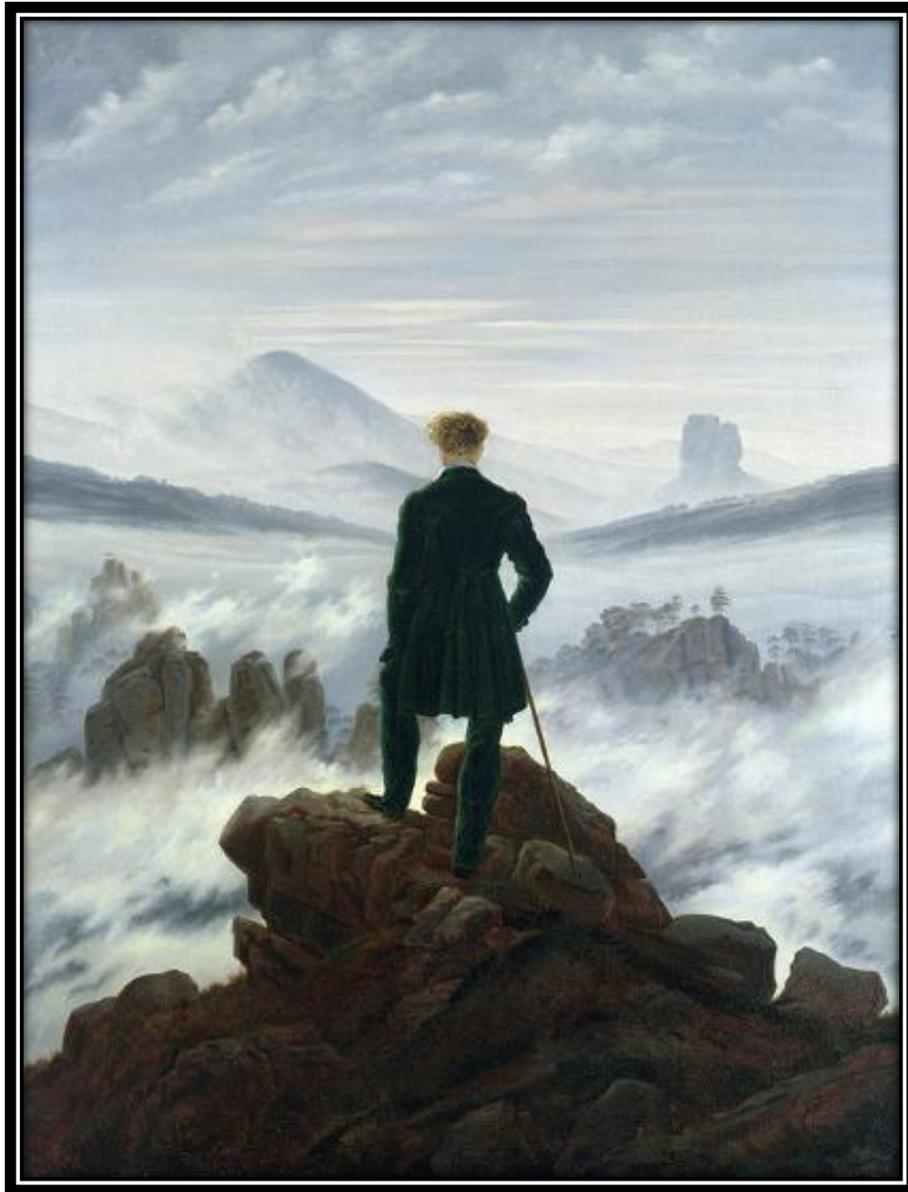


# On “Becoming Who You Are” in Times of Corporate Correctness

*A Nietzschean Analysis of the Current Managerial Climate and its  
Approach to the Individual*



Bachelor Thesis Business Administration and Philosophy

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# Introduction

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## “God is dead.”

When Nietzsche wrote these infamous words, “God is dead,”<sup>1</sup> it was not just the Christian notion of an almighty entity, the “alleged spider of purpose and ethics lurking behind the great spider’s web of causality,” he was referring to.<sup>2</sup> Rather, it meant the demise of all metaphysical and supernatural claims, principles, and entities; as the Church’s authority waned and that of science grew, metaphysical convictions expired. Throughout the Enlightenment, numerous philosophers noted how it became increasingly difficult to derive one’s sense of purpose and meaning from a collective, impersonal narrative or worldview. For Nietzsche, who was born around half a century after the Enlightenment and resonated with the Enlightenment’s developing appreciation for the role of the individual, the solution to this problem of meaning and purpose was to be found – or, rather, *created* – on the personal level, in determining one’s own fate and embracing it, daring to venture where one’s unique and personal calling leads. This culminated in the eloquently worded advice to “become who you are”.<sup>3</sup> Nowadays, however, there appears to be a trend towards egalitarian policies in the managerial landscape; that is to say, within the corporate environment, there seems to be an increase in the prevalence of policies designed to attain a representative or equal distribution of members of different background in terms of gender, color, and creed within workforces, e.g., via diversity quota. It could be argued that such policies prioritize collective identity over individual identity, which would seemingly be incommensurable with Nietzsche’s adage.

In this thesis, the following central question will be addressed: *To what extent does the*

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<sup>1</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science: With a Prelude in Rhymes and an Appendix in Songs*, trans. Walter Kaufman (New York: Random House Inc., 1974), 47.

<sup>2</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*, ed. Paul Negri, trans. Horace Barnett Samuel (Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2018), 80.

<sup>3</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 219.

current corporate climate facilitate employees to follow Nietzsche's call for individuality, i.e., to "Become Who You Are", as specified in Books Three to Five of his *The Gay Science*? To answer this question, the following sub-questions will be answered:

1. What did Nietzsche mean with "Becoming Who You Are", as described in Books Three to Five of his *The Gay Science*?
2. What policies are most prevalent in the managerial landscape, regarding individual and collective identity and equality?
3. To what extent are "Becoming Who You Are" and the current managerial landscape commensurable?
4. Is the current corporate climate desirable or problematic, regarding the extent to which it facilitates its employees in "Becoming Who You Are"?

These questions will be answered in subsequent order. As *Becoming Who You Are* is the pivotal concept of the research, the first step will be to categorize the concept, making explicit its most important themes and assumptions. Subsequently, an overview of the corporate climate will be given. As only a small aspect of this vast and complex environment can be adequately addressed, this overview will be limited to address only the most prevalent approaches in the managerial landscape in the U.S. regarding the categories that are canonical for *Becoming Who You Are*, as categorized in sub-question 1. Once the first and second sub-questions have been answered, this allows for an analysis of how well Nietzsche's *Becoming Who You Are* rhymes with the approaches most prevalent in the managerial landscape. Lastly, the desirability of the match or mismatch will be discussed, displaying explicitly from which perspectives and premises the situation is desirable, and from which it is undesirable.

N.B.: in no way do I claim to have the solution to the challenging problem of individual versus collective identity. Nevertheless, I believe an intriguing paradox appears to arise between Nietzsche's adage and the primacy it places upon the individual for the sake of the individual on the one hand, and managerial policies designed to prevent excessive inequalities and divergences between different employees, on the other. Therefore, it is my intention to analyze the topic from the perspective of Nietzsche's adage, investigating and

elaborating on the premises and aims the two apparently contradictory notions have, subsequently discussing the implications, possible areas of contention, and general contemplations on the topic.

# Chapter One:

## Introducing Nietzsche and *The Gay Science*

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### Early Life

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche was born on the 15<sup>th</sup> of October 1844 in Röcken, Germany, as the son of the town's pastor. At only five years of age, his father passed away; merely six months later, his younger brother died, too. The rest of his childhood, Nietzsche lived in Naumburg and was raised by his mother, sister, maternal grandmother, and two aunts. At a young age, he got acquainted with the classical languages, mastering Greek, Latin, and French, *inter alia*.

In 1864, Nietzsche enrolled in the University of Bonn to study Theology and Classical Philology. For a son of a revered pastor, raised in a strongly Christian household and even studying theology, it sent proverbial shockwaves through his family when, after little more than a year of his studies, he renounced his faith. In a letter to his aunt in 1865, he wrote the following:

Hence the ways of men part: if you wish to strive for peace of soul and pleasure,  
then believe; if you wish to be a devotee of truth, then inquire...<sup>4</sup>

As will become manifest, this statement foreshadowed some of the groundbreaking intellectual convictions Nietzsche was going to shock 19<sup>th</sup>-century Western philosophy with.

Despite his philosophical inclinations and successes, in 1867 he decided to join the Prussian Artillery in Naumburg; however, due to a horseback riding incident, he became

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<sup>4</sup> Nietzsche Source – Home," [www.nietzschesource.org](http://www.nietzschesource.org), January 11, 1865, <http://www.nietzschesource.org/#eKGWB/BVN-1865>.

bedridden for months and eventually felt drawn back to his studies.

In 1868, at the age of 24, he completed his studies and, impressively enough, got offered a position as professor of classical philology at the University of Basel, despite neither having completed his doctorate, nor having received any formal training in teaching.<sup>5</sup> He taught there for ten years in total, although not always with much enthusiasm; his colleagues at the Philology Department were not very keen of his ideas and methods. His first work, *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872), was received very poorly.

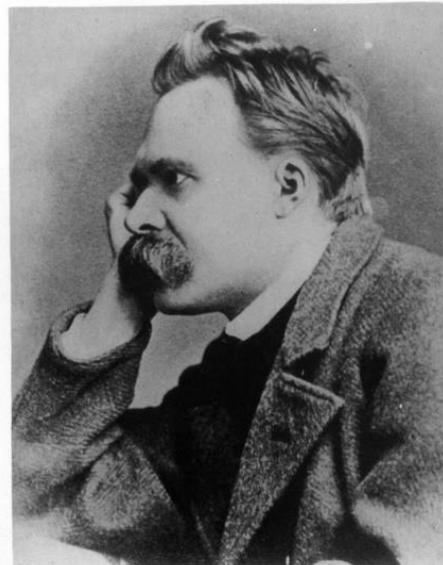


Louis Held, *Friedrich Nietzsche*, Age 17, March 1861, Historiek.net, <https://historiek.net/friedrich-nietzsche-duitse-filosooof/65048/>.

### Philosophical Works and Accomplishments

Besides feeling out of place and isolated at his profession, Nietzsche was faced with severe bouts of poor health.<sup>6</sup> In 1879, when he was 35, he resigned from his position, having become too ill to work a regular profession. From then on, he travelled through Europe, sojourning mostly in Italy, Switzerland, and France, looking for climates best suited for his suboptimal somatic situation.

Between 1879 and 1888, Nietzsche lived a solitary life, traversing through Europe in search of bearable weather to sooth his physical ailments.



*Friedrich Nietzsche.*

Gustav Schultze, *Portrait of Friedrich Nietzsche*, September 1882, [https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friedrich\\_Nietzsche#/media/Bestand:Nietzsche18](https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friedrich_Nietzsche#/media/Bestand:Nietzsche18)

<sup>5</sup> Douglas Burnham, Anthony Jensen, and Helmut Heit, "Nietzsche as a Scholar of Antiquity" (2014): 75.

<sup>6</sup> Robin Small, "Nietzsche," in *The Nineteenth Century*, vol. 7 (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 177-205, 178.

During these years, he wrote, walked, and corresponded abundantly. Especially in his last sane year, 1888, he published a Brobdingnagian five books, contrasted with his average of one publication a year in the years preceding this. In these nine years, Nietzsche wrote some of his most influential and revered works, among which are *The Genealogy of Morals*, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, and *The Gay Science*.

*The Gay Science* consists of five books in total, the first four of which were written in 1882, with the fifth book being added the same number of years later, as well as an appendix in songs, in 1887. Many have called this his best book, or at least the clearest and most comprehensive overview of his thoughts. It expands on many of his most influential ideas, such as the *eternal recurrence* and the *Death of God*, and, perhaps most notably, that of *Becoming Who You Are*. The latter corresponds strongly with the book's title; the notion of *Gay Science*, or *Joyful Wisdom*, was an allusion to the provincial troubadours, whom Nietzsche described as the combination and culmination of the poet, warrior, and free thinker. It amounts to an attitude of *yea-saying*, embracing life in a curious and well-spirited, optimistic, and brave manner. N.B.: despite the contemporary use of the word "gay", in Nietzsche's *The Gay Science*, the word is used merely to refer to an uplifted, cheerful, and playful attitude, and has no relation whatsoever to matters of sexuality.

### The Beginning of the End

At the beginning of 1889, on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, Nietzsche suffered a mental breakdown from which he would never recover. Reports vary, but the most common is that Nietzsche witnessed a horse being flogged on the street, flung his arms around it to shelter it from the incoming punishment, and collapsed, after which he returned to his room, undressed,



Eric Podach, *Der Kranke Nietzsche*, 1899,  
[https://www.friedrichnietzsche.nl/nietzsche-  
blog/erich-podach-der-krank-nietzsche/](https://www.friedrichnietzsche.nl/nietzsche-blog/erich-podach-der-krank-nietzsche/)

and, for multiple hours, claimed to be Jesus Christ, Diogenes, and Napoleon Bonaparte, respectively.<sup>7</sup>

## The Relevance of *The Gay Science* for this thesis

Nietzsche wrote *The Gay Science* during a period of recovering health; this is expressed both in the optimistic manner of writing and the topic he chose to concern himself with: the intertwinement of philosopher and philosophy. He noticed how “In some it is their deprivations that philosophize; in others, their riches and strengths,” and argues it leads to a philosophy of *life denial*, seeking to get it done with as little discomfort as possible.<sup>8</sup>

He continues to illustrate the role religiosity, and Christianity in particular, have played in this, emphasizing the antagonistic attitude to life that lies hidden beneath the promises of the afterlife.

Subsequently, Nietzsche builds up to his infamous claim that “God is dead”, spelling out the worrying consequences of the demise of theological authority without the resurgence of another source of meaning.<sup>9</sup> As appeals to the transcendent are no longer feasible, the individual is left to concoct some personal potion of purpose.

This explicit attention to creating meaning in a world where the notion of an objective, universal interpretation of reality has given way to frugal fragments of opinion is strikingly relevant for our contemporary day and age. Especially in the corporate climate, there is much ado about the place the individual should take towards the collective. If Nietzsche’s claims about the inevitable unicity of the individual are true, what is the best approach to enabling individuals to flourish in collaborative environments, where the goals of the individual and the goals of the organization presumably differ?

An approach that is becoming increasingly popular in contemporary corporate culture is that of *quota*: a fixed, minimum percentage of a workforce that must consist of people with certain characteristics, e.g., gender, ethnicity, or religious faith. In this thesis, I will compare

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<sup>7</sup> Anacleto Verrecchia, “Nietzsche Breakdown in Turin,” *Stanford Italian Review* 6, no. 1-2 (1986): 105-112.

<sup>8</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 33-34.

<sup>9</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 181.

*diversity quotas* with *Becoming Who You Are* and discuss different perspectives from which they can be treated, demonstrating the tensions and overlaps between the two positions, and finally draw conclusions from this and, hopefully, formulate the crux of the difference between the two approaches.

# Chapter Two: Quadripartite Categorization of “Becoming Who You Are”

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In this chapter, the first sub-question will be addressed: What did Nietzsche mean with “Becoming Who You Are”, as described in Books Three to Five of his *The Gay Science*? This will be done by performing a quadripartite categorization of the notion of *Becoming Who You Are*, selecting and elaborating upon four aspects of the adage which I deem canonical, preceded by a concise overview of the philosophical developments in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Western Europe to provide some historical contextualization of the material under discussion.

## Prelude: Man as Herd Animal & the Decay of the Divine

Morality is herd instinct in the individual.<sup>10</sup>

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### Abstract

Throughout Books One through Three of Nietzsche’s *The Gay Science*, he discusses the superiority that was traditionally placed on the collective over the individual, and the role religion played in this. Summarily, Nietzsche claims that mankind has, throughout history, been obliged to attribute higher value to the preservation of the species than that of the individual. Religiosity has strengthened this tendency to act in correspondence with what benefits the collective, e.g., through its positing moral imperatives which prevent the individual from acting in manners that do not accord with the general conviction of the herd.

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<sup>10</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 175.

Throughout the Enlightenment, however, the authority of the Church gradually waned because of progress in the empirical natural sciences, the rediscovery of clandestine manuscripts and a general revival of interest in materialism and other “atheist” doctrines. Subsequently, people’s devotion to (Christian) divinity depleted. However, (as of yet) unbeknownst to man, the cessation of belief in the said divinity renders Christian morality lifeless. As such, mankind has lost its morality and sense of purpose, and is unable to win their old values back, because God has already started “decomposing”. This spells out ineffable challenges for mankind to concoct some form of meaning, value, and purpose in life, devoid of divine devotion.

Nietzsche claims that, throughout human history, the flourishing of the collective has been regarded as decidedly more important than that of the individual. Hence, we have misguided ourselves so as to internalize certain acts as noble or abominable, depending on their effect on the preservation of the collective, rather than the individual:

Thus the herd instinct speaks up in us.<sup>11</sup>

(Cf. Aphorisms 50, 116, and 116). Religion played a constitutive role in mankind’s development: through our folly, we have attributed supernatural qualities to phenomena we encountered. Gradually, we have internalized this until we became accustomed to the idea of divinity; we thus developed a *metaphysical craving* (Cf. Aphorism 151).

Through religion, the herd-morality was more and more methodically ingrained upon the individual. Prayer was recommended practice for instilling docility in those with little free thought:

What religion wants from the masses is no more than that they should keep still with their eyes, hands, legs, and other organs.<sup>12</sup>

Promises of an afterlife, a realm endlessly more valuable than this life, a teleological, i.e., non-cyclical direction of development, was postulated (Cf. Aphorisms 128 and 135). This led to a

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<sup>11</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 115.

<sup>12</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 185.

life-denying attitude; being exceptional was dangerous, whereas being unchanging was a virtue (Cf. Aphorism 296).

We have internalized ideas such as 'guilt' and 'sin', but these are our own inventions and have no legitimate foundation (Cf. Aphorism 135).

### *The Death and Shadows of Our Late Father*

Throughout Books Two and Three, the infamous "Death of God" is foreshadowed and proclaimed, and the implications of the "shadows of God" are discussed; people have yet to come aware of God's going to Heaven, let alone the ineffable challenges this demise of the divine will pose for them. Below, an overview is given of how, according to Nietzsche, God's death came about, what its significance is, and what its implications are for man's future.

#### *How God fell ill*

Throughout the Enlightenment, the authority of science grew and was used to account for an ever-increasing number of phenomena on its own terms, without appeals to divinity. *Materialism*, i.e., the ontological position that *matter* is all that exists, and hence that all knowledge can be arrived at through pure empirical investigation into matter, proliferated. Simultaneously, the limits of human rationality were gradually brought to the fore. Nietzsche mentions the fallibility of men, with the subsequent unattainability of an ultimate interpretation of reality, or appeal to "objective truth" (Cf. Aphorisms 54, 57, 107, and 115). Secularization spread, and the entanglement of theological and political power weakened. Gradually, the idea of God-given authority became untenable, as the idea of divinity *an-Sich* lost credibility. Subsequently, God was regarded with waning relevance for the lives of Nietzsche's contemporaries.

## ***What it means that “God is dead”***

If you give up Christian faith, you pull the right to Christian morality out from under your feet.<sup>13</sup>

When Nietzsche proclaimed the Death of God (Aphorism 125), he was not referring to the cessation of the life of an actual entity. Rather, he meant the aforementioned cessation of belief in the supernatural, catalyzed by the progress in the realm of rationality and science. For Nietzsche, it was manifest that the attribution of divine qualities was a mere misinterpretation of natural phenomena, stemming from our limited capacity of perception (Cf. Aphorisms 109, 115, and 121). What it meant, then, was the waning of genuine subscription to the Christian belief, which used to be the source of most Westerners' morality and sense of meaning. Therefore, it was a form of deconstruction without reconstruction: the foundation of morality was discarded, but no alternative meta-narrative seemed able to fulfill the hole it left behind. To speak with the words of Dostoyevsky: if there is no God, “It means everything is permitted”<sup>14</sup>. Therefore, mankind was faced with the enormous challenge of demystifying the world whilst simultaneously inventing alternative sources from which to derive meaning, morality, and purpose (Cf. Aphorism 108).

## ***Shadows of the Supreme and Slothful Decay***

God is dead; but given the way of men, there may still be caves for thousands of years in which his shadow will be shown. –And we – we still have to vanquish his shadow, too.<sup>15</sup>

With the shadows of God, Nietzsche was referring to the metaphysical cravings we have developed via religiosity (Cf. Aphorism 108). Through generations of piety, cultural consensus on a higher power, and the subsequent expectation of the transcendent, we have become so accustomed to the idea of God that we feel naked without it; we have developed a

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<sup>13</sup> Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols, or, How to Philosophize with the Hammer*, trans. Richard Polt (Indianapolis, IN, Indiana: Hackett Publishing, 1997), 53.

<sup>14</sup> Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, trans. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhonsky (London: Everyman's library, 1992), 530.

<sup>15</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 167.

giant, gaping God-gap. To fill this void, we risk being compelled to interpret the natural as signs of the supernatural. This is problematic, because it obstructs the arrival of the new type of human:

[...] perhaps man will rise ever higher as soon as he ceases to flow out into a god.<sup>16</sup>

There is a multitude of reasons man is prone to re-deify; our innate tendency to anthropomorphize (Cf. Aphorism 109), the internalization of *herd morality* which discourages finding meaning outside of what is common (Cf. Aphorisms 21, 116, 117, 250, and 296), our constitutive erroneousness and will to aestheticize (Cf. Aphorism 54, 57, and 121), and, finally, the religious systems themselves (Cf. Aphorisms 128, 135, and 151).

Concisely, Nietzsche reasons thusly. Christianity is an Abrahamic religious doctrine that believes in an almighty God, immortality of the soul, and the promise of an afterlife, *inter alia*. Throughout the ages, Christian theology offered answers to, and simultaneously had a monopoly on, questions of both metaphysics and morality. Metaphysical questions, i.e., questions about the general principles and elements of reality that go beyond the scope of what is observable by human sensory organs but do not yet fall under the realm of the transcendent, could satisfactorily be answered by appeals to the Christian doctrine. Consequently, questions of right and wrong were likewise answered by appeals to the Christian view on reality. Therefore, when the believe in and credibility of Christian theology wanes, the general understanding of, and consensus on, what constitutes morality and what can be considered good or bad, simultaneously dissolves. Subsequently, the connection between Christianity and metaphysical knowledge is broken, giving rise to the necessity of a new morality. For Nietzsche, argued for by reasons mentioned earlier, this morality must be concocted on the level of the individual.

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<sup>16</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 230.

# Quadripartite Categorization

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## Abstract

In the following section, an analysis of *Becoming Who You Are* is performed, subsequently displaying four aspects which I deem canonical, with reference to supporting aphorisms. As the implication of God's departure are internalized, the individual is faced with immeasurable solitude, and subsequently becomes personally and solely responsible for establishing and safeguarding the meaning he derives from life. This comprises a radical and continuous auto-determination of values and purpose: given that there is no objective, transcendent purpose to life, and questions of meaning cannot be answered outside of the scope of the individual, it follows that it is entirely up to the individual to make their life bearable. Furthermore, as there are no lasting truths regarding the purpose and value of life – for such matters are to be determined individually – it follows that there can be no static identities, as both reality and subject are incessantly changing, making attempts at bifurcation infeasible. As such, the determination of one's values is a process of continuous re-evaluation, depending on the specific combination of subject, object, and world, at each specific moment. Lastly, a strongly recurring theme throughout *The Gay Science* is the importance of living dangerously and courageously, challenging and overcoming oneself to affirm life, attain growth, and make one's existence bearable as an aesthetic phenomenon.

## Aspect One: Being One's Only Audience

For the pious there is as yet no solitude; this invention was made only by us, the godless.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 324.

Once one internalizes the Death of God, there is no way back: one realizes that there is no “petty deity who is full of care and personally knows every little hair on our head” and hence has no witness besides oneself.<sup>18</sup> One of the implications of this Godlessness is a fundamental and inescapable loneliness. There is no maker who put you on this path, no principle according to which we ought to act, no ultimate sense of belonging: in Plessner’s words, man is “Konstitutiv Heimatlos,” i.e., *constitutively homeless*.<sup>19</sup> As such, it spells out irreconcilable and ultimate solitude (Cf. Aphorisms 285, 307, and 367). This poses a tremendous challenge for *Homo Sapiens* (*Sapiens*), being a social as well as meaning-seeking animal; the desire for recognition and being perceived is among the deepest human drives:

Are there people who can dispense with that also and altogether with every kind of applause? I doubt it.<sup>20</sup>

(Cf. Aphorism 277). For Nietzsche, the solution to this intrinsic loneliness must be found amid the loneliness: one must acknowledge, face, and finally embrace the fact that you are your sole, true audience, performing a play only you can judge.

## *Aspect Two: Determining One’s Own Values*

With a great goal one is superior even to justice, not only to one’s deeds and one’s judges.<sup>21</sup>

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Summarily, one embraces the value-freeness of the Universe and takes affirmative action; aestheticizing the world and making it beautiful, whilst keeping in mind it was you who bestowed this judgment upon it; hence, that it is mere conviction, but this does not make it any less valuable.

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<sup>18</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 224.

<sup>19</sup> Helmuth Plessner, *Die Stufen Des Organischen Und Der Mensch: Einleitung in Die Philosophische Anthropologie* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1975), 310.

<sup>20</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 260.

<sup>21</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 219.

Given that God is dead, and one is therefore one's own, sole spectator, this implies that all valuations are mere opinions, as there is no ultimate interpretation: "Our descriptions are better – we do not explain any more than our predecessors."<sup>22</sup>

Combined with the lack of co-spectators in the play you perform, it follows that it is up to oneself to determine what values are most valuable: "With a great goal one is superior even to justice, not only to one's deeds and one's judges."<sup>23</sup>

This means active and continual valuation and revaluation, where what is desirable depends wholly on the individual: "What I want is more; I am no seeker. I want to create for myself a sun of my own."<sup>24</sup> (Cf. Aphorisms 267 and 320).

Another crucial aspect of this auto-determination of values is its anti-essentialism. For Nietzsche, holding on to permanent and universal adages is folly, as our personalities nor the world around us are as fixed or stable as we tend to assume: "You are always another person."<sup>25</sup> (Cf. Aphorisms 296 and 307).

Instead, one must continuously let go of certain aspects of oneself in order to grow others; one must forever keep conquering and re-conquering oneself. This notion of self-conquering will be discussed in more detail in *Aspect Four*.

## *Aspect Three: Creating One's Own Fate*

For one thing is needful: that a human being should attain satisfaction with himself, whether it be by means of this or that poetry and art; only then is a human being at all tolerable to behold.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 172.

<sup>23</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 219.

<sup>24</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 254.

<sup>25</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 246.

<sup>26</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 232.

Based on one's own, private values, one commences the journey from the solipsist, audience-free point of departure towards a personal and unique destination, rejoicing how the journey is all that matters; embracing each moment as if it were all that there will ever be, with oneself as sole, eternal spectator.

Creating one's fate, and not only accepting it, but embracing and *falling in love* with it, is the essence of *Amor Fati*. The life one leads is actively interpreted and perceived in the manner that best serves one in affirming life. Affirming life is crucial and must be done by facing it straightforwardly; seeking distractions is antithetic towards life: "Does he that is enthusiastic need wine?"<sup>27</sup> (Cf. Aphorism 86).

Again, Nietzsche stresses the individual basis on which this must be performed, as it is impossible to accurately understand the suffering of others: "Our personal and profoundest suffering is incomprehensible and inaccessible to almost everyone [...] But whenever people notice that we suffer, they interpret our suffering superficially."<sup>28</sup>

Subsequently, it is of little use to convince others to become like us, for we cannot possibly attain more than a vague understanding of other people's journeys: "Let us stop thinking so much about punishing, reproaching, and improving others! [...] Let us rather raise ourselves that much higher."<sup>29</sup>

Furthermore, there is a strong emphasis on *anti-essentialism*, as the idea of self-inventing and re-inventing is repeatedly brought up:

But one day its time is up; the good thing parts from me, not as something that has come to nauseate me but peacefully and sated with me as I am with it – as if we had reason to be grateful to each other as we shook hands to say farewell.<sup>30</sup>

This corresponds perfectly with the individuality that is characteristic of this process: there are no identical situations nor people; if one cannot even find permanent truths on the personal level, they cannot possibly be prophesized to others. predictability and conformity

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<sup>27</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 146, emphasis in original.

<sup>28</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 269.

<sup>29</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 254.

<sup>30</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 237.

convey a lack of originality and courage: “Those thinkers in whom all stars move in cyclic orbits are not the most profound.”<sup>31</sup> Hence, it truly is a personal and unique challenge.

Lastly, there is a strong overlap with *aestheticizing*; the bleakness of life is to be painted with the colors of one’s imagination and *will*. A playful attitude is crucial, as the right balance must be found between awareness of the utter valuelessness of life and the cheerful willingness to engage in voluntary self-deception to make life worthwhile: “But, to repeat it, that is not how we think when we are bold; then we do not think of this.”<sup>32</sup> (Cf. Aphorism 330).

You embrace the value-freeness of the universe and take positive action: you aestheticize the world and make it beautiful, whilst keeping in mind it was you who bestowed this judgment upon it, and that it is mere conviction:

As an aesthetic phenomenon existence is still bearable for us.<sup>33</sup>

## *Aspect Four: Danger, Experimentation, and Aestheticization*

There is as much wisdom in pain as there is in pleasure: both belong among the factors that contribute the most to the preservation of the species.<sup>34</sup>

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Recurring themes throughout the different aspects of *Becoming Who You Are* are that of bravery, the intertwinement of suffering and joy, and life-affirmation through, as well as because of, aestheticization.

Nietzsche stresses the importance of letting die off those aspects of oneself that are no longer useful to one’s current goals:

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<sup>31</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 254.

<sup>32</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 249.

<sup>33</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 163.

<sup>34</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 252.

[...] precisely with what is best in them, with what only they can do, they destroy many who are weak, unsure, still in the process of becoming, of striving; and thus they are harmful.<sup>35</sup>

This corresponds to the anti-essentialism discussed in *Aspect 2*: “Life – that is: continually shedding something that wants to die.”<sup>36</sup>

This is simultaneously seen as a way of testing one’s strength: “The poison of which weaker natures perish strengthens the strong – nor do they call it poison.”<sup>37</sup> (Cf. Aphorisms 19, 26, 28, 106, 226, and 338).

Closely related to this is the pivotal idea of the intertwinement of suffering and growth:

There is as much wisdom in pain as there is in pleasure: both belong among the factors that contribute the most to the preservation of the species. If pain did not, it would have perished long ago: that it hurts is no argument against it but its essence.<sup>38</sup>

This means the idea of life-affirmation is taken further than mere approval; it means being willing to part with that which no longer serves us or is not strong enough to serve us: “The tree needs storms, doubts, worms, and nastiness to reveal the nature and the strength of the seedling; let it break if it is not strong enough.”<sup>39</sup>

Rather than avoiding and evading pain and suffering, aiming to eliminate them from our lives, we should intentionally seek the limits of our comfort and capabilities: “What makes one heroic? Going out to meet at the same time one’s highest suffering and one’s highest hope.”<sup>40</sup> (Cf. Aphorisms 48, 268, and 318).

This leads us to another vital aspect of Nietzsche’s philosophy: the capacity for taking revenge, being harmful:

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<sup>35</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 101.

<sup>36</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 100.

<sup>37</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 91.

<sup>38</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 252.

<sup>39</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 163.

<sup>40</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 219.

But not to perish of internal distress and uncertainty when one inflicts great suffering and hears the cry of this suffering – that is great, that belongs to greatness.<sup>41</sup>

This sentiment occurs repeatedly throughout *The Gay Science*: “We have little respect for anyone who lacks both the capacity and the good will for revenge.”<sup>42</sup> (Cf. Aphorisms 28, 69, 325, and 338).

The last strong current in this stream is that of *experimentation, playfulness, and aestheticization*. The importance of making life bearable through making it beautiful and revering in this self-bestowed beauty is frequently brought up: “Only in this way can we deal with some base details in ourselves.”<sup>43</sup>

Furthermore, the emphasis is laid on experimenting with life for the sake of knowledge (Cf. Aphorism 324: “Life as a means to knowledge,”<sup>44</sup>). This corresponds to the theme of *life-affirmation*; by limiting one’s attention by that which can be acted out, the focus is on that which is and lives, rather than on what might, should, or could have been: “I no longer wish to hear anything of all those things and questions that do not permit any experiment.”<sup>45</sup>

This relates to the idea of brevity of personal continuity. Crucial in the aesthetic approach to life is the element of *playfulness* (Cf. Aphorism 310). This is unsurprising, given the title of the book. Since there is no higher purpose, we must make sure to entertain ourselves.

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<sup>41</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 255.

<sup>42</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 126.

<sup>43</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 133.

<sup>44</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 255.

<sup>45</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 115.

## Concise Categorization of *Becoming Who You Are*

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In conclusion, the notion of *Becoming Who You Are* can be described as follows. The credence in God has become untenable, subsequently making universal moralities, values, and sources of meaning and purpose unfeasible. The impossibility of arriving at ultimate interpretations spells out insurmountable solitude and subsequent individuality: the answers to the questions of life are no longer to be *found* in one-size-fits-all codes of conduct, leaving the individual no choice but to *create* these answers him- or herself. However, the answers to the questions of individual value are in no way meant to be static; as people incessantly alter, what is most important is in frequent flux. Culminating from this ultimate solitude combined with auto-determination of values is the determining and subsequent embracing of the path one walks. The importance of incessant playfulness is emphasized; through aestheticization, experimentation, and self-conquering, the right balance between self-deception and ruthless honesty must be found, allowing for unwithheld immersion in courageous play whilst refraining from assuming the value one bestows has truth to it beyond one's solipsist state of self-determination.

# Chapter Three:

## Defining the Corporate Managerial Climate

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In this chapter, I describe the current corporate managerial climate and give an overview of its developments over the past century. Subsequently, I introduce and explain the concept of *corporate correctness*, followed by an elaboration on the concept of *diversity quota*. The chapter ends with an illustration of the three lines of reasoning which I deem make the strongest case in favour of the implementation of diversity quotas in the corporate environment. By doing so, the second sub-question – *What policies are most prevalent in the managerial landscape, regarding individual and collective identity and equality?* – will be answered.

### Etymological Intermezzo

*Corporate managerial climate* I take to be the most prevalent policies, strategies, and attitudes employed by managers of large, multinational corporations, performed with the aim of optimizing the benefit corporations derive from their workforce, at a certain moment in time.

*Corporate* has its etymological roots in the Latin *corporare*, which roughly translates to “to form into a body”.<sup>1</sup> The profusion of types, levels, and intentions of companies existing in the globalized, technology-dominated 21<sup>st</sup> century makes it virtually impossible to succinctly analyze the managerial climate on all levels of corporate activity. Therefore, this thesis will be limited to the current managerial climate that is dominant in large, stock-listed multinational companies, as these are more likely to encounter challenges regarding diversity and equality on a broad scale.

*Management* is a contraction of the Latin *manus*, which translates to “hand” and refers to the act of controlling another by exerting influence, and the suffix “-ment”, which refers to

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<sup>1</sup> “Corporate, Adj. and Adv.,” Oxford English Dictionary, December 1, 2019, <https://www-oed-com.eur.idm.oclc.org/view/Entry/41829?rskey=IBZVOj&result=2&isAdvanced=false#eid>.

the product or result stemming from an action.<sup>2</sup> As will be expanded upon below, management as a scientific discipline has barely passed its infancy; furthermore, its early years have been rather turbulent, with the dominant view on both manager and managee undergoing quite drastic alterations.

## A Very Brief Genealogy of Management

Over the past century, the world has changed in many ways; the global population has more than tripled,<sup>3</sup> technological advances have been almost incessant, and globalisation has grown to never-before-seen levels. Furthermore, the view on paid labour, and more specifically, those performing said paid labour, has changed significantly, too. Whereas some 100 years ago, employees were generally expected to work diligently and explain little whilst undergoing harsh and oftentimes quite dangerous labour circumstances in return for little pay or recognition, contemporary management places more emphasis on employee welfare and intrinsic motivation. As will be elaborated upon below, the advances in technology and cultural developments from the Second World War temporarily increased the mechanistic and impersonal views, but the popularity of such approaches waned with the emergence and maturing of relatively novel fields of study such as psychology, history, and cultural anthropology. Over the last decades, the profusion of different managerial schools of thought has led to what has been referred to as *Paradigm Proliferation*. Nevertheless, I argue certain trends can be noticed in contemporary management, such as the rising popularity of *affirmative action* and an emphasis on diversity and equity.

1920s. In the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, management and leadership were virtually interchangeably terms, and were generally conceived as the ability to exert influence upon one's subordinates; in 1927, for example, a leadership convention defined leadership as:

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<sup>2</sup> "Manymment, n.," Oxford English Dictionary, December 1, 2020, <https://www-oed-com.eur.idm.oclc.org/view/Entry/113829#eid38008720>.

<sup>3</sup> Jeffrey Brown, "World Population to Hit Milestone with Birth of 7 billionth Person," PBS (Public Broadcasting Service, October 27, 2011), <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/world-population-to-hit-milestone-with-birth-of-7-billionth-person>.

“the ability to impress the will of the leader on those led and induce obedience, respect, loyalty, and cooperation.”<sup>4</sup> In this era, management typically often came down to searching for and applying universal principles of influence. Employees were seen as selfish and were treated mechanistically; they were expected to work diligently without complaints.

1930s – 1960s. The three decades following the 1920s saw an interesting split emerge. On the one hand, the Second World War and the resulting omnipresence of planning and calculating was also adopted in the management sphere. For a number of years, the attitude prevalent in the Classical School of Management continued, with the focus on efficiency through meticulous planning, hierarchy, and organization. Control was centralised, and employees were expected primarily to display obedience. Eventually, however, strongly influenced by the emergence of new scientific disciplines such as psychology and anthropology, a realization dawned upon management theorists: “[...] one of the major impacts on organisational effectiveness was the motivations and actions of the workforce.”<sup>5</sup> Tellingly, the weekend was only formerly introduced in Britain in the 1930s, and not out of generosity towards employees; rather, managers noticed increased productivity and reduced absenteeism in their employees when they got regular days off, as they experienced less stress and a more enjoyable work-life balance. This led to the conclusion that *employee well-being has positive effects on labour productivity*, consequently making it desirable for managers to have their employees feel appreciated, committed, and heard. Furthermore, this period saw a shift towards a perception of employees in a less impersonal way; for example, McGregor’s *Theory X and Theory Y* was developed, arguing that different people need different types of motivation and control.<sup>6</sup> Effectively, organisations became more considering of the individuality and differences between their employees.

*The Eighties and Beyond.* From the 1980s onwards, management science grew in popularity, consequently receiving more academic attention.<sup>7</sup> Over the past decades, different

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<sup>4</sup> Moore, “The May Conference on Leadership” in *Personnel Journal*, Vol 6, 1927, 124.

<sup>5</sup> Stephen P. Robbins and Neil Barnwell, *Organisation Theory, Concepts* (Harlow, England: Pearson Education Limited, 2015), 45.

<sup>6</sup> Robbins and Barnwell, *Organisation Theory, Concepts*: 46.

<sup>7</sup> Robbins and Barnwell, *Organisation Theory, Concepts*: 50-52.

schools of management thought have arisen. *Organisational Economics* is aimed at optimizing efficiency through minimizing *transaction costs*, i.e., the costs incurred by eliminating employees' ability to engage in selfish behaviour. It has a rather impersonal and unflattering view of workers, arguing that people will engage in selfish behaviour when given the opportunity. This corresponds with the classical school of management prevalent in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century as well as with the negative side of McGregor's theory of employees. *Institutional Theory* emphasizes the intangible yet crucial influence of unspoken norms, values, and expectations within corporations. Drawing on Weick's notion of *enactment*, i.e., the idea that procedures and structures within a corporation are influenced and shaped by the actions of individuals, it argues that conventions are often unconsciously and implicitly adopted and difficult to alter once ingrained and institutionalized in the fabric of a company's culture.<sup>8</sup> *Symbolic-interpretive theories* emphasize the influence of symbols and the way their interpretation impacts the sense of meaning members of an organization derive from it.<sup>9</sup> They draw from anthropological fields of study and pay close attention to the individual members of an organisation, opening the door for a more subject- or employee-oriented style of management. *Multinationalism and -disciplinarity* are no schools of thought as such but designate important topics of concern and attention for the last decades of management theory. The ability to collaborate effectively with people from vastly different walks of life and parts of Earth has led to an increased appreciation for interpersonal and -cultural differences, and subsequently a more attentive and personal attitude towards employees.

### *Paradigm Proliferation and Popular Policies*

This abundance of diverging and oftentimes mutually exclusive managerial paradigms has led to what is called *paradigm proliferation*: the consensus that there is no universal, perennially preferable approach to management.<sup>10</sup> However, over the past years, certain

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<sup>8</sup> Robbins and Barnwell, *Organisation Theory, Concepts*: 57.

<sup>9</sup> Łukasz Sułkowski, "Human Resource Management: paradigms and basic cognitive orientations," *ResearchGate*, (2018): 13.

<sup>10</sup> Robbins and Barnwell, *Organisation Theory, Concepts*: 52, 62-3.

policies have considerably grown in popularity within the management climate. In striking contrast to the dominant view of the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, the present conviction is that intrinsically motivated employees are more productive, which corresponds with an increased attention for and appreciation of interpersonal differences and cultural diversity. Furthermore, the insurgence of corporations engaging in *corporate social responsibility* might suggest increasing consumer awareness regarding the consequences of their purchases. Perhaps most notable is the growing popularity of *affirmative action*, i.e., actions performed with the intention of eliminating social injustices. In the next paragraph, the concept of *affirmative action* is introduced and explained. Of the policies falling under this umbrella term, this thesis shall focus on *minority quotas*, which I deem exemplary for the recent developments in the managerial climate. Furthermore, the concept of minority quotas lends itself exceptionally well for a concrete analysis, allowing for a transparent comparison with the four aspects of Nietzsche's *Becoming Who You Are*.

## *Indexation of Corporate Correctness*

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Over the past decades, there has been increased globalization, as transport of both denizen and data has improved tremendously. Consequently, there is an increased level of communication between people from different backgrounds, culturally as well as in terms of gender, color, and creed. A century or two ago, communities were generally significantly smaller and more tightly connected; as such, opinions regarding morality and social norms tended to be nearer to unanimity than in our contemporary day and age. As the bulwarking bedding of the Church waned, maintaining a belief in universal truths became increasingly challenging. Combined with the ever-increasing amount of people, and hence walking world views one encounters, interaction with people who seem to differ greatly from one another is becoming an ever-increasingly present aspect of modern life. Furthermore, as has been discussed previously, the managerial climate has become increasingly attentive towards the

needs and desires of employees, treating them less as unanimous and interchangeable units of labour, instead focusing on individual well-being and fairness. This increasing diversity in modern societies, combined with a growing attention for individual well-being and fairness, has also affected the corporate climate. With a growing percentage of the workforce consisting of minorities and women, the corporate climate has experienced a surge of attention to diversity management.<sup>11</sup> Research suggests that increased diversity within a workforce can have both positive and negative effects on profitability, with the management approach<sup>12</sup> as well as recruitment- and application-procedures playing decisive roles.<sup>13</sup> The umbrella-term for policies designed to eliminate unfair discrimination is known as *Affirmative Action*, which is discussed in the following paragraph.

## Introducing Affirmative Action

The term *Affirmative Action* originates from the 1961 *Executive Order No. 10925*, which was signed by J.F. Kennedy with the aim of taking “affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed and that employees are treated during employment without regard to their race, creed, color, or national origin.”<sup>14</sup> Since then, affirmative action has become a popular umbrella term for policies aimed at reducing inequalities, increasing diversity, and ensuring access to education and opportunity. Examples are situations where being part of an ethnic minority increases one’s odds of being accepted into a university or profession.

In 1965, Lyndon Johnson, Kennedy’s successor, employed the *Shackled Runner Analogy* to illustrate the contingent and accumulative injustice surrounding (racial) discrimination.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Meg Bond and Tean Pyle, “Diversity Dilemmas at Work,” *Journal of Management Inquiry* 7, no. 3 (1998): pp. 252-269, <https://doi.org/10.1177/105649269873007>, 252.

<sup>12</sup> Gillian Coote Martin, “The Effects of Cultural Diversity In The Workplace,” *Journal of Diversity Management (JDM)* 9, no. 2 (2014): pp. 89-92, <https://doi.org/10.19030/jdm.v9i2.8974>, 90.

<sup>13</sup> John Morgan and Felix Várdy, “Diversity in the Workplace,” *American Economic Review* 99, no. 1 (January 2009): pp. 472-485, <https://doi.org/10.1257/aer.99.1.472>, 473-4.

<sup>14</sup> “Executive Order 10925-Establishing the President’s Committee on Equal Employment Opportunity,” The American Presidency Project, March 6, 1961, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/237176>.

<sup>15</sup> Mike Noon, “The Shackled Runner: Time to Rethink Positive Discrimination?” *Work, Employment and Society* 24, no. 4 (2010): pp. 728-739, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0950017010380648>, 728-9.

He refers to a race where one runner has his legs shackled by an outsider (importantly, not by his opponent directly) whilst the other can move his feet freely. The race commences; the free-footed runner gains considerable distance from his restrained opponent, until half-way through the race, the judge calls to a halt and loosens the restrained runner. Manifestly, few would call this situation equal and fair, even if the handicap eventually gets removed; the restrained one was unable to gain advantages while the former could. This parable captures the general aim and rationale employed by proponents of affirmative action.

## Introducing Quotas

One policy that has been growing in popularity over the past years is that of *gender- and minority quotas*. Most notably, the EU is planning on introducing a quotas for stock-listed companies, making it mandatory to have a board with at least 40% female members.<sup>16</sup> Similarly, in 2013, articles 166 and 276 of the Dutch Civil Code held that Dutch companies must aim to have at least 3 out of 10 members of their Board be female by the year 2020.<sup>17</sup> Manifestly, diversity and anti-discrimination measures are a *hot topic*; understandably so, as they address pressing issues in contemporary society. In the next paragraph, the concept of minority quotas is described and operationalized, and further motivation is given for treating them as exemplary of the trend of affirmative action in the workplace. Subsequently, I present the three arguments that, from my interpretation and understanding, give the strongest and most relevant support for the implementation of minority quotas in the corporate sphere.

## The Case in Favour of Affirmative Action in the Form of Temporary Diversity Quotas

Diversity quotas are numeric requirements for diversity within groups, specifying what percentage of a group must consist of members with a certain background. They can be

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<sup>16</sup> Jennifer Ryan, "EU Quota Rule for Women on Boards Is the Only Way, Reding Says." Bloomberg.com, January 25, 2013, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2013-01-25/eu-quota-rule-for-women-on-boards-is-the-only-way-reding-says>.

<sup>17</sup> "Burgerlijk Wetboek 2," Overheid.nl, June 11, 2015, <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0003045/2015-01-01> (Accessed on April 5th, 2021).

employed in different contexts and with different intended outcomes. Quotas are far from a novel invention; alterations of numerically fixed requirements for group-diversity were reportedly used by the Mongols during the Yuan dynasty over 900 years ago, albeit for purposes vastly different from those in modern times.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, their purpose is unequivocal; they are used in universities, government elections, and, in growing numbers, in the corporate environment.<sup>19</sup>

Affirmative action is a broad concept that has existed for over 50 years and has been the topic of countless discussions; for the corporate climate, the same holds true, to an even larger extent. As such, it is virtually impossible to give a coherent account of the entirety of the concepts. However, I believe *minority quotas* to be exemplary of the recent developments in the corporate climate, as they relate to the topic of individual versus collective freedom and identity. Furthermore, like Nietzsche's *Becoming Who You Are*, they are a manifestation of societal developments regarding the role of the individual, and tolerance towards injustice and exclusion. Moreover, they allow for a concrete, coherent, and succinct analysis. For these reasons, I have chosen to use my interpretation of *minority quotas* and the arguments I deem to lend the best support for their implementation. In what follows, an account is given of these arguments, as well as a display of their premises and aims.

#### 1. *Argument from Instrumentality (descriptive and consequentialist)*

This argument is based on the instrumental effect of implementing quotas. It argues that diverse groups and organizations obtain better results, both in terms of educational success (in universities, for example) and in business contexts. This justifies the use of diversity quotas on the bases of improved performance and profitability.

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<sup>18</sup> Mark Cartwright, "Yuan Dynasty," World History Encyclopedia, October 29, 2019, [https://www.worldhistory.org/Yuan\\_Dynasty/](https://www.worldhistory.org/Yuan_Dynasty/).

<sup>19</sup> Marie Froelicher and Lotte Griek, "Gender Equality in the Workplace: Going beyond Women on the Board," [www.spglobal.com](https://www.spglobal.com) (S&P Global, February 5, 2021), <https://www.spglobal.com/esg/csa/yearbook/articles/gender-equality-workplace-going-beyond-women-on-the-board>.

A recent study by Forbes interviewed directors and Board members of large international companies. Most of the interviewees reported positive effects on creativity and innovation stemming from diversity in the workforce: "Among companies with more than \$10 billion in annual revenues, 56% strongly agreed that diversity helps drive innovation."<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, a survey performed recently by Glassdoor found that people looking for employment value the diversity of a prospective workplace significantly; as such, companies with diverse workforces stand better odds at attracting talented candidates.<sup>21</sup> Correspondingly and notably, companies with higher rates of workforce diversity have been reported to be more profitable. A study by McKinsey & Company found a 15% and 35% probability for outperforming competitors for companies that are diverse in gender and ethnicity, respectively.<sup>22</sup> However, results are not completely unambiguous; for example, Armache reports that diversity within a workforce leads to increased adaptability, improved capacity for creative problem-solving, and more effective collaboration between employees, amounting to more favourable financial returns; simultaneously, however, more diversity can lead to increased levels of tension and disagreement, subsequently harming productivity.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, research performed on stock performance of companies reporting increased attention towards Corporate Social Responsibility is ambiguous, even finding occasional negative stock responses.<sup>24</sup> Admittedly, CSR and minority quotas are far from interchangeable; nevertheless, it cannot be axiomatically assumed that minority quotas will unambiguously result in favourable monetary outcomes.

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<sup>20</sup> Forbes. "Global diversity and inclusion: Fostering innovation through a diverse workforce." *Forbes Insight, New York* (2011), 5.

<sup>21</sup> Glassdoor Team, "Glassdoor's Diversity and Inclusion Workplace Survey," Glassdoor, September 30, 2020, <https://www.glassdoor.com/blog/glassdoors-diversity-and-inclusion-workplace-survey/>.

<sup>22</sup> Vivian Hunt, Dennis Layton, and Sara Prince. "Diversity matters." *McKinsey & Company* 1, no. 1 (2015): 3.

<sup>23</sup> Jalal Armache, "Diversity in the workplace: Benefits and challenges," *Journal of International Diversity* 2012, no. 1 (2012): 60-65.

<sup>24</sup> Kuo-Jung Lee, "The Effects of Social Responsibility on Company Value: A Real Options Perspective of Taiwan Companies," *Economic Research-Ekonomska Istraživanja* 32, no. 1 (January 1, 2019): 3835-52, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1331677x.2019.1679213>, 3845.

In sum, research suggests that, when managed appropriately and in an atmosphere of collaboration, transparent communication, and joint commitment to a shared, clearly defined purpose, more diverse workforces obtain more profitable results than their more homogenous counterparts.

2. *It must be done to redress past injustices (descriptive and deontological)*

This rationale argues that removing the proverbial shackles from the oppressed runner's ankles is insufficient to make up for past injustices. Not only have the oppressed been excluded from opportunities to their own direct advantage, but the resulting advantages they could have passed on to their next of kin have also been robbed. As such, merely getting rid of the policies that facilitated the sexism or racism of yore does not cut the chase; rather, those who belong to groups that have witnessed historical oppression deserve some form of preferential treatment to make up for the maltreatment they and their predecessors received in the past. This line of reasoning is complex, as it quickly requires much specification and deliberation, *inter alia* about the quantification of past injustices, the development of criteria for when justice has been established, or who is most entitled to what form of compensation. These and further complications will be discussed in Chapter Four.

3. *Restructuring the Corporate Landscape; fostering integration (normative, both consequentialist and deontological).*

Evaluations of diversity measures are frequently expressed in terms of profitability and financial performance. Such evaluations are insightful and relevant for C-suite managers and stock investors. However, the playing field is limited to the current neo-liberal capitalist system. The moral desirability of diversity cannot justifiably be determined in terms of their financial returns, as not all that is valuable can be reduced to monetary worth. As such, affirmative action in the form of diversity quotas is necessary to alter the discourse with the aim of fostering a richer and more befitting manner of

evaluating the desirability of policies.

This argument emphasizes the effects of non-spoken communication. Although there might be no formal laws preventing or even prohibiting individuals to pursue a certain career or education, there might be challenges and obstacles that disproportionately obstruct members of a minority in their pursuit of their ambitions and goals. In what follows, two elements that influence the corporate playing field are discussed.

i. *Role Models*. When young girls grow up within a paradigm where IT and STEM-fields are biologically not up their alley, or when young boys are told that “showing emotions is for girls”, this fosters internalized distinctions between what men and women ought and ought not to do. Similarly, if people of color rarely encounter others of their ethnicity at the top of the corporate or governmental hierarchy, this implicitly and unconsciously demotivates, as they will internalize this.

ii. *Old Boys’ Network*. The adage that “like attracts like” holds sway outside the confines of social interaction, too. Whether consciously or not, people are most likely to want to associate with those with whom they identify.<sup>25</sup> Historically, C-suites and Corporate Boards have seen overrepresentations of white, heterosexual men.<sup>26</sup> Because of the heteronormativity implied, when considering potential candidates for a position within a company, especially in the case of positions high up the company’s hierarchy, managers often unconsciously evaluate candidates belonging to minority groups more negatively.<sup>27</sup> Not only does this make it very difficult for minorities to obtain such positions, but it fosters unpleasant working conditions for minorities as well, as they have fewer opportunities to connect with their colleagues. As such, temporary artificial improvements in diversity through (mandated) diversity quotas is an

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<sup>25</sup> R. Matthew Montoya, Robert S. Horton, and Jeffrey Kirchner, “Is Actual Similarity Necessary for Attraction? A Meta-Analysis of Actual and Perceived Similarity,” *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* 25, no. 6 (2008): pp. 889-922, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407508096700>, 903-4.

<sup>26</sup> Terrance W. Fitzsimmons, Victor J. Callan, and Neil Paulsen, “Gender Disparity in the C-Suite: Do Male and Female CEOs Differ in How They Reached the Top?,” *The Leadership Quarterly* 25, no. 2 (2014): pp. 245-266, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.leaqua.2013.08.005>, 249-250.

<sup>27</sup> Richard E. Nisbett and Timothy D. Wilson, “The Halo Effect: Evidence for Unconscious Alteration of Judgments.,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 35, no. 4 (1977): pp. 250-256, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.35.4.250>, 250.

effective and necessary measure for altering the managerial landscape. It is important to stress that such quotas are meant to be temporal; once the institutionalized discriminatory practices and assumptions have sufficiently eroded through the replenishing water of social justice and diversity, the protective coat of diversity quotas can be shed off to usher into an era of improved collaborative flourishing, devoid of any segregation stemming from an attention to group identity.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the management climate has become increasingly attentive to the individual and their well-being. This development has also become manifest in the policies used to eliminate unfair discrimination, known under the umbrella-term of *Affirmative Action*. Of these policies, I deem *minority quotas* to be exemplary, and furthermore to lend itself well for an analysis and subsequent comparison with Nietzsche's *Becoming Who You Are*. In the next chapter, the three arguments displayed in the previous section are compared to Nietzsche's adage.

# Chapter Four:

## Nietzsche and Quotas

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In this chapter, the three arguments in favour of implementing quotas in the corporate climate are compared to the different aspects of *Becoming Who You Are*. This will provide an answer to the third sub-question of the thesis: *To what extent are “Becoming Who You Are” and the current managerial landscape commensurable?* For each argument, its commensurability with the reasoning employed in *Becoming Who You Are* is investigated. As will become manifest, an intriguing paradox occurs repeatedly. On the one hand, quotas and *Becoming Who You Are* correspond closely, as both concepts are aimed at enabling individuals to pursue the life they wish to live, lending employees a hand in pursuing what they find valuable. On the other hand, they are in stark contrast, as implementing quotas will cause equalization rather than the solipsist pursuit of individualized values; by levelling the playing field, each employee is supported and expected to pursue the same goals. Consequently, it could be argued that rather than making each employee assume the lead role in their own play, all are placed on the same stage and expected to adhere to approximately the same plot.

### Argument from Instrumentality (Descriptive and Consequentialist)

This argument considers the pragmatic consequences of implementing quotas; that is to say, its support (or lack thereof) for quotas is derived from the material or monetary consequences, rather than metaphysical or moral evaluations.

On the one hand, this line of reasoning corresponds well with *Becoming Who You Are*. Firstly, it can reasonably be expected that when companies increase their profitability, at least a portion of the increased revenue must trickle down to the employees of the company. Consequently, this enables employees to pursue what they find meaningful, effectively

facilitating them in *Auto-Determining One's Values*. Furthermore, there is some justification for aligning the argument with *Embracing One's Fate*: given that diverse workforces are more profitable, accepting and capitalizing on this can be seen as affirmative acceptance of, and subsequent capitalization of, a state of being that is grounded in the real world.

On the other hand, it breaks with *Becoming Who You Are*. Firstly, monetary values are expressions of aggregate value, not subjective and individual value. It is precisely because of its impersonality that money is so effective for organizing and facilitating trade and interaction among people with vastly different personal values. Consequently, appealing to instrumentality breaks with *Being One's Sole Audience* as well as with *Determining One's Values*, as what is pursued and valued is not personal, subjective, and lived, but rather the aggregate result of many different opinions, all of which are not determined solely in terms of the subject. Furthermore, there appears to be little support for this argument from the perspective of *Living Dangerously*, as the expected outcomes converge asymptotically, whilst most plausibly gradually raising the income per employee, as revenue increases. Therefore, viewed from this perspective, profitability cannot justify the implementation of quotas, as they do not relate to individualized subjectivity.

## Redressing Past Injustices (Descriptive and Deontological)

This argument entails that, as past injustices have accumulated, they must be redressed to be equalized; as such, members of groups that have historically been disadvantaged, ought to be given preferential treatment to make up for this injustice.

In multiple ways, this argument conflicts with *Becoming Who You Are*. Firstly, the notion of *Becoming Who You Are* is fundamentally anti-essentialist. Its credo has been poetically expressed by dr. Yalom, who wrote of it that:

There is no afterlife, no goal toward which this life points, no apocalyptic tribunal or judgment. This moment exists forever, and you, alone, are your only audience.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Irvin D. Yalom, *When Nietzsche Wept* (New York, New York: Harper Perennial, 2010), 194.

As such, it contests any attempt to establish permanence, be it normative, metaphysical, or personal. Therefore, one cannot meaningfully refer to one's former self to determine who one is and how one ought to act, let alone who one's predecessors were; the argument implies a sense of continuity between generations, whereas *Becoming Who You Are* assumes an incessant re-becoming, already on the level of the individual. Therefore, appeals to what happened to one's ancestors cannot be justified within the confines of *Becoming Who You Are*.

Secondly, there is the issue of the concept of *justice*, which Nietzsche would most probably have taken issue with:

With a great goal one is superior even to justice, not only to one's deeds and one's judges.<sup>2</sup>

For Nietzsche, justice is a construct; striving for it implies its existence. He would see this as merely another *Shadow of God*, i.e., a metaphysical claim or appeal:

Although the shrewdest judges of the witches and even the witches themselves were convinced of the guilt of witchery, this guilt nevertheless did not exist. This applies to all guilt.<sup>3</sup>

However, as for the previous argument, there is also concordance between the two concepts. As "God is dead" and all appeals to metaphysical notions of purpose, destination, and absolute meaning have become untenable, for Nietzsche, the only proper level of analysis for human life is the individual. By preventing, or at least limiting, the accumulation of discrimination, exclusion, and poverty, the baseline of opportunities for individuals in all layers of society is brought closer together, resulting in a more favourable landscape for the average individual to pursue what they deem personally meaningful. Therefore, there is overlap between the two lines of reasoning, as eliminating arbitrary and contingent factors of exclusion and discrimination ultimately seeks to enable individuals to pursue what they personally find

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<sup>2</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 219.

<sup>3</sup> Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, 216.

most valuable, exempt from contingent and arbitrary, trivial aspects of their (group-) identity, which echoes the anti-essentialism so prevalent in Nietzsche's *Becoming Who You Are*.

## Argument from Restructuring the Corporate Playing Field (Normative and Consequentialist/Normative and Deontological)

This argument holds that, by implementing temporary quotas, the corporate environment will organically adopt the more inclusive and diverse norm that is temporarily imposed artificially. Eventually, quotas will no longer be required, as exclusion based on group identity wades until it becomes structurally untenable and to the point where non-meritocratic variables become trivial.

On the one hand, this argument corresponds with *Becoming Who You Are*. Altering the playing field enables individuals to pursue what they find valuable, regardless of their gender, sexuality, ethnicity, or other qualities that tend to lead to marginalization in the contemporary business environment. By establishing, for each individual, a certain baseline of opportunities to flourish within the corporate climate, employees are facilitated in carefully contemplating and considering what they deem most valuable. This is important, as it can be a safeguard against what are called *altered preferences*. Altered preferences entail that when people grow up in impoverished circumstances, they internalize and subsequently normalize their deplorable circumstances, rendering them incapable of adequately determining when they are being mistreated. Consider, for example, an orphaned child who grows up in extreme poverty and, because of his lack of a standard for comparison, considers a day in which he is not assaulted and has some non-toxic water to his disposal as "absolutely wonderful", even though most people would agree his situation is far from humane or acceptable. Arneson has written about "ideally considered preferences", which he described as preference and values arrived at "with full pertinent information, in a calm mood, while thinking clearly and making

no reasoning errors”.<sup>4</sup> Following this reasoning, it can be argued that quotas bring people to a situation where they can calmly and exhaustively investigate what they value and what they want to pursue, effectively facilitating them in adequately determining their own values. Furthermore, as time progresses and a (temporarily artificial) more equal and meritocratic (in the sense of determined solely by factors relevant for the labor to be performed) distribution has been obtained, institutionalized marginalization is likely to erode, as social norms and expectations will alter, and the new situation eventually becomes crystallized, amplifying the effects of the quota.

On the other hand, this line of reasoning conflicts with *Becoming Who You Are*. Firstly, claiming the playing field must be altered implies that all roads *must* lead to Rome; that is to say, it implies that a more equal and representative workforce is a desirable aim, thereby neglecting the possibility that an unrepresentative workforce might be a manifestation of different interests, rather than solely the result of unequal access to opportunities. Secondly, it breaks with *Being One’s Sole Audience*: the way one lives is determined *in relation to* others, rather than primarily to oneself. Thirdly, it could be argued that the implementation of quotas is not in line with *Embracing One’s Fate*, as what is embraced is an artificially created and equalized distribution, rather than the “given” state of the world; then again, it could be countered that altering the current state of affairs is a form of life-affirmation. Lastly, it breaks with *Living Dangerously*: rather than pursuing one’s passions through the valley of danger, this is more akin to conforming to aggregate opinions.

## Conclusion

As has become manifest, the reasoning employed *Becoming Who You Are* and implementing quotas, respectively, simultaneously confirm and deny each other. On the one hand, implementing quotas corresponds with the argumentation of *Becoming Who You Are*. Although the levels of analysis differ, both *Becoming Who You Are* and the implementation of

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<sup>4</sup> Richard J. Arneson, “Equality and Equal Opportunity for Welfare,” *Philosophical Studies* 56, no. 1 (1989): pp. 77-93, <https://doi.org/10.1007/bf00646210>, 83.

quotas seek to give the individual the best chance to flourish. By removing extreme over- and underrepresentation within the corporate climate, an individual's ability to pursue what they find personally meaningful is enhanced, as the chance of arbitrary characteristics blocking them from embarking on the adventures they desire, is reduced. Therefore, implementing quotas would enable employees in applying Nietzsche's adage. On the other hand, there are strong tensions and even direct conflicts between the two lines of reasoning. Where Nietzsche and his adage see the individual as the sole determinant of what is valuable, the implementation of quotas imposes one hegemonic set of values upon all employees within a corporation, giving prevalence to the development of the collective over the particular, albeit for the sake of the individual. In the next chapter, an investigation will be performed regarding an element that might resolve the apparent paradox between *Becoming Who You Are* and the implementation of temporary diversity quotas.

## Chapter Five: *Incipit the Private Sphere*

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Paradoxically enough, as has become manifest in Chapter Four, *Becoming Who You Are* and the implementation of quotas are in remarkable concordance in several ways, yet strongly conflict in others. As will become manifest, Nietzsche's adage does not seem to treat one's professional life and one's private life as separate from each other. In this chapter, I will argue that the demarcating difference between the reasoning employed in Nietzsche's *Becoming Who You Are* versus the implementation of quotas is the distinction between the public and private life.

The era in which Nietzsche lived, was, unsurprisingly, remarkably different from ours. Not only was the Earth less populated, but (monetary) inequality was harsher and more rigid. Nietzsche was no aristocrat (although he took delight in being called a "radical aristocrat"<sup>1</sup>), but was more affluent than average; furthermore, it should be noted that, from resigning from his position at the University of Basel until his death, he received a monthly pension from his former employer. As such, although he did not live a life of excessive luxury, generating income to sustain his livelihood was a concern Nietzsche did not have to face.

Contrarily, modern western societies are characterized by a sharp distinction between one's private and public life. Where two centuries ago one's profession determined most aspects of one's life, from how most of one's waking hours were spent to one's social affiliation and political preference, the grip one's employment has on one's identity in modern societies has decreased significantly. American psychologist Joe Bailey has argued that the Industrial Revolution, combined with increased globalization and a waning sense of identification with one's country, has led to an upsurge of attention to and prioritization of the private element

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<sup>1</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche to Georg Brandes, "Letter to Georg Brandes," Letter, December 2, 1887.

of our lives, as opposed to the areas of our lives that are more directly influenced by others.<sup>2</sup> This resonates strongly with Nietzsche's claim about the "Death of God" and the subsequent emergence of the individual whose life is determined in ways unrelated to the herd.

However, from my reading of his *The Gay Science*, as well as other works, it appears that this distinction was not considered by Nietzsche, or at least not perceived to be relevant enough to investigate in detail. The following quote from his *Human, All Too Human* seems to confirm this suspicion:

...for whoever hath not two-thirds of his day for himself is a slave, be he otherwise whatever he likes, statesman, merchant, official, or scholar.<sup>3</sup>

Here, it becomes manifest that Nietzsche did not pay heed to the pragmatic necessities that bind most individuals to some form of group affiliation. Whereas Nietzsche's predecessor of the *Übermensch* was supposedly not preoccupied with ensuring his well-being, which necessarily includes some form of financial affluence, modern western individuals are generally unable to avoid engaging in some form of paid labor. Although the intransigent Nietzschean might take offense with this, when somebody's basic needs are not met, it is generally quite unreasonable to expect them to voluntarily and without complaint determine their own values and subsequently embrace the deplorable situation they might find themselves in; in other words, somebody who has four hungry mouths to feed lacks the space required to turn himself into an aesthetic project.

## Perishing Paradoxes

The apparent paradox that occurs for each of the three lines of reasoning in defense of quotas turns out to arise from the same source. As will be illustrated in the following paragraph, for all three lines of reasoning, the paradox dissolves when a distinction between life in the public

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<sup>2</sup> Joe Bailey, "From Public to Private: the Development of the Concept of the "Private," *Social Research: An International Quarterly* 69, no. 1 (2002), 21.

<sup>3</sup> Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human: Parts 1 and 2: Beyond Good and Evil*, ed. Tom Griffith (Ware: Wordsworth Editions, 2015), 164.

sphere and life in the private sphere is introduced.

*The Argument from Instrumentality.* The apparent contradiction for this argument is that, on the one hand, quotas enable employees to acquire more means of flourishing and therefore to take control of their own fate, yet on the other hand, they limit the freedom of choice that is granted to individuals in the workplace. However, when the notion of the private sphere is introduced, it becomes manifest that, by putting restrictions on what is acceptable in the public sphere, individuals are granted more freedom in their private lives. Furthermore, by implementing quotas, the divergences between different individuals in their private lives will not influence the opportunities they have access to in the public sphere. Therefore, quotas ensure a baseline of well-being for each individual, enabling each to take control of their own fate and identity, whilst simultaneously preventing the resulting differences between employees from influencing their ability to maintain their livelihood.

*The Argument from Redressing Past Injustices.* Again, on the one hand, quotas are desirable for individual flourishing, as they prevent injustices from piling up, effectively ensuring equal opportunities to all; on the other hand, quotas seemingly fly in the face of *Becoming Who You Are*, as they treat distinct individuals as identical members of a collective, emphasizing group-affiliation over individual identity. However, when the distinction between the public and the private sphere is introduced, the paradox dissolves: because each individual is irreducibly unique, interactions within the public sphere must adhere to certain restrictions. By preventing extreme inequality within the public sphere, individuals are facilitated in *Becoming Who You Are* in the private sphere; simultaneously, quotas prevent the accumulated differences in identity between employees from obstructing their development in the workplace.

*The Argument from Restructuring the Playing Field.* In this argument, the apparent paradox and subsequent solution becomes manifest most clearly. As with the previous two arguments, on the one hand, it supports the implementation of quotas, as it reasons that by altering the playing field, arbitrary and irrelevant differences are gradually made obsolete, leading to a corporate climate where employees are not limited by contingent and irrelevant aspects of their identity. On the other hand, the implementation of quotas limits the options

each employee has, reducing the number of roles an individual can play, instead deciding that each player must play a similar role and perform similarly well. Therefore, the argument simultaneously agrees and conflicts with Nietzsche's *Becoming Who You Are*. However, when the distinction between the public and private sphere is considered, the paradox dissolves, illustrating the importance of this distinction once more. Modern Western societies have a much sharper distinction between one's professional and private identity; social classes are demarcated much less rigidly in public life. Where in the 1800s, one's occupation determined most aspects of one's life, modern people are defined by their occupations to a much lesser degree. With whom one associates is no longer restricted to members of the same social class or profession; furthermore, it is no longer socially acceptable to give preferential treatment to individuals with a higher perceived social status. Because the private and public domain are so separate in modern societies, the implementation of quotas in the workplace does not mean that *all* aspects of employees' life is controlled and restricted; rather, it prevents extreme inequality in the workplace to ensure that each can affirm life by *Becoming Who You Are* in the private sphere.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, it seems as though the two lines of reasoning are in concordance with each other, yet are aimed at another aspect of the same purpose: the freedom Nietzsche so adamantly urges us to seize, is the very freedom which is intended to be created by the implementation of quotas in the public, corporate sphere. The demarcating difference between the reasoning employed in Nietzsche's *Becoming Who You Are* versus the implementation of quotas is, therefore, the distinction between the public and private life: in Nietzsche's adage, this distinction is not considered, whereas in 21st-century western societies, this distinction is much stronger and more present. Subsequently, it seems that the ability to take positive control over one's fate and to become the life-affirming captain of one's soul in Nietzsche's adage implicitly assumes the absence of certain obstacles, or, rather, the presence of certain supporting mechanisms. In the following chapter, the implications and possible complications regarding this demarcating difference are investigated and discussed.

# Chapter Six:

## *Implications and Contemplations*

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In this chapter, the results of the analysis are summarized. The crux of the difference between the two lines of reasoning will be highlighted, and its implications will subsequently be discussed, providing an answer to the fourth and last sub-question of the thesis: *Is the current corporate climate desirable or problematic, regarding the extent to which it facilitates its employees in “Becoming Who You Are”?* Furthermore, the limitations of the analysis are given, as well as recommendations for further development of the argument.

### Brief Recapitalization of the Findings so Far

In conclusion, the following observations have been made. Nietzsche’s adage puts the individual at centre stage. It urges people to embrace one’s fate, based on one’s personal, auto-determined values, to live dangerously, and to properly assume the lead role of the play that is one’s life. The temporary implementation of diversity quotas in the corporate environment seeks to equalize the opportunities to which individuals have access in public life, eliminating non-meritocratic elements when considering whether or not to hire a certain candidate. It turns out that both approaches seek the same result, i.e., the flourishing of the sovereign individual, and hence go hand-in-hand, as the implementation of quotas is aimed at facilitating employees in obtaining the freedom to live and become how and who they are (and want to be!) in the private sphere, by ensuring a baseline of opportunities in the public sphere. Consequently, it has become manifest that the crux with which the apparent contradiction between the two approaches is resolved, is the distinction between the public and the private sphere of life. Where Nietzsche’s adage paid no attention to this distinction, the implementation of quotas derives its feasibility precisely from the separation between the public and the private sphere.

## Implications and Contemplations

Throughout Western philosophy, innumerable works have been dedicated to the dynamic between individual and collective life, as well as the private and public aspects of life. In this paragraph, several influential thinkers and their perspectives on the topic will be discussed and compared to the dissolved paradox between diversity quota and *Becoming Who You Are*, highlighting similarities and discrepancies, followed by a general contemplation on the topic.

In her *The Human Condition*, Hannah Arendt discusses the distinction between the public and private life in the ancient Greek *Polis*. Interestingly enough, the Greeks gave preference to the *public* life over the private life, deeming the latter significantly less important; an embarrassing necessity rather than a valuable aspect of existence.<sup>1</sup> Individuals were deemed less important than public and political matters; Arendt has argued that this partly explains why the ancient Greeks often had a neutral or even favourable attitude towards slavery.<sup>2</sup> It appears that the distinction has become more prominent in western societies over the past centuries, but simultaneously with an emphasis on the individual and private over the collective and public.

Spinoza, in what might be considered an astounding bout of foresight, appears to have understood the importance of strict regulation in areas with many conflicting convictions, precisely to ensure everybody can hold on to their personal convictions without obstructing others in their ability to do the same. In his *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus, inter alia*, Spinoza pleads for restrictions on acceptable behaviour and forms of expression, precisely to maintain an environment in which religious toleration can exist.<sup>3</sup> Although Spinoza wrote about religious freedom within diverse communities rather than about representation within the workplace, I believe the analogy still holds ground: to enable people to be, do, and believe what they want in matters where others are not concerned, they must be prevented from obstructing others in doing the same. When the convictions of people in positions of power

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<sup>1</sup> Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1958), 133-134.

<sup>2</sup> Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 84.

<sup>3</sup> Justin Steinberg, "Spinoza's Political Philosophy (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)," Stanford.edu, June 21, 2019, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/spinoza-political/>.

are allowed to influence the professional opportunities others get access to, this hampers the ability of said others to become who they are in their private life, as they might lack the means and attitude required to do so.

This point made by Spinoza corresponds with an intriguing point made by Popper in his *The Open Societies and its Enemies* about another apparent paradox: intolerance towards intolerance. He argues that for societies to be open, tolerant, and inclusive, they must be relentless towards behaviour and attitudes that fosters intolerance.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, to be free, it is vital to have certain self-imposed restrictions. This corresponds closely with the topic under investigation, as the implementation of quotas is intolerant towards certain modes of action within the corporate sphere but is aimed precisely at instilling an atmosphere of tolerance and freedom of expression and belief.

In his *Liquid Modernity*, the Polish sociologist and philosopher Zygmunt Bauman investigates the developments of modernity. In brief, he claims that contemporary identities are tremendously less rigid and defined than has been the case throughout most of mankind's existence. He uses the term "shopping" to indicate the modern attitude towards identity: commitments, for example to a job, social position, or fashion style have become disposable, underscoring a society that is much more flexible and volatile.<sup>5</sup> Bauman's analysis corresponds well with Nietzsche's proclamation of the "Death of God" and the subsequent demise of absolute truth and certainty. Bauman argues that modern societies no longer subscribe to an implicit notion of incessant progress, nor to the notion that a "great society" can be realized.<sup>6</sup> Consequently, modern societies are, in Bauman's view, characterized by a latent sense of uncertainty, instability, and volatility, with members who view themselves and their identity as increasingly fluid and subject to unpredictable changes. This prevalence of uncertainty relates closely to the anti-essentialism of Nietzsche's adage. To function and prosper in a society and era that is so fluid, Bauman argues, the importance of *civility* can hardly be overstressed. To facilitate each in shopping and disposing aspects of their identity

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<sup>4</sup>Karl Popper, *Open Society and Its Enemies*. (New York; London: Routledge, 2015), 581-582.

<sup>5</sup> Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity* (Cambridge; Malden, Ma: Polity Press, 2000), 159.

<sup>6</sup> Bauman, *Liquid Modernity*, 134.

as they please, there must be rules and restrictions regarding what is acceptable behaviour and what is not. Developing this line of reasoning further, it can be argued that the implementation of quotas and other restrictions aimed at preventing extremely disproportionate developments in the public sphere are necessary to enable individuals to *Become Who You Are*. The possibility to re-invent oneself is crucial for Nietzsche's adage; it appears that certain restrictions are necessary precisely to allow others to be, become, and re-invent themselves.

Admittedly, there are significant differences between the views of these different thinkers and that of Nietzsche, and it would be an exaggeration to claim to have found the philosophical Egg of Columbus regarding individual and collective identity. Nevertheless, the concordance between these influential thinkers and the conclusion of the investigation conducted in the past chapters can be seen as support for the findings of this thesis. In the next chapter, the final conclusions of the thesis will be listed and discussed, as well as the limitations of the thesis.

# Conclusions

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In this thesis, an investigation has been done regarding the commensurability of Nietzsche's advice to *Become Who You Are* and the implementation of diversity quotas in the workplace. I have argued that this adage comprises of four canonical aspects: becoming one's only audience, auto-determining one's values, embracing one's fate, and living dangerously. These four aspects together provide an answer to the first sub-question.

Subsequently, an analysis of the current managerial climate has been done, postulating a development towards more attention for employees' individuality. Next, the notions of *Affirmative Action* and diversity quotas were introduced to substantiate the claim that the management climate is undergoing a trend regarding policies designed to improve inclusivity and diversity. The three lines of reasoning most relevant for the defense of the implementation of diversity quotas were introduced and the lines of reasoning were displayed. By treating diversity quotas as exemplary measures for the current managerial climate, this analysis answers the second sub-question.

When these lines of reasoning were compared to the four canonical aspects of *Becoming Who You Are*, a paradoxical situation of simultaneous commensurability and incommensurability occurred. However, Nietzsche did not make a distinction between life in the workplace and life "off the clock". When the distinction between the private and public sphere of life in modern societies is made, the paradox dissipates: by putting restrictions on what is acceptable within the confines of the workplace, individuals obtain a higher degree of freedom to design their lives in the private sphere as they seem fit. Simultaneously, quotas prevent the differences in individual identities that may eventually arise from the enlarged freedom in the private sphere from limiting employees' options in the workplace. As such, the answer to the third research question is that diversity quotas and Nietzsche's adage need not be incommensurable, as diversity quotas can be instrumental for increasing employee's freedom and autonomy in the private sphere, effectively facilitating them in *Becoming Who*

*You Are*. This simultaneously provides an answer to the fourth and last sub-question: as quotas and *Becoming Who You Are* can go hand in hand, it can be argued that the increasing presence of diversity quota within the corporate environment is conducive for employees' ability to act out Nietzsche's call for individuality in the private sphere.

The *anti-essentialism* Nietzsche was so eloquent and so insightful to predict and address nearly 150 years ago has become a demarcating feature of life in modern societies. People are no longer bound to the wills and whims of deities; social immobility can no longer be justified; contingent aspects of people's identity have become increasingly trivial. By collectively adhering to restrictions regarding acceptable behaviour and expression in the public life, the sovereign individual is catalyzed in taking control of their fate whilst ensuring others can do the same. Therefore, the Research Question posed at the beginning of this thesis – *To what extent does the current corporate climate facilitate employees to follow Nietzsche's call for individuality, i.e., to "Become Who You Are", as specified in Books Three to Five of his The Gay Science?* – can be answered thusly. When including the distinction between the public and private sphere, the implementation of diversity quotas in the workplace is not problematic for employees' ability to take to heart Nietzsche's adage, and may in fact be instrumental in doing so. Nietzsche's adage and the policies prevalent in the current corporate climate, taken to be exemplified by diversity quota in the workforce, can therefore be seen as commensurable. Diversity quota can be seen as instrumental to enable employees to *Become Who You Are* in their private lives, without having their private practices limit their professional possibilities, as well as preventing precarious personal preconditions from being determinant for the professional opportunities an individual has access to.

## Limitations

The analysis undertaken in this Bachelor Thesis has several limitations. Firstly, quotas have been deemed exemplary of the trend of policies aimed at Affirmative Action in the contemporary corporate climate. However, although there is quite some justification for the use of this variable, it must nevertheless be stressed that these terms are not interchangeable

and that matters regarding quotas might therefore not be completely representative for policies of Affirmative Action in general. Secondly, regarding the *Argument from Instrumentality*, there is another question of representativeness. As Ferreira has argued, research conducted on the results of quotas in the corporate sphere is often performed on professions higher up in the organizational hierarchy. As those who excel in the corporate environment are often exceptionally ambitious, it is questionable to what extent research conducted on this group can yield findings that apply to all levels of the corporate sphere. Thirdly, although I have intended to be as transparent and coherent as possible about what information was used and where it originated from, I have necessarily relied on articles written in different parts of the world, in different eras, and on different aspects of different subjects. Therefore, there might be small anachronisms in the lines of reasoning.

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