Self-deception at the Intersection of Friedrich Nietzsche and the Apostle Paul
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ABSTRACT

Self-deception is a key component in Friedrich Nietzsche's concept of *ressentiment*. It also plays a significant role in Paul's notion of the fall. This thesis explores issues of self-deception in the realm of Nietzsche-Paul discourse. Specifically, Nietzsche's explication of self-deception inherent in *ressentiment* is used to elucidate Paul's usage of self-deception in the context of the fall. Nietzsche's work on *ressentiment* is set in historical context to identify circumstances, people, and events that influenced development of his overall thought. A literature review is also supplied to appreciate the development of *ressentiment*. The primary source for Nietzsche's treatment of *ressentiment* are his late works. Analysis of Nietzschean *ressentiment* is conducted through them, first by means of a genealogical study of the castes of *ressentiment*, then in terms of an examination of the mechanism of *ressentiment*. This supplies a knowledge of the fundaments and workings of *ressentiment* requisite to identify its crowning feature, self-deception. The resulting platform allows a fresh reading of Pauline fallenness, specifically concerning the notion of self-deception, in terms of the internalisation and moralisation of *ressentiment*. Paul's Letter to the Romans, particularly Chapters 1 and 2, is the material for this reading. The correspondence between select contours of Pauline fallenness and those of Nietzschean *ressentiment* validates the hypothesised association, propelling the investigation of self-deception forward. This brings to light a congruence of self-deception between the Nietzschean *ressentiment*-man and the Pauline fallen-man. It also recommends a driving motive for self-deception, fear of death. Death as a theme for Nietzsche is examined both biographically and philosophically. Seminal conclusions from the thesis argument are reviewed, contributions to the existing literature are offered, and significance of the project for the psychology of religion is discussed.