we desire to avoid anxiety about holding potentially false beliefs.

That said, Srinivasan's discussion of the pertinence of genealogical thinking to contemporary Anglophone philosophy is set within the framework of contemporary epistemology. In particular, Srinivasan (2015) is preoccupied with identifying an *epistemological* principle that justifies genealogical scepticism.[13] There are good reasons for wanting to do so. For instance, consider the following examples discussed by Mogensen (2016). The first is supposed to illicit a feeling of anxiety in us, while the second is not.[14]

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[13] In (Srinivasan, 2019) this focus shifts towards seeking pragmatic justifications.

[14] The target of Mogensen's discussion is the phenomenon of *contingency anxiety*, which is different to Srinivasan's *genealogical anxiety*. For the purposes of our illustration, however, the first example can be thought of instigating both forms of anxiety, whereas the latter instigates neither.

Jerry Cohen's Political Beliefs

"Cohen enjoyed a strongly political upbringing among working-class Marxists in Montreal. He claims, plausibly, that he is a Marxist because of his upbringing: had he been raised in the upper-middle-class part of Montreal, his present political beliefs would not be nearly so left-wing. And this troubles him: he feels much less confident of his political beliefs, knowing that he would not have them had he been raised differently." (592)

Corner Shop:

"Albert believes that the corner shop closes at midnight. A lover of spaghetti, Albert eats too much pasta one night, has trouble falling asleep, and goes for a walk around the block: he discovers that the corner shop is still open at 1 am. Albert realizes that if he didn't love spaghetti so much, he would still believe that the corner shop closes at midnight." (594)

I suspect most people only find Cohen's conundrum a good motivator for thinking further about genealogy as conceived under RCN. Yet, in order to understand how genealogical scepticism might threaten the warrantability of some of our beliefs, we need to understand what principle makes genealogical scepticism applicable in cases like Cohen's, but not Albert's.

However, according to Srinivasan (2015; 2019) no such principle is available, and therefore the importance of genealogical thought must seek different grounding. A genealogical-cum-epistemological principle is inviable because "any plausible argument for genealogical scepticism rests on contested first-order epistemological premises — premises that some philosophers find intuitively attractive while others do not" (2015, 327-328). Srinivasan thinks this shows that genealogical arguments are epistemically inept at convincing those who do not find their assumptions attractive. Therefore, she argues, rather than thinking of genealogies as a tool with which to undermine the beliefs of others, we should seek their significance in their capacity to make us mistrust our own.

To understand this, we must first look briefly at what Srinivasan considers to be the most promising (if ultimately flawed) articulation of a valid genealogical-cum-epistemological principle. This is an argument from unreliability, predicated upon Srinivasan's preferred version of the safety condition.

"*Safety$_n$:*

S's belief in the necessary proposition p is safe$_n$ iff S could not have easily believed not-p using a sufficiently similar method she uses to believe p." (2015, 339)

From this safety condition, Srinivasan suggests one might articulate the following argument to justify genealogical scepticism:

"Argument from Unreliability (AU):

(i) The genealogy of our philosophical judgements constitutes strong, undefeated evidence that those judgements are unsafe$_n$.

(ii) Whenever we have strong, undefeated evidence that one of our judgements is unsafe$_n$, we ought to abandon it.

(iii) We ought to abandon our philosophical judgements." (*Ibid.)*

To illustrate how this principle might work, consider again *Experimental Gettier*. The case considered (fictitious) experimental results that suggested that one's philosophical judgements concerning whether Gettier's Jones knows was *causally* linked to features about one's cultural upbringing that, *ex hypothesi*, are supposed to be irrelevant to one's capability to form unbiased philosophical judgements. Reflecting on the causal contingency of our belief is supposed to leave us anxious about the safety of our own philosophical judgements, insofar as the experimental data suggests that we could have easily believed the opposite than we do had we grown up in a different environment. The genealogical-sceptic can thus claim that our philosophical judgements are unreliable, and that we ought to abandon them.

However, Srinivasan thinks that a genealogical-sceptic-denier has a response to (AU): the experimental evidence only undermines confidence in our own philosophical judgements *if* the method we use for obtaining those judgements would remain sufficiently similar under a different upbringing. The sceptic-denier can contend that such methods would not be similar, for example by claiming that one's cultural upbringing *does* influence one's capability to form unbiased philosophical judgements, such as by exposing them to a number of background beliefs which one has an interest in seeing vindicated. That is, the sceptic-denier can argue that the sceptic's argument hinges on contested first-order epistemological assumptions.

Srinivasan's argument is that there is no first-order epistemologically stable ground on which to base (AU). This leaves genealogical scepticism epistemologically ill-founded, and thus unable to undermine the beliefs of others. However, she goes on to claim, for those of us who *do* find the genealogical-sceptic's premises attractive—e.g. if we happen to believe that the method by which we reach philosophical judgements will be similar to others of a different cultural upbringing—ignoring the epistemic threat of genealogy is not an option. (AU)'s premises might be epistemically unstable because of its reliance on contested first-order premises, but insofar as *we* are inclined to accept them, they are constitutive of our own epistemological framework and therefore it is not within our gift to reject them. Srinivasan concludes that philosophical knowledge will not seem possible for the

genealogical-sceptic unless they are able to reconsider their own conception of what knowledge demands.

For Srinivasan, then, we may say that genealogical worries start and end when we are sceptical or anxious about the degree to which our beliefs can withstand enquiries into their causal-origins. Throughout her work, Srinivasan has considered four strategies through which we might proceed in such situations: believing ourselves to be the beneficiaries of good genealogical luck ((Srinivasan, 2015, 347-348), (Srinivasan, 2019, 6-7)); adopting an internalist position about the objects of our genealogical beliefs that denies that subjectively ideal beliefs can be false (Srinivasan, 2019, 7-8); rethinking the concept of philosophical belief based on the Pyrrhonian conception (Srinivasan, 2015, 351-352); and rethinking the goal of philosophical inquiry along the lines suggested by Williams in *Philosophy as a Humanistic Discipline* ((Srinivasan, 2015, 350-351), (Srinivasan, 2019, 8-9)). However, she does not argue for the primacy of any of them.

(B) The Three Conceptions and the Three Components

Geuss, Williams, and Srinivasan think differently about genealogy. I argued in Section II that understanding how their conceptions relate requires a systematic comparison of their main differences. I will now discuss how each conception relates to the three components of my rubric. It will be helpful to keep the following analogy in mind throughout:

Socialism

'Socialism' can be examined through several disciplines, including sociology, economics, and political theory. Each of these approaches corresponds with a particular method and object of study. For example, one can study a particular set of historical events; a set of economic principles that organises labour and the distribution of goods; or a matrix of political concepts that mediates a political agent's relation to wider societal structures. In each case, learning about the particular object of study requires a distinct methodological approach.

These analyses can interrelate and at times overlap. One might use the vocabulary of political theory to interpret the meaning of historical events one wishes to relate to the history of socialism; cite historical events as evidence of abstract socialist economic relationships; or make reference to principles of economics to defend a socialist form of political organising.

Yet even though these analyses can interact and inform each other, there remains a clear sense in which the study of socialism from the purview of economics cannot be reduced to that of sociology, or vice-versa. Although each of these analyses is a form of studying socialism, it is unhelpful on any but the most abstract level to describe all of them as engaging in substantially the same kind of endeavour.

In what follows, I try to persuade the reader that the question 'what does a genealogy look like?' is similar to the question 'what does a study of socialism look like?' in that answering either requires a taxonomy that distinguishes the different answers that can be given. Put differently, the claim that examples of different conceptions of genealogy are all instances of the same sort of enterprise should be treated with similar circumspection to the claim that economists and sociologists that study socialism are engaged in the same endeavour. With this in mind, I now analyse the three conceptions of genealogy through my rubric.

<u>Object of Study</u>

The objects of Section I's genealogies are very different; it is unlikely that genealogists could agree about what kinds of objects are amenable to genealogical scrutiny. This is because one's conception of genealogy and the kinds of objects which one thinks are genealogicisable correlate.

For example, under the RCN conception, genealogies identify a causal narrative about our belief(s) that instils scepticism or anxiety in us. *Prima facie*, such a causal narrative could affect any of our beliefs. Although it is unlikely that I will suffer anxiety about the belief that Brasilia is the capital of Brazil, there is no reason why this could not be so. However, as we have seen, the real target of the RCN conception are those beliefs to which I am warranted to respond—due to my first-order epistemic commitments—with genuine sceptical worry or anxiety.

For the HoP conception, a genealogy investigates a more particular kind of object: a "deeply entrenched contemporary item or phenomenon" (Geuss, 2001, viii-ix). Examples of items or phenomena discussed by Nietzsche and Foucault are practices (punishment), institutions (mental asylums; penal institutions), or identities (Christianity); Geuss' own genealogical example is based on a conceptual distinction (private/public). In every case, this item or phenomena presents itself to an ideologically situated subject as unitary and coherent, with an implicit rationale through which one can appraise it. (E.g. Liberals claim that the public/private distinction is conceptually transparent to us, and that its function has been consistent wherever it has existed). Moreover, it is an item that (the genealogy will show) we relate to in an ideologically pejorative sense. (E.g. we are conditioned to reply to questions of the form, 'Why shouldn't we interfere in such-and-such a seemingly pernicious situation?' by uncritical appeal to a particular conception: 'Because the situation occurs in the *private* sphere'). Finally, they are items for which we—erroneously—tend to assume a single point of

origination. For example, Nietzsche discusses many conceptions of the function of punishment which he claims have been held at different times:

> "Punishment as a means of rendering harmless, or preventing further harm. Punishment as payment of a debt to the creditor in any form (even one of emotional compensation). Punishment as a means of isolating a disturbance of balance, to prevent further spread of the disturbance. [etc.]" (GM II: 13).

Of course, a defender of RCN might retort that the target of Nietzsche's mini-genealogy of punishment are his readership's beliefs about the function of punishment which Nietzsche thinks should cause them genealogical scepticism or anxiety. For instance, because they might come to suspect that their beliefs about the practice of punishment are by-products of their upbringing, or because they may suffer from genealogical anxiety at the thought that the origins of their beliefs about punishment reveal them to be based on a conflation of various previous conceptions.

There is, however, an important distinction between what qualifies something to be the object of genealogical enquiry under HoP and RCN. Although Geuss might agree that studying the history of conceptions of punishment might evoke a response of scepticism or anxiety, he would simply disagree that the evocation of such responses are grounds for describing something as genealogical. For him, that punishment can be the subject of a genealogy simply has nothing to do with the fact that one may develop feelings of scepticism or anxiety towards our beliefs about it. Although HoP and RCN conceptions somewhat overlap in terms of the *extension* of the set of objects that are amenable to genealogical enquiry, their conception of what defines the sets *intension* does not overlap.

The SPE conception presents another object of inquiry: descriptions of the kinds of actors and environments which explain why humans have developed the concepts and practices they have. Thus, the target of Hume's genealogy of justice is the psychological-environmental circumstances that explain why we developed the artificial value of justice. Similarly, Williams' genealogy of truthfulness begins by discussing our concept of truthfulness primarily as a concept that fulfils a necessary role based on root human needs, and which explains why truthfulness has come to be thought of as possessing intrinsic value. Williams' analysis then develops secondary features—such as distinguishing between the Rousseau's and Diderot's conceptions of sincerity—that expand his analysis' explanatory capacity to account for all facets of our valuation of truthfulness, but do not possess the functional necessity of the primary features.

Explanatory Aim

Genealogies also explain different kinds of things about their objects. RCN genealogies provide a narrative that gives us grounds for thinking that there is a mismatch between the level of epistemic justification warranted by our beliefs and our affective stance towards them. (By 'affective stance' I mean things like feeling troubled or untroubled about our beliefs. RCN genealogies chiefly explain why our affective towards our belief should be one of *anxiety*). Such genealogies show that we could easily have different beliefs had certain background variables differed — a thought that should lead us to consider revising our beliefs. Srinivasan reports that "[m]any contemporary ethicists claim that the evolutionary origins of our moral judgments demand that we abandon or revise those judgements, or that we adopt an anti-realist construal of their contents" (2015, 326).

Of course, one can justify the need for belief revision without mention of anxiety, by framing our reasons for such revision purely in terms of the epistemologically unreliable status of our belief: it is because we are interested in getting our beliefs right that a genealogy might prompt us to revise our judgements. Yet I do not think this accurately describes the RCN position. The RCN conception describes our concerns *affectively,* as a desire to achieve equanimity: we revise our judgements not because we want to get things right, but because we do not want to feel anxious about our beliefs.

To see this, consider two of the strategies Srinivasan discusses for confronting genealogical scepticism. The first is to consider ourselves genealogically lucky.

> "[I]f I am committed to the claim that my genealogically-contingent beliefs are justified, it seems that I am ipso facto committed to the claim that I am the beneficiary of what we might call *good genealogical luck…* Indeed I take myself to know that I am genealogically lucky vis-à-vis my feminist commitments. But this is only a comfort to those who have not, in a moment of genealogical anxiety, already lost confidence in their beliefs. The moment one abandons a belief under genealogical attack, one will no longer be able to use it as a premise in an argument to the effect that one is genealogically lucky vis-à-vis that belief" (Srinivasan, 2019, 6)

Good genealogical luck is striking because it predicates the permissibility of an epistemic position on the absence of an affective state (of anxiety). One cannot here separate the epistemological desire from the desire for equanimity. This characteristic is not found in the traditional epistemological literature — one would hardly expect to find papers defending whether or not clairvoyance constitutes knowledge hinging on whether the clairvoyant in question feels sufficiently anxious about her psychic abilities.

A further example that the RCN conception is concerned with justifying one's affective stance towards one beliefs, rather than with their epistemic status per se, comes from Srinivasan's suggestion that we might respond to the threat of genealogical scepticism by reconceptualising belief along the lines suggested by—the Pyrrhonian sceptic—Sextus Empiricus:

> "Sextus famously advised that we suspend judgment about all things, including the sceptic's argument. Might the philosopher do the same in response to the genealogical sceptic — that is, simply suspend judgment on whether any of her philosophical judgments constitute knowledge, given their genealogies?... One might for example think that philosophers don't (or shouldn't) believe their views outright, but merely 'accept' them — where acceptance either amounts to some practical commitment to act as if they believed them, or some other belief, for example the belief that the philosophical view in question has various theoretical virtues, or even practical ones." (Srinivasan, 2015, 351-352)

The pay-off of such a reconceptualisation of belief is not that it helps us to get things right so much as that it reassures us that we are not getting them wrong. A defining contention of Pyrrhonism is that a tranquil state of mind is the ideal (Vogt, 2018), or ultimate end (Perin, 2010, 3), of philosophical praxis. Suspending judgement is a means to obtaining equanimity in the face of epistemic uncertainty. This, it seems to me, is precisely the advantage of Srinivasan's reconceptualization. But this being so predicates the advantage of adopting the epistemic framework Srinivasan proposes on its ability to help us avoid anxiety.

None of the above is relevant to the kinds of things HoP genealogies can help us understand. Geuss (2001, xiii) thinks the natural form of epistemology that goes with genealogy is a form of *perspectivism* that defends an analogy between knowledge gained through historiography and knowledge gained by the visual senses. With visual senses, the further an object is from us, the less sharply it is perceived. Similarly, genealogical-perspectivists claim, the more temporally distant an event is, the less sharp our cognitive grasp of it will be.

Geuss' reference to perspectivism might be thought ambiguous. He might be claiming that we have a misguided tendency to think that we are innately drawn to certain distinctions—such as 'private' and 'public'—that are actually historical constructs. Or he might be claiming that genealogy helps us understand that the history of some self-identities is not amenable to exhaustive explanation — that the search for the historical origin of some of our most used self-identities appears blurrier and less well-documented the further we go back. These two senses of perspectivism need not be connected. One can be an anti-objectivist about concepts, but still believe that all our political and ethical concepts can be traced through a conceptually neat and coherent history to a single point of origination. Queloz (2017b, 734) and Schacht (2007) think that Nietzsche's genealogical method is

staunchly anti-Platonic, substituting metaphysics for a philosophical anthropology which does not seem committed to any claims about whether our concepts have a single point of origination. Conversely, someone else might be an objectivist about certain concepts—Truth, Beauty or the Good, say—but still think that philosophy tends to underestimate the extent to which some identities are formed from orthogonal influences that we uncritically treat as a coherent whole. Stern argues that Nietzsche treats the maximisation of will to power as largely synonymous with the concept of 'the good' (*Forthcoming*, 12), whereas he uses GM and *The Antichrist* to demonstrate why the Christian conception of morality is an amalgamation of the consequences of several historical moments (*Forthcoming*, 27-37).

Arguably Geuss' conception of genealogy can be associated with both insights. However, I think that he has the latter in mind when speaking about genealogy's 'perspectivism'. Geuss claims that genealogy is concerned with social phenomena that people assume have "essential defining features [that] can be traced back continuously to a single point of origination" (2001, ix). Moreover, in discussing Nietzsche's conception of genealogy, Geuss (2002) emphasizes his claim that genealogy's treatment of its objects "crystallize[s] in a kind of unity which is difficult to dissolve back into its elements, difficult to analyse and, this has to be stressed, is absolutely *undefinable*" (GM II:13). Finally, Geuss treats Foucault's (1977) analysis of GM's differentiated use of two terms for 'origin'— *Herkunft* and *Ursprung*—as crucial to understanding the kind of history that genealogy provides. Herkunft can be translated as pedigree — evocative of an unbroken line of descent, for which value is passed on at each stage. A search for morality's Herfunkt seeks a continuous level of meaning in what 'good' has meant across cultures and epochs. In contrast, morality's Ursprung, or emergence, seeks the historical moments which came to define the current usage conditions of moral terms. It is only in a search for morality's Herkunft that we seek a single point of origination and explanation for the meaning of morality.

I think these passages are central to what Geuss means by genealogy's perspectivism. The kernel of this perspectivism is the claim that our grasp of the historical origins of some of our most inveterate social concepts and practices is unreliable, and that therefore our grasp of our ancestors' intuitions about cognate concepts and practices is obscure. HoP genealogists seek to disabuse us from believing that the historical context behind our intuitions about some of our most salient self-identities are transparent by showing that our attitudes towards them are embedded within an historically specific form of thinking which can be problematized.

Finally, SPE genealogies aim to provide functionalist explanations of our concepts. Such explanations have two complementary features. The first is a concern with naturalising explanations — i.e. explaining phenomena by means of concepts which we already think of as sufficiently naturalized (Williams (2000a, 154), Kail (2011, 221), Janaway (2006, 340), Queloz (2017b, 728)). It is important to emphasize that this claim is not meant to imply that the HoP and RCN explanations are not naturalistic, but rather that SPE genealogies have a particularly demanding conception of naturalistic explanations, and argue for the *necessity* of certain aspects of our practices.

For example, Hume's genealogy explains our practices concerning justice as consequences of certain universal features about human moral psychology and environments. Williams claims that demonstrating something to be an intrinsic good requires showing that it is "*necessary* (or *nearly necessary*) for basic human purposes and needs that human beings should treat it as an intrinsic good*" (2002, 92, my emphasis). These present more demanding naturalist requirements than are present in Geuss' genealogy. He sought to explain our beliefs about the private/public distinction as a conflation of three different conceptions (Diogenesean, Caesarean and Augustinian). This explanation is naturalistic in that it does not reference any supranatural phenomena. However, it is not within that genealogy's explanatory burden to account for whether the employment of any of these prior forms is functionally necessary. This is not to say that one cannot expand Geuss' explanation to identify functionally necessary features. For example, Geuss suggests that one of the three distinctions being conflated by the Hellenic private/public dichotomy is the kinds of situations in which certain actions are likely to cause disgust. Geuss does not explicitly claim that disgust can be thought of as a feature of human-nature, but neither is it a big leap to think of 'disgusting' behaviour as amenable to functional explanations in those terms, such as the avoidance of noxious situations (which is not to imply that it manifests itself in the same way in all cultures, just as Williams shows with truthfulness). I see no particular reason why Geuss' other examples are not just as amenable to functional explanations. However, the point remains that it is not necessary for Geuss to explain our use of the public/private distinctions in terms of functional necessity. Whereas the success of SPE genealogies hinges on their ability to provide pragmatic explanations of social phenomena — to explain these phenomena "as a function of motives, reasons, psychological processes which we have reason to acknowledge already" (Williams, 2002, 33-34). Such pragmatic explanations of a discourse aim to answer two questions, designed to privilege linguistic-cum-functional explications over metaphysical ones: (i) Explaining what terms in the language do; and (ii) Explaining why we have terms in our language that do that.[15]

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[15] The same approach is favoured by the metaphysical Non-Representationalists.

The second concerns the relationship between genealogy and the sciences. SPE favours a more marked distinction between a genealogy's purely source-based historical claims and its social scientific hypotheses. This is particularly clear when we consider readings of GM by authors that primarily have a SPE-like conception of genealogy. Janaway has recently said of the claim that Nietzsche's genealogy "simply is history correctly practiced"[16] (Nehamas, 1985, 246 FN1) that this formulation "run[s] the risk of being uninformative: there are notable differences between genealogy and other forms of history" (Janaway, 2007, 10). Perhaps the best example of what Janaway means comes from the account of *bad conscience's* origin in (GM II:22). Here, we find Nietzsche's claim that he is describing 'what actually happened' juxtaposed with a passage best described as a situated psychological explanation. Janaway emphasizes that, here, doing 'real history' means providing an explanation that does not reference "specific, datable human-beings", only environmentally-situated generic psychologies (2006, 344). I take this to imply that a central disagreement Janaway has with Nehamas' and Geuss' readings of GM is over whether Nietzsche's genealogical method is historiographical (or purely historiographical).

Genealogy and Historiography

Janaway is not alone in his position. According to Kail, Nietzsche's genealogy is largely psychological (2009, 114). Hoy describes Nietzsche's genealogical method as a form of "experimental reasoning" (1994, 252), and claims that "[GM] does not provide the detailed historical studies the preface calls for, and I cannot see that they are less psychologically speculative than Hume's" (1994, 253). Whereas Prinz (2016) argues that the advantages of *Nietzschean* genealogy comes from its blending of serious attention to both history *and* psychology.

I do not think that the central disagreement between SPE and HoP is over whether GM's argument is historiographical. Such a proposition implies that there is a clear distinction to be drawn between historical and psychological claims. I am not sure that there is. One might think that the watermark of orthodox historiography is that—unlike disciplines such as social psychology—it is concerned with 'token' rather than 'type' evaluations: that it always refers to its subject by individuating particular events or individuals, rather than through the attribution of psychological profiles. However, this is not an accurate characterisation of all historiographic practice. We might find it hard to identify specific occurrences in pre-agricultural societies, but that does not mean that they lie outside the scope of historiography. Neither does the individuation of events or individuals always benefit a historical narrative. Compare a chronology of kings to an economic history of

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[16] The claim is also defended by Geuss (1994, 285).

continents — what constitutes good historiography in either case differs greatly. Given this, why should we not think that Nietzsche's accounts of ressentiment, although largely predicated on the character-types of 'Nobles' and 'Slaves', employs a valid historiographical method? Even if genealogy in GM is construed as a situated psychological account, I do not think that this would vindicate the claim that Nietzsche's conception of genealogy is not historiographical. It seems at least as historiographical as a Marxist history of the 'bourgeoisie' and the 'proletariat'.

A more useful way of contrasting SPE and HoP is on their relationship to fiction. To see this, recall the differences in what Prinz and Bevir think is innovative about Nietzschean genealogies. Prinz suggests that Nietzschean genealogy's innovation was its ability to marry concerns for historical accuracy with serious attention to moral psychology. *Prima facie*, this seems an odd distinction to make: some psychological explanations are historical. Consider however state of nature stories that are fictional by definition. Here, the distinction makes more sense. Williams (2002, 33-34) discusses how fictional genealogies can be informative. He argues that the simplifications involved in fictional genealogies reveal as *rational* the relationship between the reasons for actions of both those societies that already make use of the concept or practice being genealogised *and* those societies that don't yet possess the term, but possess a psychology and an environmental-situation that allows them to appreciate why it would be useful. I.e. fictional genealogies help explain how a society without the concept of a social contract finds itself with rational reasons to act in the same way as societies that do. Williams extrapolates from this argument a reason for thinking that fictional genealogies are better placed than their non-fictional counterparts to demonstrate a concept's functionality: "Genealogy keeps historical fact and functionalist abstraction in their places" (2002, 35).

Consider GM. SPE theorists place a greater focus on how developments in our moral history—such as the advent of disparate frameworks through which Slaves and Nobles value morality—fulfil a role that would always need filling once we accept the premise that that history always responds to the dynamics of the character-types of the Noble and the Slave. This is reflected in Kail's definition of genealogy in GM as asserting the *Genealogy as Situated Psychological Account,* which would, I think, be accepted by Janaway and Hoy, and account for the 'psychological' aspects of the method which Prinz thinks are so important.

On the other hand, Bevir (2008) argues that GM was innovative because it defended the *radical history* view. This means eschewing reference to *anthropological universals*, portraying history as discontinuous and contingent, and thinking that there are always innumerable ways in which a representation may be reinterpreted, transformed, or overpowered (2008, 267-268). Bevir's

interpretation of history is similar in many ways to Geuss', whose conception centres around the claim that history is a struggle between historically embodied forces that attempt to overpower each other; the development of which cannot be modelled through tools such as the state of nature, instead the outcomes are overwhelmingly the product of gross historical contingency (2001, *xiii*). This has consequences for the status of the concepts and practices we end up adopting:

> "Any significant human phenomenon that has succeeded in maintaining itself throughout a long history into the present, then, can be expected to be a highly stratified composite whose parts derive originally from different periods." (*Ibid.*)

Thus, for Geuss, genealogical explanations show us that "[t]here is no such thing as *the* origin of significant social phenomena, and to speak of an 'origin' is just to pick out a point that recommends itself for its convenience for whatever purpose one has in mind, but has no absolute standing." (Geuss, 2001, *x*). As we have seen, this was exactly what Foucault had in mind with his distinction between Herkunft and Ursprung.

Emphasis on how Nietzsche's conception of history took the distinction between Herkunft and Ursprung to be paramount is also evident in the work of Prescott-Couch (2015), who views the role of history in GM as intended to reveal the structural-complexity of morality's history. An interpretation of a practice is structurally-simple if it assumes the relations between the parts of a practice operate together in support of a *single* basic function (2015, 243). Take the employment of a medium of exchange to purchase goods and services *(Ibid.)*. This involves many different practices, from printing and distributing paper bills to the digital infrastructure required by debit-cards. However, each part supports the function of *increasing the efficiency of exchange*. Not all practises are amenable to a structurally-simple interpretation. Consider Christmas *(Ibid.)* – the elements of this practice have Christian, Pagan, and consumerist influences. There is no unified rationale to the practice. For Prescott-Couch, history's function in GM is to disclose how the history of morality is not amenable to a structurally-simple interpretation, as the English-Psychologists had assumed. Rather, genealogy aims to uncover the truncated, stratified, and discontinuous histories of our identities. It is hard to see how a *fictional* genealogy could ever achieve this objective.

Some critics, such as Kail (2011, 233), have taken issue with Williams' decision to call genealogies that depart from real history *fictional genealogies*. He argues that calling them *conjectural genealogies* would have been more apposite as it suggests the possibility that genealogies might offer historically correct explanations. It is not clear to me that Williams would accept this suggestion. I think he contends that state of nature stories deal with environments that are simplified to such an extent that any explanations we derive from them must by necessity be thought of as *imaginary*.

Unassisted, fictional genealogies do not work as explanations of our practices in the real world, because real world explanations must reference the complicating factors that are bracketed out by our fictional accounts. However, if Kail's reading is right, we might think that this disproves the claim that the distinction between SPE and HoP genealogies centres on the role of fiction. I am not convinced. Even if state of nature stories are conjectural in Kail's sense, we can still identify an important distinction in aims between the two conceptions. HoP proceeds from evidence that our representations of a practice have historically been different to conclude that our current representation could be different. SPE proceeds from the claim that the root needs and circumstances supporting central practices have always been constant, in order to conclude that something like those practice would always have developed to fulfil our needs.

<u>Methodological Description</u>

Genealogies also employ distinct methodologies. The output of HoP investigations is the demonstration that the genealogicised item is a product of a highly truncated, contingent, and layered history, lacking both functional coherence and historical univocality. This requires a methodology that is *documentary* in character, and *problematizing* in output. *Documentary* because it grounds genealogies in 'real history': not merely postulating on how we might have come to think as we do, but showing us how we actually did. *Problematizing* because it aims to uncover the contingent cacophony of influences that inform our representations of the world, as well as the lack of stable grounding for the inveterate evaluative attitudes we uncritically take towards them. Of course, there is more than one methodology that adheres to this perspectivist postulate; despite their similarities, HoP thinkers have distinguished between Foucault's and Nietzsche's genealogical methods (Sax (1989), Geuss (2002), Koopman (2013)). Nevertheless, one salient characteristic of HoP is that all genealogies under its conception are structured to uncover the untraceability of the genealogicised item.

The best description of SPE's methodology is given by Kail's *Genealogy as Situated Psychological Account*. SPE's naturalistic concerns for pragmatic explanations, and its distinction between historical sources and scientific hypotheses explain why SPE genealogists are attracted to situated psychological explanations such as state of nature accounts that lack the concern with historical detail favoured by HoP. Overall, SPE's methodology can be described as *modelling* in nature, and *functional* in output. *Modelling* because its genealogies abstract from examples of particular individuals or locations, instead aiming to identify the environmental and psychological variables that explain social beliefs and behaviours. *Functional* because it accounts for the existence

of practices and concepts in terms of our needs, which we might think of as characteristic of Nietzsche's substitution of philosophical anthropology for metaphysics.

Williams' genealogy contains a second stage which distinguishes the parameters that explain a concept's functional necessity to the much more localised and historically contingent developments that overlie the functionally necessary features we ascribe to a concept. For example, our conception of truthfulness in the UK is informed by living under a parliamentary democracy—(although we expect a certain amount of equivocation from members of Government when asked about state business, we also expect their behaviour to accord with the virtues of truthfulness, e.g. by not lying in the House)—but it is not a functional necessity that human societies develop this form of politics. Thus the genealogical methodology retains the paradigmatically SPE characteristic of establishing the functional boundaries of our concepts and practices through something like a state of nature account, but adds to this the methodological objective of discerning the historically contingent features which they have developed. Moreover, Williams' *Philosophy as a Humanistic Discipline* suggests that he does not think that the purpose of genealogies is to vindicate functionally necessary features and undermine the historically contingent. Rather, their purpose is merely to distinguish these two categories.

Finally, RCN's methodology is to provide a causal narrative that gives us reason to be sceptical or feel anxious about the epistemic status of some of our beliefs. Srinivasan thinks that reflecting on the epistemological significance of these sorts of narratives leads to further philosophical questions about what the best philosophical stance to take in the face of this anxiety is. This further result should not be thought of as part of the RCN conception of genealogy or its methodology. Rather, the question about how to face up to genealogical anxiety illustrates an avenue of philosophical investigation that becomes relevant when we think about the role of contingency in shaping our past from within the specifically epistemological framework proposed by the RCN conception.

The RCN methodology is more open-ended than that of HoP and SPE genealogies. For example, I might read *Public Goods, Private Goods* as an RCN genealogy in that it provides me with reasons to develop genealogical scepticism or anxiety about my judgements concerning what aspects of my life should be protected from State intervention because they belong to the private sphere. Similarly, situated psychological accounts—such as those presented by the so-called 'hermeneutics of suspicion' accounts—could also provide reasons for scepticism or anxiety about my beliefs. This does not mean that the HoP and SPE conceptions can be subsumed under the RCN conception. What allows both particular examples of SPE and HoP genealogies to also serve as examples of RCN genealogies is

that the latter's methodology is defined at a more abstract level. However, although there is some sense in which the methodologies of HoP and SPE can be used under the RCN conception, it remains the case that these conceptions are aimed at different kinds of objects, and intended to provide different kinds of explanations.

Summary

This section introduced three different conceptions of genealogy, under which a vast sway of genealogical examples could be subsumed. It then applied Section II's rubric to elucidate the central distinctions between these conceptions. This provided the resources to satisfy this thesis' first objective. Namely,

> (Objective 1) – I provide the reader with a rubric through which to identify something as a genealogy.

Our analysis has shown that we can only identify genealogies *qua* membership to a given conception of genealogy. It is not possible to provide a non-disjunctive set of conditions for identifying all genealogies because the literature contains three heterogenous conceptions of what genealogy is. Instead, genealogies should be identified by comparing whether an investigation's objects of study, explanatory aim and methodology match that of one of the three conceptions. These can be summarised as follows:

<u>Object of Study</u>

The RCN conception investigates causal narratives underlying beliefs about which we are prone to feel anxious or sceptical due to our first-order epistemological commitments. The HoP conception investigates deeply embedded self-identities, which are commonly and mistakenly assumed to have a continuous identity and to have developed in accordance with a coherent rationale. The SPE conception primarily investigates the environmental and psychological conditions that explain why we developed the social phenomena that we have, and, under Williams' development of this conception, also identifies which aspects of our social phenomena lack a functionally necessary role, but have nevertheless have become part of what we value.

<u>Explanatory Aims</u>

Genealogies under the RCN conception are concerned with justifying an affective stance of anxiety towards our beliefs given certain first-order epistemological commitments. Some thinkers,

such as Srinivasan, view this as requiring us to revise our epistemological stance towards philosophical beliefs in general, particularly by placing a greater emphasis on adopting a relationship to the epistemological status of our beliefs that allows us to overcome anxiety. Under the HoP conception, genealogies explain why certain self-identities are ripe for *problematization*: that is, why certain self-identities (concepts, practices, institutions, or social identities) are less coherent than we assume and can allow for a greater number of justified evaluative stances than we currently suppose. Finally, under the SPE conception, genealogies explain the necessary functional role some of our concepts play given the kinds of moral psychologies we possess and the material environments in which we abide. Further, under Williams' development of this conception, genealogies also highlight the historical moments in which additional features were ascribed to these concepts, over and above those that are explained by situated psychological accounts.

<u>Methodological Framework</u>

Genealogies under the RCN conception identify specific causal narratives that underlie a given belief and highlight its contingency in a way in which we are prone, given our first-order epistemic commitments, to respond to with scepticism and anxiety. Under the SPE conception, genealogy identifies the social-cum-environmental variables to which specific psychological types are responsive to, using these to explain our practices as by-products of our environmental situation. Whereas genealogies under the HoP conception identify, through meticulous historical detail, the discontinuous and sedimentary character of the history of our social concepts, institutions, identities and practices that we have come to uncritically assume possess functional coherence and historical univocality.

Section IV

Having provided a taxonomy of genealogical conceptions to identify something as a genealogy, this section seeks to satisfy our second objective

(Objective 2) – I enable the reader to articulate the reasons why a (good) genealogy can assist philosophy.

There existed a noted hostility within certain philosophical traditions to the idea that philosophical insight can be garnered through studying the origins of our philosophical outlooks,[17] as famously evidenced in "Ryle's frequent injunctions to treat something written by Plato as though it had just come out in the most recent issue of Mind" (Conant, 2016, 39). Gilbert Harman has claimed that "the history of philosophy tends not to be useful to students of philosophy", just as it is "not particularly helpful to students of physics, chemistry, or biology to study the history of physics, chemistry, or biology" (Queloz, 2017a, 137). Karl Popper's *The Poverty of Historicism* goes further, arguing "that historicist inquiry was not only irrelevant to the pursuit of philosophical truth, but moreover morally pernicious" (Srinivasan, 2019, 3).

Insofar as genealogies (under any conceptions) are attempts to garner philosophical insights about ourselves—our practices, concepts, social identities, institutions, beliefs, etc.—through investigation into their origins, genealogists should respond to these kinds of challenges. On the other hand, I hope that our investigation so far has convinced the reader that there is no common form of enquiry referenced by the term 'genealogy'. Thus we should neither assume that objections to one conception of genealogy will apply to others, nor that the responses available to one conception will be available to others.

In what follows, I investigate what I see as the most common objection levelled against the validity of genealogical arguments: the claim that genealogies commit the genetic fallacy. I first consider what adaptations are necessary to make the challenge relevant to each of the three conceptions of genealogy, and then discuss what responses are available to them.

The Genetic Fallacy

Our first task is not simple: one finds in the literature several definitions of the 'genetic fallacy',[18] many of which are not even superficially similar. For instance, the genetic fallacy has been defined in some places as the conflation of the temporal or historical origin of a belief with its logical nature and in others as the mistake of inferring the current function of a concept or practice from its ancestral function.

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[17] Conant (2016, 36-42) offers a good summary of some of the attitudes adopted by analytic philosophers towards the history of philosophy.

[18] Queloz (2018, FN 12) provides a useful index of the different ways the genetic fallacy has been defined in the literature.

Given this ambiguity, I propose a more stipulative approach. For our purposes, I will take the 'genetic fallacy' to refer to a conflation—first mentioned in the Introduction—between what Reichenbach (1938) called a theory's *context of discovery* and its *context of justification.* Reichenbach claims that the distinction illustrates "the well-known difference between the thinker's way of finding [a] theorem and his way of presenting it before a public" (1938, 6). That is, it distinguishes between the explanation of how we first came to believe in a theory, and the explanation of why we should continue to do so given what we now know. The conceptions we have defined are not primarily concerned with theories, but I will assume we can extrapolate Reichenbach's worry to the objects relevant to each conception (e.g. beliefs, practices, self-identities, etc.). Irrespective of which of these objects we have in mind, I think Reichenbach's distinction helps articulate a particular fallacious argumentative step — "not the inference from origins to justification *per se*, but the inference from irrelevant information about origins to justification" (Queloz, 2018, 5). I will stipulate that an argument commits the genetic fallacy whenever we can show that it tries to reach a normative conclusion about an object that relies on inference from facts about the context of discovery of our representations that do not apply to our current context of justification.

There are three reasons why I have chosen this formulation. Firstly, because of the sociological influence Reichenbach's work has had—particularly within the philosophy of science—in discussions about the incompatibility of 'positivistic' and 'historicist' philosophy, (see, e.g. Hoyningen-Huene (1987, 501-502)). Second, because it is used by authors writing on the relevance of the genetic fallacy to genealogy ((Srinivasan, 2019, 3), (Queloz, 2018, 4-5)).[19,20] Finally, and most importantly, because I think there are a few *prima facie* plausible ways for motivating objections to the normative consequences of genealogies via this distinction.

Here are two examples. One might claim—plausibly, if inaccurately—that the purpose of GM is to destabilise our beliefs that cohere with Christian morality's construal of morality by revealing the *pudendo origo*—the shameful context of discovery—from which they originate. Indeed, we might think that Srinivasan (2015, 325-326) provides such a reading. For her, GM argues that our system of morality was formed through the interplay of lowly forces. Our beliefs about morality are besmirched by this formation process, putting their epistemological status into question. Not all the examples of genealogies we have considered are amenable to objections of this type. Engels' genealogy of the

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[19] Queloz, following Salmon (1973, 11), describes it as "the error of treating items in the *context of formation* of conceptual practices as if they belonged to the *context of justification* when in fact they do not" (Queloz, 2018, 4-5). For our purposes, I assume we can treat Solomon's *context of formation* and Reichenbach's *context of discovery* as synonymous.

[20] Stern (2019) and Loeb (1995) take a different approach, although I think their conclusions are reconcilable with mine.

material dialectic explains our adoption of the asymmetric monogamy model. One could question what relevance this dialectic has to an evaluation of that practices' continuation: although Engels' genealogy provides an explanation of the context of discovery for asymmetric monogamy, this is of little relevance to the philosophically more interesting questions of what our reasons are—i.e. what the context of justification is—for continuing to adopt this model of familial organisation. This objection is not analogous to the one levelled against GM because it does not seek to show that our current model of familial organisation is based on false beliefs, but that the formation process for our practices is irrelevant to adjudications on their continuation.

The difference in how Reichenbach's distinction is used in these cases underscores the need to analyse the threat posed by the genetic fallacy to genealogy at the level of individual conceptions. That said, on a sufficiently abstracted level, we can say that thinking about the genetic fallacy helps us identify how genealogies could inform normative philosophy:

> "What normatively ambitious genealogical explanations depend on, then, is that there be such a connection rendering some aspect of the context of formation relevant to the context of justification" (Queloz, 2018, 5).

Queloz contends that genealogies employ two basic strategies when providing an appropriate connection between the two contexts: they either appear as *genealogies of genetically justified practices* (GGJP) or as *genealogies yielding justifications* (GYJ). The former is concerned with practices whose authority derives from its representation of its own formation processes, such as decisions made through the democratic process, or by the inheritor of the Catholic apostolic lineage (Queloz, 2018, 6). Decisions made through these processes derive their authority from the processes by which they are reached. Moreover, the reason such processes are considered authoritative is because of the representation we have of their formation processes. Queloz (*Ibid.*) claims that GGJP genealogies can be used to either subvert or vindicate these representations via the following strategies:

(Vindicatory/Subversive) GGJP:

- Conceptual or evaluative practice P understands itself or claims authority for itself in terms of a representation $R_{(FP)}$ of its own formation process FP.
- Inquiry into how FP might have given rise to P suggests that $R_{(FP)}$ is (true/false).
- Therefore, the authority of P is to that extent (vindicated/subverted).

Notice that these strategies are about whether representations are *true* — i.e. they are about beliefs we might have about these formation processes. This suggests that these schemas may possibly apply to the RCN conception.

I say possibly because Queloz does not define what 'conceptual or evaluative practices' are. The examples he cites are of processes that are embedded within a larger spiritual-political social structure. However I read this terminology as capacious enough to apply to the objects of study of the RCN conception. For example, I take it that the schema can apply to practices such as the formation of certain kinds of philosophical belief—e.g. the conceptual practice of distinguishing between what cases constitute knowledge—and that the authority on which these practices are based is that of our trust in the unbiased character of our philosophical judgements. Hence, the case of *Experimental Gettier* could be construed as a subversive GGJP.

Queloz claims that the subversive GGJP strategy is the standard way in which genealogists have responded to the 'genetic fallacy' objection (2018, 6), adding that "a genealogy can sap the authority of beliefs or ideas by revealing their contingency *insofar* as these demand authority for themselves in terms that are incompatible with that contingency" (2018, 7). This statement coheres with Srinivasan's position, with the caveat that she thinks that what is to be considered 'incompatible with *that* contingency' will be epistemologically contested case by case. Thus, with *Expertimental Gettier*, whether I find the fact that my philosophical judgements are contingent upon my being an Easterner troublesome will depend on whether I think my Westerner counterparts share a sufficiently similar method for deriving their philosophical judgements.

The second strategy for overcoming the genetic fallacy challenge is what Queloz calls the *genealogies yielding justifications* (GYJ) strategy. The primary difference between these is that instances of the latter strategy do not disclose how practices claim authority for themselves, but instead provide explanations of why our practices originated. Queloz explicates this in relation to a concept of rational contingency.

Rationally Contingent:

"Let us say that a practice P is *rationally contingent* to the extent that the considerations contributing to the best explanation of why a group G engages in P fail to provide reasons to prefer P over possible rivals to P, where possible rivals to P are unrealised alternatives to P competing for the place in our lives occupied by P, and notably include the abandonment of P." (2018, 7)[21,22]

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[21] Queloz's formulation has in mind Williams' point from *Philosophy as a Humanistic discipline* that it is not our job to search for a system of political or ethical ideas that is best from an absolute point of view. See his discussion on page nine, particularly FN 22.

[22] Because Queloz (2018) is almost exclusively concerned with what I have called SPE genealogies, he does not have much to say on Williams' other claim that "deriving our concepts *a priori* from universal conditions of human life… are likely to leave unexplained many features that provoke philosophical enquiry". This claim, I contend, is only explainable by taking the HoP conception into account.

A concern with rational contingency seems relevant to SPE genealogies. In fact, Queloz has Williams in mind as a paradigmatic case (2018, 13). But it is also relevant to other strands of SPE genealogies. Engels' genealogy investigates how asymmetric monogamy became the keystone of current family structures. Presumably, one will not find that his explanations yield good reasons for supporting this practice, and so Engels' genealogy can work to support the claim that asymmetric monogamy is a rationally contingent practice. Whereas Hume's state of nature is supposed to convince us that there are good reasons for adopting the artificial value of justice. His genealogy vindicates our practices concerning justice. Queloz (2018, 7-8) argues that these results can be formalized into three categories.

(Vindicatory/Non-Vindicatory/Subversive) Genealogy:

- Group *G* engages in (conceptual or evaluative) practice *P*.
- The best explanation for why *G* engages in *P* is that *P* is the result of formation process *FP*.
- *FP* is (vindicatory/not-vindicatory/incriminating), i.e. it (offers reasons to prefer *P*/fails to yield reasons to prefer *P*/offers reasons against the continuation of *P*) over possible rivals, including the abandonment of *P*.
- Therefore, the continuation of *P* is to that extent (justified/rationally contingent/subverted).

Queloz's GYJ strategy clearly applies to SPE genealogies. Less clear is whether it also applies to HoP genealogies. Once again, this depends on how 'conceptual or evaluative practice' is construed, but I see no reason why understanding the world in terms of concepts such as social identities (e.g. one's sexuality) or political distinctions (e.g. private/public) would not count as examples of conceptual or evaluative practices in the sense intended by Queloz.

Assuming I am right in claiming that 'conceptual and evaluative practices' can refer to all the kinds of objects we have discussed throughout this thesis, the utility that these strategies for our project should be evident. Queloz's two strategies not only explain how genealogies can avoid committing the genetic fallacy, they also offer insight into the utility of genealogical thinking. However, considering that the first component of our rubric sought to distinguish genealogies based on the kinds of objects they think are amenable to being genealogised, we might wonder how Queloz is able to refer to such heterogenous objects through the same label — i.e. 'conceptual and evaluative practices'. I think the following two points are useful here.

First is to understand how 'conceptual and evaluative practices' have objects that are beliefs in some cases (RCN genealogies), and not beliefs in others (SPE and HoP genealogies). The answer is that they do not — the scope of the term 'conceptual and evaluative practices' are *practices*, and not beliefs about practices. It is useful to highlight a metaphorical use of phrasing that occurs in Queloz's

definition of Vindicatory/Subversive GGJP. He says, 'conceptual or evaluative practice P *understands itself* or *claims authority for itself*' (my emphasis). Practices—conceptual, evaluative, or otherwise—do not possess the autonomy requisite for claim-making. What Queloz means is that the authority we perceive in these practices comes from the beliefs we hold about their formation processes.

Second is to understand that what counts as 'the best explanation for why G engages in P' need not always be the same kind of explanation. Some aspects of practices are not amenable to analyses of functional necessity. This was exemplified by Williams' discussions of the different historical modulations in our conception of truthfulness, all of which satisfied the functionally necessary role required by the state of nature. Moreover, according to the doctrine of *radical history*, every significant human phenomena is comprised of a series of stratified influences from different historical moments. These are not explainable in terms of their functional necessity. The existence of these practices, or aspects of practices, demonstrate that we require more strategies to vindicate our concepts than those proposed by situated psychological explanations.

Equipped with Queloz's helpful distinctions between strategies, we now turn to assess how each of the genealogical conceptions avoid the genetic fallacy.

<u>Revelatory Causal Narrative Conception</u>

RCN genealogies follow the *Subverisve GGJP* strategy, which argue that our context of justification for a conceptual or evaluative practice is predicated on a false representation of the formation process through which that practice originated. That is, the GGJP is interested in whether our current context of justification is relying on invalid inferences about the context of discovery from which a genetically justified process is supposed to derive its authority.

Importantly, Srinivasan would argue that the reasons through which we arrive at the judgement that $R_{(FP)}$ is false depend on first-order epistemic commitments of the person doing the judging. Compare a different example discussed by Srinivasan, with her example of *Experimental Gettier*:

Ideological Feminism

"Suppose the critical genealogist is attempting to impugn my feminist commitments as a mere product of leftist indoctrination. He points out that had I been educated differently, I wouldn't have my feminist commitments. Does this not impugn the safety of the method on which I base my feminist beliefs, viz. the method of believing in accordance with my political formation? My response surely will be that this is *not* my belief-forming method. I don't simply believe in accordance with what I was taught to believe. My feminist

commitments are based, rather, on reflection on the experiences of women, myself included, aided by the interpretative resources of feminist theory. Patriarchal beliefs, meanwhile, *are* based on an inferior method – viz. the method of believing in accordance with a false ideology. The critical genealogist will presumably retort that to insist on the superiority of *my* belief-forming method requires that I presuppose the truth of the very feminist commitments that are under attack.

What is at issue here is how to individuate belief-forming methods for the purposes of assessing their safety. The problem is that there is no principled, independent answer to be given to this question — that is, independent of the very first-order beliefs that are in dispute. Any judgment about what counts as a distinct or superior method will have to be informed, in a circular fashion, by whether we judge the relevant case to be a case of knowledge. Thus the critical genealogist who appeals to safety will risk begging the question against his opponent. For he will have to make assumptions about method-individuation that will in turn be informed by his judgment that the beliefs in question are not justified. But this is to presuppose precisely what must be proven." (2019, 5).

According to our analysis of the RCN conception, what primarily distinguishes the outcome of the genealogical sceptic's challenge is that in *Experimental Gettier* I feel genealogically anxious about my own beliefs, whereas in *Ideological Feminism* the genealogical sceptic is my interlocutor, who is trying to induce such anxiety in me. This is a key difference because, given Srinivasan's above argument, the sceptic's argument will beg the question in the latter case but not the former.

Thus RCN genealogies are only able to satisfy the second premise of the GGJP strategy—i.e. convince us that R$_{(FP)}$ is false—where my first-order epistemic beliefs make me inclined to find the contingency revealed by genealogical inquiry troubling. On the other hand, that I am inclined find the genealogical evidence for the claim that R$_{(FP)}$ is false compelling means that, *for me*, the current context of justification for the genetically justified practice appears unreliable. This gives me reason to re-assess my evaluative stance towards beliefs that derive their authority from that genetically justified practice.

Histories of the Present Conception

HoP genealogies follow the *Subversive GYJ* strategy. They show us that we engage in a practice through a formation process which we think is incriminating. Importantly, this strategy would commit the genetic fallacy if the reasons given against its continuation are merely that the practice has shameful origins. Such reasons are irrelevant to whether we should continue our practice, but they are not of interest to HoP genealogies. Rather, these look to history to understand what the pragmatic consequences of that practice have been.

Notice that in claiming that Geussean genealogies adhere to the GYJ strategy, I imply that, for Geuss, the outcome of genealogical inquiry can be vindicatory, subversive *or* non-vindicatory. I think this is correct. To understand why, it is useful to refer to Queloz's (2018, 8-9) comments about the *tripartite* structure of the GYJ strategy. Queloz argues that the GGJP strategy is bi-valent because it is concerned with evaluating our representations (of formation processes) as either being true or false. In contrast, the objects of the GYJ strategy are practices, not representations — and practices are neither true nor false. Queloz argues that practices are evaluated based on how aptly they are fulfil our purposes (2018, 9) which does not always result in a well-ordered ranking.

Sometimes there are no uncontestably criteria through which to compare their values —— in Queloz's terminology: sometimes our practices will show themselves to be rationally contingent. Moreover, some practices are functionally necessary on a broad level, but also include specific eccentricities that might be thought rationally contingent. For example, Williams' argued that we must distinguish between the functional characteristics of truthfulness that are deducible from the state of nature, from other connotations that we only associate to truthfulness due to contingent historical modulations undergone by that concepts. The connotations associated with these historical modulations are not vindicated by Williams' state of nature. This allows us to distinguish between two claims: (i) that *some* conception of truthfulness—i.e. not necessarily our current conception—is functionally necessary for human societies, and that this function cannot be executed if we abandon a belief in objective truth; and (ii), that the *particular* values that we associate with the concept of truthfulness are still open to problematization. HoP genealogies are concerned with this second kind of claim; they utilise history as a tool to help us assess the rational contingency of practices (or aspects thereof) that are not functionally necessary.

Situated Psychological Explanation conception:

SPE genealogies also follow the GYJ strategy, but are not wedded to the Subversive Genealogy path. Rather, they provide an environmental and psychological description of a situation from which a practice originates. This explanation sometimes shows the extant practice to be apt (e.g. Hume), other times non-apt (e.g. Engels), and still other times to be merely rationally contingent (e.g. Williams on the specific historical modulations of truthfulness). This framework allows for the genetic fallacy to be circumvented. For example, Queloz (2018, 11) argues that subversive genealogies can reveal that we are engaged in a practice because of a function which we do not need to see discharged: "This is an attempt to side-step the genetic fallacy by using the context of formation as a guide to current functionality, which is in turn a relevant consideration when it comes to the practice's

justification" (Queloz, 2018, 11). Conversely, in the case of practices that can be thought of as apt responses to inescapable human needs, genealogies vindicate our practices by showing them *not* to be rationally contingent.

Continuity Failure

The above outlines how SPE genealogies avoid the genetic fallacy. However, Queloz argues that this strategy fails when there is discontinuity between the original and the current circumstances in which a practice occurs. Queloz, following Smyth (2017) calls this the problem of *continuity failure*. Smyth thinks continuity failure arises in genealogies that appeal to a situated psychological explanation that identifies a set of conditions that no longer obtain. His argument is concerned with contemporary genealogies of morality, such as those of Joyce (2006), Prinz (2007), and Kitcher (2011). To avoid introducing yet more genealogical examples I will exemplify the issue by reference to GM, via Chaudhri's (2016, 207-208) argument against the coherence of Prinz's (2016) claim that Nietschean genealogy pays serious attention to both history and psychology.

Chaudhri argues that if we interpret, as Prinz does, Nietzsche's account of ressentiment as a situated psychological explanation of an environment that existed specifically in early Christianity, then it seems to follow that ressentiment cannot explain our *current* psychological motives. He explains that in the first treatise, Nietzsche claims that our present conception of morality has its historic origins in the slave-revolt of morality, which inverted the Nobleman's conception of morality. But if the Slaves did in fact take revenge upon the Nobles by inverting their values, Chaudhri asks, "why should their resentment have survived? Why did their resentment not gradually disappear once the object upon which it had been directed was historically defeated?" (2016, 208). He suggests—citing (GM I:16) and (GM III: 11) as evidence—that this might be because Nietzsche thought that the opposition between the Nobles' and Slaves' values recurs throughout history. If this were the case, he continues, this might make sense of how ressentiment survived throughout history without our being fully aware of it, *however,* it also calls into question "the idea that Nietzsche's genealogy exemplifies what Prinz calls 'historical particularism'" (*Ibid.*).

For Chaudhri, Prinz's claims about Nietzschean genealogies imply that they uphold two mutually inconsistent virtues: historical particularism and psychological universalism. This is precisely what Queloz (2018) identifies as threatening SPE genealogies that describe historically particular environments. For him, genealogies that follow the GYJ strategy can only be successful if they avoid the genetic fallacy by not making inferences from irrelevant information about origins to justification, while also not violating the continuity failure condition:

Continuity Failure:

"Necessarily, for any P, G, and RC_i: if $\{RC_1, RC_2, …, RC_n\}$ is the set of root conditions relative to which practice P was originally functional under some description, then the inference from the original function of practice P to its current function in group G is justified only if $\{RC_1, RC_2, …, RC_n\}$ also obtains in G.

When this constraint is not met, genealogically derived ascriptions of functionality exhibit what Smyth calls *continuity failure.*" (2018, 11)

I will leave aside whether Prinz's interpretation of Nietzschean genealogies can withstand Chaudhri's criticism, and focus instead on Queloz's analysis of how genealogies following the GYJ strategy can avoid continuity failures. Queloz claims that genealogies need to employ two strategies to avoid continuity failure.

The first is to provide an environmental and psychological description that abstracts from particular historical situations, focusing exclusively on very general features about the conditions in which humans exist. For example, Hume predicates the structural necessity for an artificial virtue of justice on the fact that humans are self-interested, possess a limited capacity for sympathy, and live under conditions of material scarcity. The same was true of Williams account of the functional role played by truthfulness that was predicated on a society's need for the division of epistemic labour. These situated accounts identify a set of collectively unsatisfactory circumstances to which the development of a given practice constitutes a solution. Queloz calls this the *high-level description strategy* (2018, 13-14). He primarily thinks of this as a model-based response to the threat of continuity failure: an "idealising representation of functional dynamics at a level of abstraction familiar from game theory and rational choice theory" (2018, 13). The aptness of this model depends on whether it is applicable as an explanation of a conceptual or evaluative practice in an extremely wide range of situations. Any good model helps secure continuity by avoiding claims that imply that the root conditions that explain a practice only apply to specific epochs.

The second strategy shows that the need for a practice derives from basic needs we can safely assume apply to all humans, which Queloz calls the *anchoring in human nature* strategy (2018, 14-16). He describes the basic needs described by state of nature accounts as second-order structural needs—such as the need to gather and share information about the immediate environment (e.g. Craig and Williams) and to avoid conflict (e.g. Hume)—that are derived from first-order needs, such as the need for various kinds of foods, goods, and tools. Queloz highlights that in focusing on practices that are not postulated but shown to entail from more primitive needs, the anchoring in human nature strategy appears as counterfactually robust. In fact, I think the advantage of both Queloz's strategies is that they contribute to making *Model-Based Genealogies* counterfactually

robust. Consider the schema Queloz proposes for how pragmatically vindicatory genealogies function:

> *"Model-Based Genealogy:*
>
> **P1** In a prototypical group G, a set of root needs RN_1-RN_n under root circumstances $RC_1 - RC_n$ generate a practical problem
>
> **P2** This generates a pragmatic pressure on G to solve the problem: the focal need FN
>
> **P3** Prototypical practice P would meet the focal need FN by discharging function F
>
> **P4** P could develop quite naturally, i.e. out of the capacities we are prepared to grant G anyway, via the set of steps $S_1 - S_n$
>
> **C1** Therefore, P would be bound to develop in any G that persists
>
> **C2** Therefore, it is rational for G to engage in P in order for F to be discharged in G (in the sense that people with these needs under these circumstances would welcome and, if they could do so, aim for engagement in P with a view to the discharge of F)
>
> **P5** In the actual group G^*, there are close analogues to $RN_1 - RN_n$ and $RC_1 - RC_n$,
>
> namely $RN^*_1 - RN^*_n$ and $RC^*_1 - RC^*_n$
>
> **C3** Therefore, it is also rational for G^* to engage in P^*, the closest analogue to P in G^*, in order for F to be discharged
>
> **C4** Therefore, the best explanation for why we go in for P^* is that it discharges function F
>
> **C5** Therefore, there is a *prima facie* reason for G^* to continue P^*, and P^* is to that extent vindicated" (Queloz, 2018, 16)

Queloz's strategies insulate Model-Based Genealogies from two types of counterfactual variation. The high-level description strategy aims to insulate Model-Based Genealogies from diachronic variations. It ensures that the root needs and circumstances of the prototypical group G remain relevant through time, such that it applies to both the original and current circumstances ascribed to an actual group G^*; i.e. it ensures that (P5) will be true of both our present condition and any particular moment in our past. Whereas the anchoring in human nature strategy insulates Model-Based genealogies from plausible variations that could have occurred due to historical forces. Here is a schematized argument.

Argument for Counterfactual Robustness:

P6 The only situations in which the development of focal practice P is not entailed by root needs RN_1-RN_c are those in which the set of root conditions, RC_1-RC_n do not apply.

P7 Due to the high-level description strategy, RC_1-RC_n apply to all situations that sufficiently resembles the circumstances in which human societies develop.

C6 Therefore, any society in which RN_1-RN_n do not apply does not exist in a nearby possible world.

(P6) and (P7) make (P1) counterfactually robust, in the sense that if we were to substitute actual group G^*, actual root needs RN^*_1–RN^*_n, and actual root conditions RC^*_1–RC^*_n, for any variant that plausibly applies to human society, (P5) would still be true.

Together, these strategies ensure (P5) is true irrespective of temporal or historical-contingent variations, thereby insulating Model-Based genealogies from continuity failure.

Summary

This section has argued that the three conceptions of genealogy use different strategies to avoid committing the genetic fallacy. RCN genealogies follow the Vindicatory GGJP strategy, which relies on the fact that my first-order epistemological beliefs lead me to believe that the formation process through which I came to them warrants their re-evaluation. RCN genealogies disclose a particular causal narrative which leads me to suspect that certain assumptions in the context of justification of my beliefs rely on assumptions about the formation process of that belief that derive from their context of discovery in a way that, upon reflection, I now come to dispute.

In contrast, HoP and SPE genealogies employ distinct sub-strategies of the GYJ strategy. HoP genealogies aim exclusively to provide *Subversive Genealogies*. They show us how some of our evaluative attitudes towards conceptual or normative practices can be shown to be rationally contingent. They do so through problematization, which discloses how our evaluative attitude's context of justification are implicitly motivated by undesirable features of our context of discovery without our realising.

SPE genealogies can provide vindicatory, non-vindicatory, or subversive genealogies. They consider whether we can depict our practices through the *Model Based Genealogy* schema. In circumventing the charge of the genetic fallacy through a model-based strategy, SPE genealogies open themselves to the threat of *continuity failure*. This threat does not apply to HoP genealogies as they do not rely on model-based abstraction. Successful SPE genealogies avoid continuity failure by adopting the *high-level description* and *anchoring in human nature* strategies, that ensure that model-based genealogies are counterfactually robust. In turn, counterfactual robustness ensures that inferences made from a conceptual or normative practice's context of discovery are predicated on societies' root needs and circumstances that are relevant to that practice's context of justification.

Section V

The last section explained the philosophical function of genealogies by considering how they avoid committing the genetic fallacy. This requires rendering some aspect of the context of formation relevant to the context of justification. How this is done depends upon the conception of genealogy being employed, but understanding the conceptions' strategies elucidates how their type of genealogy can contribute to philosophical knowledge. This result coheres with the findings from Section III which showed that there is no single philosophical method referenced by the term 'genealogy'.

Of course, depending on what kind of thing X is, one can make an informed guess as to which kind of genealogy would be most appropriate. However, this is not always obvious: in Section III, we discussed differing theorists' views on the function of genealogy in GM. Thus, ostensibly, in telling you that I am writing a genealogy I do not say much more than that I am working on some kind of origin-story.

Here I return to the question of whether anything more might unite the three conceptions. I begin—in subsection (A)—with a hypothesis about their connection. I argue that all of them understand genealogy as concerned with the same general problem about our relationship to contingency in our past. I demonstrate that every case study from Section I accords with this characterisation. In particular, I argue—in subsection (B)—that theorists' differing interpretations of the meaning of 'genealogy' in GM is predicated on different interpretations of this general problem: the conceptions correlate with worries about the different kinds of contingency they think genealogies reveal. Finally—in subsection (C)—I conclude that the philosophical function of genealogy is to help us confront the significance of the contingencies in our past that effect our current philosophical outlook.

(A) The General Problem of Genealogy

Given the heterogeneity of the conceptions of genealogy identified, does it make sense to treat 'genealogy' as a unified term? In the Introduction we considered three possible responses, the common label could indicate:

(i)   A mere coincidence given that there is no substantive commonality in the conceptions' use of the term;

(ii)   The existence of a univocal conception of genealogy under which all three conceptions can be subsumed; or

(iii)   The existence of a non-trivial commonality between the three usages at a certain level of abstraction, but that there is no non-trivial commonality between the conceptions when we examine their reference to 'genealogy' *qua* method of philosophical investigation.

I claimed at the beginning that I wanted to defend the third option. Having completed our taxonomy of genealogical conceptions, I can now provide my reasons. My contention is that all three conceptions of genealogy are concerned with a common problem:

The General Problem of Genealogy

To what extent are the concepts and practices through which we organise our philosophical outlooks *contingent*, and what is the philosophical importance of this fact?

I think that genealogies are origin-stories that make us confront the fact that many aspects of our current practices stem from a contingent feature of our past. However, the three conceptions associate different sets of questions to this problem. To see this, consider how *The General Problem of Genealogy* applies to the examples from Section I.

<u>Revelatory Causal Genealogies:</u>

Xenophanes, revisited:

Xenophanes claimed that if cattle or horses were to imagine the gods, their representations would not be anthropomorphised. The object under discussion is the ancient Greeks' representations of the gods. Xenophanes' genealogy questions where this representation comes from. He suggests that the formation process by which the Greeks formed their theological beliefs is biased by the desire to represent the gods as themselves. The genealogy, in effect, provides a causal narrative about how the Greek's beliefs were formed that highlights a contingency in that formation process.

To put this in terms of Reichenbach's conflation: Xenophanes claims that the way in which the Greeks came to derive their representations of the gods—the context of discovery of their theological beliefs—was causally affected by their anthropomorphising desires. He then suggests that our reasons for continuing to believe in these representations—the context of justification for our representations—should not be informed by these assumptions because conforming beliefs to such desires is not a reliable method for forming

true beliefs: hence the suggestion that if cattle could draw, they would represent their gods as cattle-like. Therefore, the Greeks should be sceptical about their theological beliefs.

Experimental Gettier, revisited:

One's upbringing as an 'Easterner' or a 'Westerner' contributes to how one forms judgements about Jones—i.e. they form part of the context of discovery—because one learns about the concept of 'knowledge' during one's upbringing. Yet many of us would expect that the specific 'Easterner' or 'Westerner' character of that upbringing does not form part of the grounds on which one now bases one's beliefs—i.e. the context of justification—on whether Jones knows. In *Experimental Gettier,* however, fictitious experimental results suggest that beliefs about whether Jones knows *are* causally influenced by one's upbringing.

Applying this to my own beliefs about Jones suggests that these are at least partly due to my upbringing. As it happens, my first-order epistemological commitments lead me to think that there is no reason to believe my upbringing is epistemologically privileged viz. the capacity to form accurate philosophical judgements. This gives me reason to feel anxious that all my judgements about knowledge are the consequence of a contingent feature about my upbringing, impelling me to change the representation I have about my knowledge-judgements.

Both revisited cases highlight key characteristics of RCN genealogies: they reveal causal narratives that, given certain first-order epistemological commitments, appear to undermine our reasons for confidence about certain beliefs. This justifies us to modify our affective stance towards those beliefs by developing scepticism or anxiety, which, in turn, can prompt us to re-examine our epistemic stance towards certain classes of beliefs. What concerns us in these cases is the identification of *contingent* features about ourselves that we think should only inform the context of discovery of our representations, but which genealogy shows to also influence their context of justification.

Situated Psychological Explanations:

Hume, Revisited:

The target of Hume's genealogy is not the virtue of justice itself, but the conditions that explain its emergence as an artificial value. Perhaps more accurately, and to repurpose a phrase from Prinz (2016, 181), Hume's genealogy collapses the question 'Why are we just?'

and 'Why be just?'. He argues that a pragmatism is engendered in all human societies by the scarcity of nature and our self-interested nature, and that respect for property rights—i.e. justice—appears as a form of amelioration, thus producing a new, communal, reason for action.

We can think of this through Reichenbach's terminology. The psychological-cum-environmental circumstances depicted by Hume's state of nature form part of the context discovery of our practices surrounding justice. We developed these in order to alleviate pragmatic pressures inherent in our circumstances. Due to their generality, we are still subject to the circumstances described in Hume's account, and thus the same reasons that explain how we developed these practices also apply to our context of justification for their continuation.

Hume claims that we would be mistaken to think that once justice has become an intrinsic value the state of nature conditions cease to be part of our context of justification for valuing it. "Encrease to a sufficient degree the benevolence of men, or the bounty of nature, and you render justice useless, by supplying its place with much nobler virtues, and more valuable blessings" (Hume, 2014, Book 3, Part II, Section 2). Our practices relating to justice respond to needs that could not be met without their adoption. Of course, the circumstances that inform those needs remain contingent. It is a logical possibility that humankind could have been more generous, or Nature more bountiful. However, *assuming* our relative self-interest and Nature's relative scarcity can be taken as constants, the adoption of our practices around justice *is not contingent*, and thus is a source of vindication for our practices. They are functionally justified relative to those pressures.

Engels, Revisited:

Engels' genealogy is best thought of as a chronicle of the pragmatic pressures caused by material changes in our environment, and the ensuing efforts to palliate them through changes in the family unit. He concludes that our paradigm of asymmetric monogamy is a product of the current material factors effecting society. For example, the growth in the economic role of men that accompanied the decline of the nomadic lifestyle continues to affect our family values, such as greater restrictions on female sexuality to ensure the wealth accrued by men remains with their lineage.

We can think of both Hume's and Engels' genealogies as fitting the *Model-based Genealogies* schema because they describe a series of root needs and conditions, and explain how developments in practices helped account for those needs. They differ in that the environment described by Engels is less stable: it does not follow the *high-level description* or the *anchoring in human nature* strategies. We might not be able to change the bountifulness of Nature, but the material circumstances that affect our social organisations can change.

Engels' genealogy thus reveals a worrying feature about the contingency of our practices surrounding familial organisation. The asymmetry in the economic roles of men and women has given men a systemic advantage that has been leveraged in establishing asymmetric restrictions on men and women concerning sex, marriage, and the family unit. A pragmatic effect of this interplay is the relative oppression of women. However, these material conditions are contingent — it is within our power to alter them. Therefore, we are justified to ask whether we want to uphold our practices concerning the role of women in society; whether to reconsider our context of justification for maintaining those practices.

Williams, Revisited:

The first half of Williams' genealogy follows a similar strategy to Hume. A state of nature story is proposed, isolating the psychological and environmental circumstances that explain our need to adopt certain practices. Williams argues that this is sufficient to vindicate our treatment of truthfulness as an intrinsic good. However, he goes on to highlight that not all aspects of our conception of truthfulness can be justified in this way.

For example, Williams' state of nature argues that humans require a conception of truthfulness that values sincerity. There is a structural requirement that, by default, people can be taken to believe what they assert; situations lacking this characteristic open themselves up to the kind of risk which the fable of *the boy who cried wolf* tries so hard to warn us about. In this sense, sincerity addresses a pragmatic pressure in society. However, one can develop different conceptions of sincerity which still satisfy the pressures described in the state of nature. If I know that someone is prone to changing their opinion, I might not believe their sincerity when today they earnestly claim to be against capital punishment. Yesterday, for instance, they may have earnestly claimed to be for it. We might think that earnest belief in what one claims at the time of utterance is not sufficient to ensure sincerity, which also requires us to possess a minimal amount of consistency in our opinions. In

effect, this is the difference Williams described between Rousseau's and Diderot's conceptions of sincerity: Rousseau thought there was no such minimal consistency requirement, whereas Diderot did. Both are valid conceptions, and, since the state of nature argument only engages with a simplified model of what human's needs for sincerity are, the validity of the argument is not affected by which specific conception we subscribe to.

Williams claimed that the purpose of genealogy is to distinguish functional abstraction from historical contingency. The reason we should want to do so is because each reveals a form of contingency in our practices that challenges the extent to which we can consider them vindicatory. The simplified dynamics of situations in the state of nature mean that such stories cannot offer exhaustive defences of our practices: the development of some aspects of our practices are simply a matter of historical contingency. This does not mean that we have no reason to maintain the other aspects. Historical contingency may be more volatile than the constant but contingent features that characterise the basic psychological-environmental conditions of human societies, yet despite this greater volatility, we would still like to show them not to be rationally contingent. After all, it is a source of vindication for a practice that there are no known alternatives to it that are pragmatically preferable.

These cases demonstrate features associated to SPE genealogies. Their object of study is a description of an environment and a moral psychology that is responsive to that environment, which can explain the development of a particular practice. Their aim is to elucidate whether the structural features surrounding the context of discovery of those practices is relevant to their context of justification. If we can provide a near-universal description of the environmental dynamics surrounding a certain practice, this justifies its continuation because it shows the practice is insulated from certain kinds of contingencies. Williams' genealogy shows us that in some cases what is being vindicated is a simplified version of the practice, to which other connotations might have been associated that can be questioned separately. If the situational dynamics concerning certain aspects of a practice are not near-universal, then we should evaluate that practice based on its pragmatic effects.

Histories of the Present:

Geuss, Revisited

Geuss' genealogy uncovers three disparate conceptions of 'public' and 'private' that he thinks are overlooked in our everyday political appeal to 'the' (singular) public/private distinction. The object of his genealogy is a 'self-identity' with a layered history that can be

traced to at least three different contexts of discovery. Geuss think that revealing this complexity is important because it discloses a conflation perpetuated by liberal theory which has pragmatic consequences: Liberals assume that there is a coherent rationale behind their judgements about State intervention. This assumption obscures the fact that there are significant differences in the kinds of things the public/private distinction is being used to justify. Sometimes it is used to justify the Hellenic distinction between actions that are solely permissible in sufficiently intimate social contexts. Other times, it is used to justify the Roman distinction between differences in expectations that are placed on public servants and private citizens. Insofar as it is logically possible that our intuitions about State interference might conflict in these two conceptions, Geuss' genealogy shows us that we have reason to problematize our practice.

Geuss' point can be understood through the concept of rational contingency. His claim is that Liberals have treated reference to the public/private distinction as providing sufficient grounds to justify whether or not the State can interfere in a given situation. Geuss argues that such references are illegitimate, and that we should take a less ideological approach. First by taking a more piecemeal approach to such decisions – i.e. distinguishing between the different conception of 'public' and 'private' that are at issue. And secondly by deciding whether or not to allow the State to interfere solely by considering the pragmatic consequences of it doing so for that particular conception of public and private (which requires looking into the history of that concept—i.e. distinguishing the three contexts of discovery that have been conflated).

Geuss' genealogy fits the description of HoP genealogies; he uses historical evidence to reveal a way in which that self-identity can be problematized. *Problematization* is predicated on contingency: something can only be problematized if it is possible that our evaluative stance towards it could be substantially different, as what we seek is to reveal the possibility of adopting an ameliorative relationship towards it.

<u>What about GM?</u>

We have seen how the six case studies associate with particular conceptions of genealogy, which are themselves linked to a particular kind of worry about contingencies in our past. This leaves only GM which, as noted in Section I, has been associated with each previous conception of genealogy. As such, it is a special case, which I will approach by explaining how the alleged conceptions within it can be located.

(B) Three Readings of the Function of Genealogy in GM.

As we saw in the '*Genealogy as Historiography*' subsection, theorists have employed both HoP and SPE conceptions in interpreting the meaning of 'genealogy' in GM. According to the SPE conception, 'genealogy' refers to *Genealogy as Situated Psychological Account*. The proponents of this reading suggest that GM's central arguments rely on the identification of timeless character-types (i.e. Slaves, Nobles, Priests), and description of their moral psychology (e.g. Slaves are weak and jealous; Nobles are strong but not especially bright; Priests are intelligent and scheming) from which it is possible to explain the development of a series of psychological mechanisms and modes of valuation (i.e. ressentiment, bad conscience, aesthetic ideal) which gave rise to two historically important conceptions of morality (i.e. Slave and Nobleman morality).

Under this reading, GM employs the Subversive GYJ strategy by explicating our conceptual and normative practices concerning morality as responses to the pragmatic pressures that arise in situations where Slaves, Nobles, and Priests live together. Some of these practices might be considered functionally necessary. For example (GM II: 1-3) describes how Nobles used pain as a mnemonic technique that eventually led to the emergence of conscience. Arguably, under Nietzsche's description there is nothing contingent about the Noble's development of conscience: it came as the solution to the pragmatic pressure that was caused by their desire to assert their superiority over the Slaves. In response to this 'root need', the Nobles developed the capacity to promise and the privilege of responsibility through which they were able to differentiate themselves from the Slaves.

Whereas other practices that belong to our moral outlook are not functionally necessary. For example, take the aesthetic ideal, which is presumably an evaluative practice that derives moral valuations from a particular ideology. Nietzsche describes the aesthetic ideal as having been developed by the Priests as a way of taking advantage of the pragmatic pressure instantiated by the Slaves' guilt. However, Nietzsche seems to suggest that this practice is rationally contingent: the hegemonic adoption of the Priest's mode of valuation has the pragmatic effect of leading European society to embrace nihilism. The consequences of this practice give us a reason to desire the abandonment of the practice of evaluating morality through the ascetic ideal.

According to the HoP conception, 'genealogy' in GM refers to the practice of using history and philology to show that many of our current concepts are "absolutely undefinable" (GM II: 13). This is predicated on a view of history which Bevir called 'radical history' which I have argued seems consistent with the view presented by Geuss (2001, *xii-xiii*). Thus, one way of reading the GM is as a series of reflections on how moral philosophy has so far only concerned itself with a simplified and

sanitised version of our moral history. This was the central thesis of Prescott-Couch's (2015) paper, where he argues that the role of history in GM is to reveal that our moral history is structurally-complex. An example of what such a reading of GM might look like is provided by Geuss' (1994) account of the way Nietzsche thinks about Christianity in GM and *The Antichrist.*

It is also possible to project concerns that are indigenous to the RCN conception into readings of GM. Srinivasan's (2015) account[23] claims that the GM's purpose is to show that our beliefs about morality are the product of an interplay of lowly forces. This implies that GM subscribed to the Subversive GGJP strategy because it argues that inquiry into the formation process through which we came to our moral outlooks suggests that our representation of that process is false. We might have thought that our moral outlook developed from some preternatural ability to track the morality of our action, or based on our learning to only identify and value actions that benefit society. According to GM, however, our system of morality is the product of "the *ressentiment* of slaves against their masters, the debtor-creditor relation, and the desire of the priestly caste to dominate" (*Ibid.*).

I agree that moments in GM are susceptible to the RCN conception. It is certainly plausible that our moral beliefs are particularly amenable to the threat of genealogical anxiety or scepticism. Indeed, Nietzsche seems to have something similar in mind when discussing the lambs and the birds of prey (GM I: 13). It is absurd, he argues, to expect that the strength of the birds of prey will not express itself as strength. The imagery invoked is important here: lambs are well-known Christian symbols, while the eagle is the most iconic symbol of Roman strength. He seems to be arguing, therefore, that it is absurd for Christians and Jews to claim that the Romans should not want to take advantage of the power imbalance that existed under the Roman occupation of Jewish territories. The implication is that, had the Christians been the benefactors of the power-imbalance, they would also have taken advantage of their environmentally situated superiority. Here, Nietzsche explains the Romans' practices of asserting strength by analysing the dynamic between two character-types; the passage serves as an example of how an SPE analysis can be repurposed to bring forth specifically RCN-like epistemological concerns.

We also find examples in GM of where an HoP analysis can suit the purposes of a RCN genealogy, such as Nietzsche's claim that the history of punishment has 'crystallized' into a kind of 'undefinable' unity, comprised of 'relatively restricted and random material' (GM II: 13). Although an HoP theorist would read this as making a point about the highly-stratified nature of an everyday

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[23] But not Srinivasan's (2019) account.

concept, the RCN theorist can claim that the passage plays the second function of giving us reason to doubt some of our beliefs about the function punishment plays in society.

Indeed, it seems plausible that Nietzsche had both HoP-like and RCN-like aims for this section. Nietzsche was aware that his account of the history of morality was inconsistent with, and therefore undermined any Christian history of morality. However, it seems incorrect to claim that Nietzsche's discussion of punishment only criticises our representation of its formation process. Nietzsche goes on to argue that although the current role of the penal institution is supposed to be rehabilitative, pangs of conscience are extremely rare amongst convicts and criminals (GM II: 14). I read this as a pragmatic critique of penal institutions—the system does not provoke the affective reaction it intends to—which implies he is using the HoP's Subversive GYJ strategy, rather than the RCN's Subversive GGJP strategy.

The above considerations show that it is possible to project all three conceptions of genealogy into specific passages of GM. This still leaves what was Nietzsche's conception of genealogy in question. I do not think it plausible that Nietzsche primarily construed it as similar to the RCN conception. As Kail explains, "[t]he GM explains more than beliefs of course. The phenomenon of evaluative self-awareness or conscience is a central explanandum, and though beliefs about it emerge, the central phenomenon is not itself a belief" (2011, 219).[24]

More importantly, a RCN reading of GM implies that the book primarily employs a Subversive GGJP strategy, the sole concern of which is to reveal the falsity of our representation of the formation processes through which we came to our beliefs. This implies that the *positive* ethical positions Nietzsche argues for in GM are not part of his genealogical strategy. I think this position leads to some interpretative tight-spots. For example, Nietzsche argues for the pragmatic preferability of adopting a cheerful, anti-nihilistic, morality that will allow Europe to rediscover its love of man (GM *Intro*: 6-7: I: 9, 11, 14; III: 7-8, 24-25). It seems to me that he is *not* arguing that adopting this more vitalistic conception of morality will make our beliefs true, but that it will have beneficial pragmatic consequences. Someone wishing to defend a resolute RCN reading of GM must either argue that Nietzsche's concerns in these passages are actually about the truth of our representations, or that there is simply nothing genealogical about them.

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[24] Note that Kail also claims that a significant part of GM is concerned with explaining evaluative beliefs (*Ibid.*).

I also think that Nietzsche oscillates between the HoP and SPE conception throughout GM. He appeals to SPE-like arguments whenever he emphasizes that the dynamic between Slaves and Nobles reoccurs throughout history, and can inform us about the origins of our own moral outlook. He also uses a similar argument to claim that the strategies employed by the Priests to convince Slaves of their conception of morality are reconcilable to his theory of the will to power. On the other hand, Nietzsche makes recourse to the HoP conception whenever he wants to chastise the previous genealogists of morality for the unhistorical nature of their accounts and when he argues that adopting a more vitalistic conception of morality would be pragmatically preferable. It is unclear to me whether Nietzsche thinks that one or both of these conceptions are central to genealogy's method.

What is clear is that each of the authors we have considered relate the role of 'genealogy' in GM to some worry about the existence of contingency in our past. They all engage with what I have called *The General Problem of Genealogy* — that of trying to understand what impact the contingency of our past have on our current outlook, and whether it matters. However, the conceptions are concerned with different kinds of contingency. Thus, we can think of each as a framework from which we engage with this problem. We can use different typologies of genealogy to attend to different questions regarding that central problem, for example: 'to what extent does my socio-cultural background undermine my beliefs?'; 'to what extent are my practices functionally justified?', 'to what extent should I think of practices which are not functionally justified as rationally contingent?'. Each question identifies a different kind of contingency which might affect how we think about the effects of the past on our current outlook. That is, each genealogical conception employs a different interpretation of the same general problem to derive a specific set of questions about that problem on which it wants to focus. Different questions require different kinds of answers, and different tools for providing those answers. These are exemplified by the differences in objects of study, explanatory aim, and methodology of individual conceptions, as well as in the different strategies each conceptions employs in discussing facts about an item's context of discovery in order to put pressure on its context of justification.

(C) Taking Stock: Should Philosophy Care About Genealogy?

In this final section I intend to demonstrate the connections between the different parts of investigation undergone in this thesis. It began by asking what genealogies are, and what their purpose is. By surveying the literature we identified three distinct conceptions that propose different answers to these questions, and argued that a broad collection of genealogies can be subsumed under each.

The conceptions were explicated through three characteristics: an object of study, an explanatory aim, and a methodology. Applying this analytical framework, we identified three distinct interpretations of the meaning of 'genealogy' in GM, and elucidated how genealogical investigations operate under each conception. This allowed us to identify a common thread between them: each is concerned with how contingency in our past might effect our current outlook whilst being concerned with a different set of questions about contingencies in our past. This led to the hypothesis that the different characteristics of genealogies under each conception correlates with different interpretations of *The General Problem of Genealogy.*

I want to end by suggesting that these results indicate that whatever other differences may exist between particular genealogical methods, at the heart of any genealogical endeavour lies a common concern for utilising origin-stories to gain insight into how the contingencies of our past effect our current outlooks. This helps us to adjudicate on the aptness of our philosophical perspectives. In so doing, genealogies move us as best we can towards a system of ideas that, whilst not free of historical contingencies, is not philosophically threatened by the contingencies of our past. In my view, then, what differentiates genealogies from more pedestrian origin-stories is precisely their capacity to help in this goal.

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