

Today's philosophers may like to think of themselves as the culmination of a purposeful tradition going back two and a half millennia, but the record suggests something different: their predecessors were, for the most part, making their way along unmapped forest paths, with various combinations of ingenuity, frustration, anxiety, improvisation, frivolity and braggadocio. Instead of seeing their works as candidates for inclusion in some ultimate compendium of knowledge, we might do better to treat them as individual works of art forming a tradition as intricate and unpredictable as, say, Yoruba sculpture, Chinese poetry or the classical string quartet.

—Jonathan Rée, from *Witcraft*

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Muindi Fanuel Muindi

S.I.P.M.L.

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First Printing, 2021

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ISBN 978-0-578-93374-0

This book is dedicated to the memory of
MWATUM ZUBERI MUINDI
(1959-2009)



Table of Contents

<i>Overview and Acknowledgments</i>	3
<i>Prelude: On Coexistence (Beyond Dominance)</i>	5
<i>A Genealogy of Sociality</i>	11
<i>Interlude: On Transformation (Beyond Information)</i>	67
<i>I-and-Other, Child-and-Mother</i>	73
<i>Postlude: On Ethics (Beyond Morality)</i>	107
<i>Appendix: The Artist as Value Creator</i>	111

OVERVIEW	3
ACTED ON CREATIVE ELEMENTS	
ON COEXISTENCE	5
BEYOND A DOMINANCE	
A GENEALOGY OF SOCIALITY	11
ON INTERLUDE TRANSFORMATION	67
BEYOND INFORMATION	
CHILD AND OTHER	73
LAND AND MOTHER	
POSTLUDE IN ETHICS	
BEYOND MORALITY	107
APPENDIX	
THE ARTIST AS VALUE CREATOR	111

OVERTRUE

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AC_

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MENTS

My first three books, collected in the volume titled **TRIPTYCH**, attempted to answer the question, "How do I become what I am?"

This book, my fourth, attempts to answer the immediate follow up question: "Knowing how I become what I am, how do I relate to others?"

The two texts that form the core of this book approach the question of "relating to others" from two different "logical" perspectives.

A Genealogy of Sociality, approaches the question from a "sociological" perspective, attending to "social relations".

I-and-Other, Child-and-Mother approaches the question from a "psychological" perspective, attending to "personal relations".

The terms "logical", "sociological", and "psychological" are placed within quotation marks here because these terms only apply to my texts metaphorically and ironically: I am not a legitimate heir to the disciplines that have reduced these terms in order to make representative claims about reality.

I wrote the two texts at the core of this book in response to the proceedings of two discussion groups that I organized and convened during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

A Genealogy of Sociality was written in response to the proceedings of the **(ANTI-)SOCIAL (ANTI-)BODIES**.

I-and-Other, Child-and-Mother was written in response to the proceedings of the **URULENTLY SELFISH**.

These two texts owe a great deal to the remarkable conversations that took place in and around these two discussion groups, and I invite readers to review the sprawling and ambitious proceedings of these two discussion groups for themselves at solutionsforpostmodernliving.org.

Finally, I am glad to acknowledge and give thanks to the friends and collaborators who graciously provided me with kind comments, constructive criticisms, insightful questions, and delightful suggestions as I put this book together.

Ylfa Muindi, Jonathan Agins, Niklas Damiris, Nathaniel Elias Mengist, and Phillip Thurtle: I could not have written this book without you!

PRELUDE:

**ON
CO-
EXIS-
TENCE**

**(BEYOND
DOMINANCE}**

ONE.

An "authentic" learned behavior, or a **whim**,
is a behavior learned **without** reference to symbols and,
as such, it is a behavior that is invested with sentiments
but **not** invested with a logic.
By contrast, a "conventional" learned behavior, or a **custom**,
is a behavior learned **with** reference to symbols and,
as such, it is a behavior that is invested with a logic
in addition to being invested with sentiments.

TWO.

A **culture** is a group of interrelated and interdependent customs.
Or, in other words, a culture is a group of learned behaviors
that have been invested with a logic
by a group of interrelated and interdependent symbols.

THREE.

Different cultures come into **conflict** with one another when
(i) they invest similar learned behaviors with dissimilar logics, or
(ii) when they invest dissimilar learned behaviors with similar logics.
For example, a cultural conflict may arise for an individual because
this culture claims burping is a sign of rudeness and
teaches one to conceal one's burps as a logical consequence, while
that culture claims burping is a show of appreciation for a meal and
teaches one to make a show of burping as a consequence.
Another example, a cultural conflict may arise when two cultures
claim that one must revere one's superiors, but
this culture teaches that it is logical to tolerate rudeness
from one's superiors in a show of reverence, while
that culture teaches that it is logical to riposte rudeness
from one's superiors in a show of reverence.

One culture **dominates** other cultures by making its own logic
override and overrule the logic of others.

This is to say, in other words, that a dominant culture forces its own logic
on all learned behaviors,
overriding and overruling the alternative logics
that so-called "subcultures" give to learned behaviors.

FIVE.

Instead of dominating other cultures, one culture **coexists** with other cultures
by compromising its own logic in order to accommodate the logic of others.

Coexisting cultures agree:

- (i) that a given learned behavior can be invested
with many different logics,
- (ii) that no one logic for a given learned behavior can be objectively
higher, nor truer, nor more desirable than any other, and
- (iii) that all logics ought to be compromised whenever and wherever
cultural conflicts arise.

SIX.

Insofar as different logics for the same learned behavior may be mutually exclusive
and beyond rational arbitration, coexisting cultures negotiate conflicts
with appeals to **sentiments beyond reasons**.

Unlike logics, sentiments are never mutually exclusive:

differing sentiments can be superposed atop one another
and can coexist in superpositions.

Take, for instance, the bittersweet as a superposition of wonder and sadness,
or take the love-hate relationship that betrays superpositions of
love and cruelty.

Coexisting cultures resolve conflicts by deferring to the differing sentiments
of the persons involved in conflicts, thusly enabling
compromises that are unreasonable yet sensible,
compromises that conflicted parties can *feel* satisfied with
in spite of their logical contradictions.

SEVEN

*Dominant cultures diminish and discredit subcultures
by appealing to **reasons beyond sentiments.***

*Logical arguments against sentimentality are the hallmarks
of dominant cultures, and those who argue that there is
"no room for sentiment" when it comes to resolving a conflict
are arguing for cultural dominance
as opposed to coexistence.*

*Dominant cultures disparage sentiments for ***confusing*** matters
and esteem logics for ***representing*** matters clearly and distinctly.
Objecting to unreasonable compromises, dominant cultures "resolve"
cultural conflicts by determining the higher logic
that overrides and overrules all others,
clearing the way for a reasonable compromise.*

EIGHT.

*A **counterculture** is a subculture that resists a dominant culture
and that promotes cultural coexistence.*

*Countercultures negotiate cultural conflicts by frustrating higher logics,
and by deferring to the differing sentiments of the parties to a conflict.*

*It is the would-be dominant culture that fights fire with fire,
pitting one logic against another in order to discover which is
the highest, truest, and most desirable.*

*Countercultures subvert logical arguments by situating them
in sentimental stories, in narratives
that characterize and contextualize logical contradictions.*

NINE.

***Sentimental storytelling** enables us to seek and discover compromises
that we can ***feel*** satisfied with in spite of their logical contradictions.*

In doing so, sentimental stories distinguish themselves from didactic stories.

*Whereas didactic stories betray sentiments to obey higher logics,
sentimental stories betray logics in deference to differing sentiments.*

Didacticism is part and parcel of displays of cultural dominance.

Sentimentalism is part and parcel of attempts at cultural coexistence.

If sentimentalism has a low reputation in our time, it is because

**so few of us still know how to express and interpret sentiments
with any skill and subtlety.**

When we condemn sentimentalism in storytelling,

*we are like the failed painter turned photographer who cites his own lack
of painterly skill (and his facility for photography)*

*when claiming that portrait painting is a lower artform
than portrait photography.*

Sentimental storytelling is not a low artform in and of itself, rather,

it is a low artform when those who practice it have little or no skill for it.

EL E E V A N.

Dominant cultures endeavor to stifle and suppress

the development of skills for sentimental storytelling

*in order to ensure that sentimentalism cannot be deployed
by countercultures against dominant cultures.*

The retainers of dominant cultures, their bureaucrats and their soldiers,

mustn't be allowed to fall prey to sentimentalisms

that would keep them from executing their duties as retainers.

To this end, dominant cultures take efforts to devalue sentimentalism

so that sentiments come to seem trite, cloying, and impotent

relative to the "facts of life" and the "power of logic".

The fall of sentimental storytelling

and the concomitant ascent of information gathering and reporting

are not historical accidents that have befallen our time.

The art of sentimental storytelling has been pushed to new lows

and the science of information gathering and reporting

has been carried to new heights

by cultures bent on achieving dominance.

It should be no wonder that the rise of capitalism and colonialism

as highly refined techniques of cultural dominance

involved the proliferation of information technologies

and the decimation of storytelling traditions.

As, and it is no wonder that the dominant cultures of our time tell us that,

the gathering and reporting of information has become essential and

storytelling is nothing but a diversion or an ornamentation.

TWELVE.

*To promote cultural coexistence, it is imperative that
the art of storytelling and its attendant sentimentalism
be revived, refreshed, and provisioned to outmaneuver and outwit
the didacticism that attends the science of information
gathering and reporting*

*Those who would fight for a multicultural world,
and who would fight against the spread of a global monoculture,
must recognize that a multicultural world is a world rife
with cultural conflicts that will need to be resolved
with the aid of sentimental storytelling*

*This is to say, in other words, that a multicultural world
is a world in which storytelling becomes an essential practice
that precedes, exceeds, and succeeds the gathering and reporting
of information.*

A GENE- ALOGY ^{o f} SOCIALI- TY

Man is by nature a social animal; an individual who is unsocial naturally and not accidentally is either beneath our notice or more than human. Society is something that precedes the individual. Anyone who either cannot lead the common life or is so self-sufficient as not to need to, and therefore does not partake of society, is either a beast or a god.

— Aristotle from *Politics*

INTRODUCTION

THE STAKES

*It is the 21st Century of the Common Era, roughly three hundred millennia since the species *H. sapiens* emerged from a predecessor within the genus *Homo*, roughly a hundred millennia since *H. sapiens* equipped with symbolic social forms began migrating out of Africa, roughly ten millennia since *H. sapiens* first domesticated plants and animals, roughly five millennia since *H. sapiens* developed formal writing and the first "exact" predictive sciences, roughly two centuries since *H. sapiens* began to exploit fossil fuels at an industrial scale, roughly a century since *H. sapiens* split the atom, and roughly a half century since *H. sapiens* deciphered the genetic code and set foot on the surface of the moon.*

Life is in a process of breaking down, of cracking up: half the world's wildlife is gone, half the world's forests, half the world's topsoil. Meanwhile, derivative fascisms are proliferating: "there's always another attack, election, coup, or someone upping the ante in terms of violence, misogyny, snuff, or infamy."*

*Whatever could have happened for things to have come to this? Everyone knows that something remarkable and terrifying must have happened, but few have a positive sense or understanding of what. All are certain that this remarkable and terrifying happening was a **social event**, having to do with the artifice or nature of **sociality**, but the most alluring diagnoses regarding the origins of our present situation all account for much less than what they purport to.*

* Hito Steyerl coined the term "derivative fascisms" in an essay on "Contemporary Art and Derivative Fascisms". In this essay, Steyerl writes, "The term 'derivative fascisms' means a jumble of widespread extreme right-wing movements that relate to twentieth-century fascisms in terms of future options, but not by any means as equivalents, as in: creating and marketing future options for fascism. There is no point in asking whether they are really fascisms or not because fascism is the underlying entity, which may or may not have anything to do with its derivatives."

A GENEALOGY OF SOCIALITY

*Our Genealogy of Sociality aims to develop a diagnosis that could both account for more than others and rival the allure of others. Ostensibly, this essay is a diagnosis of origins, recognizing that the term "diagnosis" is derived from the Greek **diagignoskein** "to know apart (from another)" and that the term "origin" is derived from the Latin **oriri** "to rise; appear over the horizon". That being said, putting literal matters aside and focusing on literary matters, this essay should be read like a novella. Two French philosophers, Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, once proposed that the novella was a literary genre organized around the question, "What happened? Whatever could have happened?" But they also proposed that "the novella has little to do with a memory of the past or an act of reflection; quite to the contrary, it plays upon a fundamental forgetting." Our Genealogy of Sociality proceeds from the assumption that whatever could have happened has been forgotten and has to be re-collected or, rather more precisely, that whatever could have happened had to have happened unknowingly and has to be re-constructed from scant traces and by way of thought experiments. At the same time, however, our essay also assumes that whatever could have happened can neither be properly re-collected nor properly re-constructed because it wasn't a conventional historical happening. Indeed, our essay assumes a **para-historical** happening, a betrayal of the form, function, and structure of conventional historical happenings. As, and in so far as the novella is the side-story [**para-histoire**] that betrays the form, function, and structure of the conventional chronicle of happenings [**histoire événementielle**], our Genealogy of Sociality is to a conventional history of sociality what the novella is to the conventional chronicle of happenings.*

INTRODUCTION

More profoundly still, this essay should be read like a novella because this essay owes a great deal more to creative imagination than it does to analytical and empirical investigation. This fact follows, in part, from all that was already stated above: because that which cannot be properly re-collected or re-constructed has to be re-imagined in a (re-)creative manner. Going further, this fact also follows from whom we, the genealogists, are. We are neither "academic authorities" nor "scientific researchers". We are what Augusto Boal would call "spect-actors". We are spectators-and-actors in the para-historical happening that we have endeavored to re-imagine in this essay. This is to say, in other words, that we are not, nor do we pretend to be, disinterested parties. On the contrary, as the sometimes denizens of Western "Educated", industrialized, Rich, and "Democratic" (WEIRD) nations and cosmopolitan "global cities", we are interested and involved parties. We are aware of the fact that our own imaginations will be implicated in whatever could have happened, and we are aware of the fact that explicating whatever could have happened will, in part, be a matter of explicating what we have imagined into being. Indeed, the implication of the imagination in whatever could have happened is precisely that which makes whatever could have happened a para-historical happening as opposed to conventional historical one: for that which has been imagined into being is precisely that which cannot be re-collected or re-constructed but can only be re-imagined in a (re-)creative manner. Thus, our Genealogy is, in the last instance, organized around the question, "Whatever could have happened in and to our imaginations for things to have come to this?"

A GENEALOGY OF SOCIALITY

Born black in New York City in the late 1980s to a broken middle-class immigrant family hailing from the depths of the East African Rift Valley, a dropout and autodidact, working as a lowly administrator at a public university on the Pacific Northwest Coast of the United States, and lacking the meritocratic credentials that would authorize me to make a legitimate diagnosis of the human condition, I convened the (ANTI-)SOCIAL (ANTI-)BODIES during the summer of 2020 in spite of who I was. It was the turn of my thirty-third year, and I was suffering under the "new global monasticism" effected by the all-too-necessary social distancing measures and stay-at-home orders adopted to fight the COVID-19 pandemic. The spread of COVID-19 had sparked a global public health crisis. Uneven global responses to this public health crisis had sparked a global economic crisis. Uneven responses to this economic crisis were exacerbating ongoing political and cultural crises that had already rattled the (neo)liberal West and destabilized a global capitalist "order of things" that depended upon (neo)liberal political institutions and cultural practices. By many accounts, I was a probable victim of these cascading crises, and my knowing or not knowing their origins was a superfluous matter. I was to be a statistic, at worst, or, at best, a case study, leaving behind some scant trace of myself that would inform the thought experiments of a better credentialed and more analytical or empirical mind. In no way was I, Muindi Fanuel Muindi, authorized to act as a clinician of the human condition.

But by my own account, however superfluous it was, I had not yet become the victim of whatever had happened. By my own account, I could still survive and thrive in spite of whatever had happened, but I could only do so if I had a diagnosis of the human condition that I could handle and play to some advantage. Having found no diagnosis that I could play to any advantage, I needed to develop a diagnosis for myself and to do so as quickly as possible, lest I perish. I had to urgently ask and answer the question, "What happened?" Under no pretense was I entitled to ask and answer the question, but asking and answering the question seemed a matter of life and death to me, and I refused to let a lack of credentials prematurely sentence me to death.

INTRODUCTION

Thankfully, I rightly figured that this question was a matter of life and death for others like and unlike me, some credentialed and some uncredentialed, some more analytical, some more empirical, some more imaginative. Knowing better than to go it alone, I put out a call for others who had no choice but to ask and answer the question, inviting them to join me in the asking and the answering. The unconventional artists, writers, and thinkers who joined with me in the asking and the answering formed the (ANTI-)SOCIAL, (ANTI-)BODIES.

*The (ANTI-)SOCIAL, (ANTI-)BODIES embarked upon a Genealogy of Sociality collectively, but this essay is my own idiosyncratic impression of the results of our endeavors. I must make use of a "we" in this text because I cannot claim the thoughts articulated in this text for myself alone. The reader ought to recognize, however, that the "we" in this text is highly diffracted and refracted by me. In no way does this text purport to be an accurate reflection of the "we" that it presumes. Rather, this text is a warped reflection, a primitivist rendering of the (ANTI-)SOCIAL, (ANTI-)BODIES, akin to Picasso's rendering of *Les Femmes d'Alger*. It is my hope that the others who participated in the endeavor will someday offer up their own reflections and that their reflections will bear little resemblance to mine.*

As, so, presuming to speak for my fellow travelers, a brief summary of our diagnosis runs as follows:

A new and more virulent strain of the human condition emerged between the fifteenth and nineteenth centuries of the Common Era, and was incubated in regions of the world that had been colonized by Western European nation-states and their forerunners. In the wake of three World Wars during the twentieth century, two "hot wars" and one "cold war", this new and more virulent strain of the human condition conquered the entire globe. This new strain of the human condition not only threatens to obliterate the animal in the human but, more profoundly, it threatens to obliterate the animal in general.

A GENEALOGY OF SOCIALITY

*Indulge me, if you will, and try to understand the term "animal" here in the broadest possible sense, invoking the Latin **animale** "living being, being which breathes", from **anima** "breath, soul; a current of air", but also invoking the **animisms** that find all beings inspired and inspiring, including mineral, vegetal, and elemental beings alongside those beings that we commonly call animals. Stretching the term to its most tenuous extreme, try to understand that the term "animal" here refers to any inspired or inspiring being, to any being that is in some sense aerial, aerated, atmospheric, breathable or breathing.*

Was it only a coincidence that we came to such a diagnosis in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic which was needlessly taking the breath away from millions? Was it only a coincidence that we came to such a diagnosis in the wake of the protests in response to the murder of George Floyd, who died breathless while pinned under the knee of a police officer? Was it only a coincidence that we came to such a diagnosis as we breathed in air that contained greater concentrations of carbon dioxide than ever before in human history as a result of human activity? Being a Black African in America, one lacking higher credentials and making ends meet by performing bullshit and soon-to-be-automated forms of administrative labor: this diagnosis only made me more keenly aware of the fact that I am so easily taken for a less than human beast by the powers that be, making me into a probable victim of this more virulent strain of the human condition. In other words, I am statistically less likely to be treated "humanely" by the powers that be and, thus, I am more likely to perish during a pandemic, more likely to be slain by an "officer of the peace", and more likely to be the victim of some climate injustice. Perhaps this diagnosis is but an echo of the last words of Eric Garner, Javier Ambley, Manuel Ellis, Elijah McClain, and George Floyd,

"I CAN'T BREATHE."

INTRODUCTION

*Our diagnosis contrasts the term "animal" with the term "human", the latter of which is etymologically derived from Proto-Indo-European *(dh)ghomon-, making the human being, literally, an "earthling" or earthly being. Contrasted with the inspired or inspiring animal, the human is hum-bled and hum-bling, hum-iliated and hum-iliating. The perilous new human condition that we have diagnosed is the condition of being "human, all too human" and hostile to the animal, being "earthly, all too earthly" and hostile to the sky, being so humbled and so humiliated that one can no longer inspire or be inspired by others. That being said, however, we do not mean to suggest that the human is necessarily hostile to the animal, nor that the earth is necessarily hostile to the sky, nor that humbleness and humility are necessarily hostile to inspiration. Our diagnosis, rather, finds that the **symbol** is responsible for this new strain of humanity which seeks dispense with the animal, this new strain of the earth which seeks to suffocate the sky, this new strain of humbleness and humility which seeks to smother inspiration.*

It is widely held that the human species is distinguished from other species by being the only known "symbolic species", the only species that regards the use and abuse of symbols as a matter of life-and-death. We would like to suggest that, in addition to being that which distinguished the human species from others, the rise of the symbol was also the para-historical happening that introduced the break between earth and sky, human and animal, body and breath. It is the symbol that pits one against the other, that divides and conquers. Dividing the earth from the sky but favoring neither one in or for itself, the symbol employs whichever one is ready-to-hand to quash the other. While the "human, all too human" condition in our age is defined by the symbol's use of the earth to suffocate the sky, in the age prior to ours, the "human, all too human" condition had been defined by the symbol's use of the sky to swallow the earth.

A GENEALOGY OF SOCIALITY

*Prior to the emergence of the symbol, neither earth nor sky, neither human nor animal, neither body nor breath existed in and of themselves: there was only the horizon, the *singular confusion* of earth-and-sky, human-and-animal, body-and-breath. Ay, and what the symbol seeks is not the obliteration of earth or sky but, rather, the obliteration of the horizon, either by making the earth suffocate the sky or, vice versa, by making the sky swallow the earth. Indeed, we become "human, all too human" whenever we come to believe either that the sky must swallow the earth or that the earth must suffocate the sky, whenever we come to believe that the human-and-animal horizon must be obliterated, that the human can do in and do without the animal.*

If our diagnosis of our present strikes you as no more than a preposterous play on words, I would suggest that you stop reading here and that you consider whether your desire for a diagnosis in grounded literal terms, as opposed to soaring literary terms, is an indication that your humanity is well on its way to obliterating your animality. On the other hand, if our diagnosis strikes you as a meaningful play on words, however minimally, please read on, for there is more to this diagnosis than there might seem upon first reading. For one thing, in spite of all that was said above, the symbol is not to be repudiated and obliterated in order to rescue the horizon. The definitive victory of the horizon over the symbol seems to us no more desirable than the definitive victory of the symbol over the horizon. In the game of Go, the term Seki (セキ) refers to an impasse that cannot be resolved into simple life or death for either side. This term is often translated as "mutual life". Our diagnosis revolves around a kindred notion of "mutual life": our concern is for a way to achieve "mutual life" for the symbol-and-horizon, as opposed to life for one and death for the other.

*Many readers might now be asking themselves, "This is all well and good, but what has all this to do with sociality?" Well, we hold that the human-and-animal horizon is sociality itself. We hold that all social species live on the human-and-animal horizon, not just our so-called human species, *H. sapiens*.*

INTRODUCTION

*Is it any wonder that all animals strike us as human when we can "relate to them" socially, when we observe them conspiring and when they inspire social sentiments in us? We hold that *H. sapiens* is a social species first and a symbolic species second, and that our symbolic capacities are an outgrowth of our social capacities. In other words, we hold that the symbol first emerged as an implication of the human-and-animal horizon and that it has explicated the horizon in addition to threatening the horizon with obliteration.*

*The symbol's explicative capacity relative to the horizon has always been attended by an oblitative capacity, but we hold that the symbol has become a threat to the horizon only since humans started to identify as human first and foremost, rather than a species of social animal. Whatever could have happened to have made such a vulgar claim, "human(ity) first", possible? Our **Genealogy** will follow the symbol's development, from implication of the horizon, to explication of the horizon, to the obliteration of the horizon, in order to reveal how the symbol's development betrays and is betrayed by the horizon in and through the claim "human(ity) first". Indeed, if you will allow us to appropriate some figures from the thought of the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, our narrative will reveal that it is the **Last Man** who believes that "putting humanity first" is the secret to happiness. "Formerly all the world was insane", — say the subtlest of them, and blink thereby. Meanwhile, the **Beyond-Human** is inspired by the human who keeps company with the eagle who soars across the sky and the serpent who slithers along the earth, and, what's more, the **Beyond-Human** inspires the human to protest against the scourge that would forever transform an animal into a dull beast.**

* It should be noted that we shall appropriate a number of figures from the thought of Nietzsche throughout this text. For instance, Nietzsche's **Genealogy of Morality** provided us with the idea for a genealogy that owes more to creative imagination than to documentary investigation, very unlike a history. Furthermore, and more profoundly still, our philosophical cosmology of the symbol-and-horizon takes a great deal from Nietzsche's philosophical cosmology. That being said, however, we do not feel beholden to Nietzsche nor his work in any way whatsoever, in spite of all that we have taken from him. As Igor Stravinsky once put it, "good composers borrow, great composers steal." The borrower cannot do what they will with what they have taken because the borrower wants to return what they have taken to its rightful owner in tact. The thief, having broken the chain of rightful ownership, can do what they will with what they have taken. We have stolen from Nietzsche, and we fancy ourselves thieves in the mold of Robin Hood and his Merry Men: stealing from the rich and giving to the poor. The rich may elegantly look down upon the coarse and graceless needs and distresses of us poor folk, but we poor folk know how to make good use of what we manage to steal from the rich. All that we have stolen from Nietzsche will be put to poor use in this text, yes, but this is not a flaw but, rather, a feature of this text.

A GENEALOGY OF SOCIALITY

We have re-imagined the story of the symbol and its relation to the horizon in six chapters. These chapters run as follows:

- *In the first chapter, **THE HORIZON**, we have re-imagined the rise of symbol on the human-and-animal horizon.*
- *In the second chapter, **KINDRED SPIRITS**, we have re-imagined human-and-animal socialities, in the light of the rise of the symbol, as socialities revolving around communing with "kindred spirits" (i.e., beings beside human beings that populate the horizon).*
- *In the third chapter, **MINOR GODS**, we have re-imagined how the symbol explicated human-and-animal socialities to yield profane-and-sacred socialities: the latter being socialities that revolve around emulating "Minor Gods" (i.e., beings above human beings that serve as role models).*
- *In the fourth chapter, **MAJOR GODS**, we have re-imagined how the symbol explicated profane-and-sacred socialities to yield leisured-and-laboring socialities: the latter being socialities that revolve around the whims of "Major Gods" (i.e., beings above and beyond human beings that do not serve as role models but are served as whimsical rulers).*
- *In the fifth chapter, **THE ABSOLUTE**, we have re-imagined how the symbol explicated leisured-and-laboring socialities to yield idealistic-and-materialistic socialities: the latter being socialities that revolve around the logic of the "Absolute" (i.e., a being [or a nothingness] that encompasses all beings, both human and non-human, not serving as a role model but being served as a rational, rather than whimsical, ruler).*
- *Finally, in the sixth chapter, **STATISTICS**, we have re-imagined how the symbol explicated idealistic-and-materialistic socialities to yield statistical-and-spectral socialities: the latter being socialities that revolve around inferring the rational will of a people (i.e., a population of human beings) by surveying/surveillance the irrational whims of persons (i.e., [in-]dividual human beings)*

INTRODUCTION

*The fifth and sixth chapters are the decisive chapters of our **Genealogy**. The fifth chapter re-imagines how the symbol pivoted away from explicating the horizon and began threatening the horizon by proposing that the sky swallow the earth. The sixth chapter re-imagines the decisive maneuvers that have enabled the symbol to make more dire threats against the horizon by proposing that the earth suffocate the sky. But where the danger is, also grows the saving power. The very same maneuvers that have enabled the symbol to pose a threat to the horizon have also enabled the symbol to explicate the horizon in more respects and with more respect than ever before. The fact that the symbol serves as a **pharmakon**, a poison-and-remedy, with respect to the horizon cannot be underestimated. This is why, although they are not the decisive chapters, the first four chapters set the stage for the decisive fifth and sixth chapters in the most crucial way by demonstrating how the oblitative capacities of the symbol betray its explicative capacities.*

*With that, we are now ready to proceed with our **Genealogy**, save for one last statement of intent. On the one hand, our **Genealogy** is only interested in finding out what happened: it is not at all interested in foretelling what is going to happen next. That being said, on the other hand, our **Genealogy** clearly knows what it does and does not want to happen next: it does not want the symbol to obliterate the horizon for good but it does want the symbol to continue to explicate the horizon in more respects and with more respect. This is to say, in other words, that our **Genealogy** has been written for the sake of those who would regard the horizon with ever increasing respect. We hope that our **Genealogy** manages to find those for the sake of whom it was written and that they find it inspired and inspiring.*