

The Agonist

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Fall 2019 & Spring 2020

Nietzsche Affect &



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Nietzsche and Affect

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Editors' Introduction

Welcome to the Fall 2019 & Spring 2020 issue of *The Agonist* on Nietzsche and affect. In his notes, Nietzsche remarks that “Under every thought there is an affect [*Affekt*]. Every thought, every feeling, every will is not born from one particular drive, but an overall condition” (KSA 12: 2 [103]). Affects are described in *Daybreak* as “inclinations” and “aversions [or disinclinations]” that influence one’s behavior (D 34). And indeed, throughout his work Nietzsche examines a wide variety of particular affects and their functions, analyzing the influence of affects such as pity, guilt, contempt, fear, honor, dishonor, pride, and cheerfulness. A number of Nietzsche scholars offer accounts of how affect functions broadly in Nietzsche. While some investigate the way in which affects create values or evaluative stances (Janaway, Katsafanas, Poellner), still others examine the way affects shape epistemic perspectives (Clark and Dudrick) and perceptual experience (Poellner) in Nietzsche. Yet the topic of affect in Nietzsche’s thought is still under-thematized.

This special issue of *The Agonist* on affect aims to serve as a corrective for the undertreatment of this topic so central to Nietzsche’s work. To this end, the essays in this issue treat the topic of Nietzsche on affect [*Affekt*] (or passion [*Leidenschaft*]) from a variety of perspectives. Here, we learn about Nietzschean affectivity from the perspective of a single aphorism in *Daybreak* and through his reflections on moods [*Stimmungen*]; we learn through the lens of Spinoza and the interpretations of Deleuze on the primacy of the body. Several essays probe the relationship between the will to power and affect in Nietzsche’s thought, while others situate us in relation to a particu-

lar affect (such as Zarathustra’s disgust) or in particular affective contexts (such as aesthetic experience).

Nietzsche’s reflections on the role affective orientations play in shaping our experiences and coloring how we come to know our world calls attention back to the body as a site of world- and knowledge production that is never value neutral. His remarks on the way in which values emerge from our embodied affective lives help us see that what often seem to be subject-independent values, quite simply, are not – and can never be. Without understanding Nietzsche on affect, we not only fail to understand key themes of his thought (the revaluation of values, the role unconscious forces play in shaping our perspectives, and more); we also fail to understand ourselves.

We would like to thank all of our contributing writers, the members of our advisory board, the editorial staff at *The Agonist*, and, of course, our readers. We also would like to announce some changes: Alec Ontiveros resigned in June of last year; we would like to thank him for his consistent and dedicated work for the journal. This is the last issue for Kaitlyn Creasy. Kaitlyn worked in different capacities for *The Agonist* and has been a central figure in its publication. We would like to thank her and wish her much success in her on-going and future tasks and responsibilities. Finally, we would like to welcome Michael Polesny on board; he is the new Managing Editor of the journal.

The Editorial Board, January 2020

Essays
on
Nietzsche and Affect

Nietzsche on the Knowledge of the Sufferer: A Contribution to the Philosophy of the Emotions*

Keith Ansell-Pearson

Introduction

Although the passions are important to Nietzsche, it is surprising the extent to which the topic is covered so little, and often superficially one might add, in the literature on him. In his writings we find thought-provoking treatments of a whole panoply of passions or emotions, including fear, hope, love, joy, pride, vanity, shame, sympathy, compassion, guilt, melancholy, and so on.¹ In a note from 1880 Nietzsche indicates the importance the passions have for him by observing that without the passions the world is reduced to

*This essay utilizes material forthcoming in Keith Ansell-Pearson & Rebecca Bamford, *Nietzsche's Dawn: Philosophy, Ethics, Politics, Religion, and the Passion of Knowledge* (Wiley Blackwell, 2020), chapters one and five.

¹Although there are affinities between the notions of passions, emotions, and affects I readily acknowledge one might also wish to draw attention to some subtle differences between them and to draw out their histories. This is something beyond the scope of this particular essay.

simply 'quantity and line and law and nonsense' (KSA 9:7 [226]).² These are all things that, if this is all that existed, would rigidify life and turn it into something strictly mechanical, automatic, predictable, regular, and even boring.

Perhaps in accordance with this insight on Nietzsche's part, Robert Solomon has argued that Nietzsche attacks philosophy's modern emphasis on epistemology and seeks to return philosophy to its true vocation as a doctrine of the passions.³ For Solomon, the title of the text *The Gay Science* signals a defence of the passionate life, since *la gaya scienza* is a life of longing and love. Solomon's idea of Nietzsche as a 'passionate defender of the passionate life' – a thinker who wanted to promote living with passion and who writes from the perspective of the passions and not from the supposedly objective perspective of reason and rationality and offers an *unrestrained* defence of them – requires a great deal of qualification since Nietzsche's views on the passions are far subtler and decidedly more complex than this. Nietzsche's art of the passions is an intricate and delicate one; it is an art that accords an important role to reason and the need for sober and calm reflection. In considering his thinking about the passions, as on many other subjects or topics, we need to take cognizance of both his philosophical complexity and his philosophical dexterity. For an appreciation of Nietzsche on the importance of reason in life, one need only refer to the portrait of Epictetus we encounter in *Dawn* where Nietzsche makes clear that he esteems this Stoic figure on account of the fact that 'he believes rigorously in reason' and that he 'is no teacher of penitence' (D 546).

In short, I do not find it at all clear what it means to say, as Solomon does, that philosophy's 'true vocation' lies in it being a 'doctrine of the passions'. This strikes me as a fanciful conception of philosophy both with respect to its origins and its history. It does not capture in any incisive or faithful way the actual character of Nietzsche's own conception of philoso-

²*Kritische Studienausgabe*, ed. G. Colli and M. Montinari (München/Berlin & New York, Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag/Walter de Gruyter, 1967-77 & 1988).

³Robert C. Solomon, *Living with Nietzsche: What the Great "Immoralist" Has to Teach Us* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003), p. 63.

phy or his principal modes of philosophical practice. In his middle writings such as *Dawn*, for example, Nietzsche is a critical sceptic and Enlightenment thinker who appeals, above all, to the need for *science and reason*. In one aphorism in *Dawn*, for example, entitled 'Do not turn passion into an argument for truth!', Nietzsche – with caustic wit and an effort to produce intellectual alarm in his reader – explicitly and vigorously attacks those who want to abandon themselves to the passions and so partake in a 'depravity of the intellect', and that manifests itself in an arrogant disdain for 'criticism, science, and reason' (D 543).

How you thirst for these moments where in your own mind your passion bestows upon you categorical right and as it were innocence, where in battle, intoxication, anger, hope you are beside yourselves and beyond all doubt, where you decree "anyone who is not beside himself as we are cannot possibly know what and where truth lies!" How you thirst to find people of your belief in this state – it is the state of depravity of the intellect – and to ignite your flames at their fires! Oh your despicable martyrdom! Your despicable victory of the sanctified lie! Must you cause yourselves so much suffering? — Must you? — (D 543)

Nietzsche on the Knowledge of the Sufferer: Emotions and Moods

The focus for my reflections here is one particular aphorism in Nietzsche's corpus that appears to be especially instructive with respect to the task of determining the nature of Nietzsche's contribution to a philosophy of the emotions: aphorism 114 from book two of *Dawn*. In this aphorism, Nietzsche negotiates a delicate and subtle appraisal of various emotions (including pride, contempt, and anger) in the context of a particular, and powerfully drawn, case study: that of a person experiencing a fundamental estrangement

from life who ultimately experiences a deepened and affectively re-oriented re-attachment to life.

According to Rüdiger Safranski, Nietzsche was 'a master of shading the particular tinge, color, or mood of experience' and someone who used their own solitude and suffering as a springboard to construct a new philosophy, often providing exquisite depictions of the world while racked with pain. Moreover, Nietzsche is not content with mere expression and self-expression, but rather uses the example of his own experience to probe new and challenging questions. As Safranski rightly notes, Nietzsche is 'a passionate singularist' in the sense that for him the world is composed of nothing but details; even the self can be approached in such terms, that is, as a detail that is composed of further details. In the analysis of the detail there is no point of completion or termination: 'There are only details, and although they are everything, they do not constitute a whole. No whole could encompass the plethora of details.'⁴ By paying attention to the details of existence we may discover ourselves in ways that surprise and enlighten us. As Nietzsche likes to point out, the journey of self-discovery has consequences that are frightful and fearful at one and the same time. Nietzsche's opening up of thinking in texts such as *Dawn*, and later in *The Gay Science*, to great currents, oceanic expanses, and departures for new shores, is metaphorical imagery by which he intends to explore the vast unknown territory of human consciousness and existence (e.g. D 575).

We find this attention to experience, and especially the importance of forging a link that between experience and knowledge, in *Dawn* 114 on the 'sufferer's knowledge' (*Von der Erkenntniss des Leidenden*). It is in *Dawn*, in fact, that Nietzsche suggests that in order to fully pursue knowledge as a passion, and partake of its adventure, the thinker needs to make himself vulnerable to all kinds of experience, and this viewpoint reflects his predilection for thinkers whose lives display what he calls a 'passionate history of the soul'.

⁴R. Safranski, *Nietzsche: A Philosophical Biography*, trans. Shelley Frisch (New York: Norton & Co, 2002), p. 210.

Here he mentions the likes of Spinoza, Rousseau, Pascal, and Goethe. By contrast, Kant's philosophical existence is too much of the 'head' and reflects a life governed by rigidity, whilst Schopenhauer's philosophical existence is the mirror of a 'character', albeit one characterised by an interesting vehement ugliness (D 481). What Nietzsche prizes, then, are the lives of thinkers where we find a philosophical existence punctuated by crises and catastrophes, and with respect to this we ought to duly note his reflections on his own intellectual development in *Ecce Homo*, where he reveals that *Human, all too Human* is 'the monument to a crisis' and that idealism had until that point been the great curse of life and that it was the experience of *illness* that brought him to *reason* (EH 'Human, all too Human').⁵

There has been one concerted reading of *Dawn* 114 in the literature on Nietzsche, and that I wish to take cognizance of. Jaanus Soovali interprets the aphorism by locating in it the origins of Nietzsche's 'affirmation of life'.⁶ This approach yields important insights into important aspects of Nietzsche's thinking, and the reading he develops pays close attention to what Nietzsche is saying about pride in the aphorism and is especially instructive on this. Ultimately, Soovali, by reading the aphorism in the context of an appreciation of the subsequent aphorisms – 115 and 116 – seeks to argue that one cannot simply select one aphorism from the writings, separating it from its larger context, and then interpreting it as the crystallization of Nietzsche's philosophical position. From this he thinks we can advance an important principle that needs to inform how we read Nietzsche, so he writes: 'In the end, it seems to come down to being conscious of the fact that every (genealogical) analysis of oneself and others rests on uncertainty and inexhaustibility. Hence, Nietzsche brings considerable uncertainty into every possible discourse, including his own'.⁷ For him, then, this is the chief lesson the reader needs to

⁵F. Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, trans. Duncan Large (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

⁶Jaanus Soovali, 'Origin of the Affirmation of Life? The 'Dialectic of Suffering, Pride, and Affirmation in *Daybreak* 114', Celine Denat and Patrick Wotling (eds.), *Aurore : un tournant dans l'oeuvre de Nietzsche* (Éditions et presses de l'université de Reims, 2015), pp. 329-343.

⁷*Ibid.*, p. 340.

take away with himself or herself from their encounter with *Dawn* 114. Although I think Soovali is making an important point with respect to how we need to read Nietzsche as a thinker and writer, my appreciation of the aphorism is different: to my mind, the lesson of the aphorism is not a genealogical one. Instead, one can identify in the aphorism an important contribution to an understanding of the emotions. In addition, we are not left by the end of the aphorism suspended in uncertainty as Soovali suggests; rather, something important has been learned by the sufferer and by us the readers of the aphorism: a spiritual growth – let's call it a deepening of the self and of its being in the world – has taken place.

In this quite stunning aphorism on the sufferer's knowledge – stunning on account of the brilliance of its phenomenological description and the incisiveness of its psychological insights – Nietzsche seeks to draw out the value for knowledge of the condition of the infirm who are tormented for long periods by their suffering but whose minds remain unclouded (perhaps he is writing from his own experiences). Such experiences, and insights into them, are of value because they come from profound solitude and release one from all duties and customs, including customary habits of seeing the world and being in the world. Nietzsche writes:

From within this condition the heavy sufferer looks *out* onto things with a terrifying coldness: for him all those little deceitful enchantments in which things usually swim when regarded by the healthy eye disappear. Supposing that until that point he was living in some sort of dangerous fantasy world: this supreme sobering up through pain is the means to tear him out of it. He thinks back with contempt on the warm, cosy, misty world in which the healthy person lives his life without a second thought; he thinks back with contempt on the most noble and cherished illusions in which he used to indulge himself in days gone by. (D 114)

In the experience Nietzsche is describing in this aphorism, it is the “prodigious straining” of the intellect that wants to resist the pain that ensues from the experience of feeling alienated and withdrawn from familiar life (the “warm, cosy, misty world”). Even in this extreme condition, then, the sufferer can resist the temptation to suicide and want to continue living; such is the mind’s fascination with what it is now experiencing. Indeed, the sufferer experiences only contempt for this warm and cosy world in which the unreflective, healthy person lives. As a counterweight to the physical pain now being felt, the sufferer conjures up this attitude of contempt from the “deepest hell” and that causes what is his greater bitter suffering, namely, that of his *soul*. The sufferer thus feels compelled to wrestle with their suffering and ultimately seeks to prove equal to the experience they are undergoing. They become their own accuser and executioner in the process, recognising their own complicity in their experience, which involves a “capricious pleasure” and “tyrannical arbitrariness”. Now they can elevate themselves above their life and their suffering and “look down into the depths of meaning and meaninglessness!”

At this point the sufferer experiences pride, which is the pride of opposing the tyrant that is pain and that wishes to overwhelm us and devour all our attention – and attachment – to life. Against the tyrant the sufferer wants to be life’s advocate. Nietzsche then adds:

In this state, one resists to the death all pessimism lest it appear to be a *consequence* of our state and humiliates us as one who has been defeated. By the same token, the appeal of exercising justness in judgement has never been greater than now, for now it constitutes a triumph over ourselves and over the most sensitive of all states. We find ourselves in veritable paroxysms of pride... (D 114)

We might suppose that such an altered – and alienated – state of consciousness can bring with it the possibility of a new just “judgement” on the self and world, affording us insights into existence that are simply not available to us

in our normal, everyday and habitual comportment. However, Nietzsche is honest enough with himself and his readers to draw attention to the limits of such an experience:

And then comes the first twilight glimmer of alleviation, recovery – and almost the first effect is that we resist the supremacy of our pride; we call it foolish and vain – as if we had experienced anything! Without gratitude, we humble the almighty pride that had just allowed us to endure pain and we vehemently demand antidotal venom for our pride: we want to become estranged from ourselves and depersonalized after the pain has made us *personal* too forcefully and for too long a time. (D 114)

In short, is the pride not just a malady like any other? Does it not need to be humbled? Does the self not need to exercise in this life situation, with its recognition of specific alienated moods it is experiencing and that are informing its conception of the world, some humility? This is precisely what Nietzsche is advising in the aphorism, and now comes the final dramatic twist in his portrayal of the sufferer’s knowledge. It is now returned to life in a new and surprising way, with its senses restored and the appreciation of life deepened:

We begin to pay attention again to people and to nature – with a more longing eye: smiling ruefully, we remember that we now have come to know certain things about them in a new and different way than before, that a veil has fallen – but it *restores* us so as to view once more the *subdued lights of life* and to step out of the horrible, sober brightness in which, as a sufferer, we saw and saw through things. We don’t grow angry when the enchantments of health resume their play – we look on as if transformed, kind and still weary. In this state, one cannot listen to music without weeping. (D 114)

Here Nietzsche depicts in a subtle and varied manner the way our consciousness functions, involving an initial detachment from life and a new reattachment to life. We see through the illusions that characterize normal life, but then, having withdrawn from them and having become divorced and estranged from practical life, we are filled with a new longing for them and there comes into being an appreciation of life that is ultimately deeper and richer in sensitivity and knowledge. As Nietzsche points out, there is a need to get outside and beyond our own personhood — a need to become “depersonalized,” as he puts it — since in an experience of profound suffering, pain traps us for too long in ourselves and makes us “*personal* too forcefully and for too long a time” (D 114). We should also note just how brilliantly, displaying real philosophical subtlety and dexterity, Nietzsche is drawing the reader’s attention to how our differing and varied attitudes towards existence reflect our own emotional condition at any given time, such as our moods and our life situation. As he so astutely observes, one’s “pessimism” about life and one’s existence may be little more than a reflection of our own state of being, as opposed to a correct or adequate appreciation, even representation, of the world as it actually is. “Pessimism” about life is something we have the *freedom* to wrestle with and, through the experience of an enriched appreciation that is acquired through some actual experience, defeat. Nietzsche is *not* being didactic about the issue of pessimism here; rather, he is raising a suspicion in order to provoke his reader into genuine reflection.

The insights Nietzsche provides into our emotional life in this aphorism are not intended to be either definitive or exhaustive: they do not pretend to be and we should not take them as such. And although Nietzsche may well be drawing upon his own experiences of pain and suffering in the aphorism, the insights he is developing into the emotions are not reducible to personal experience. What he says at the end about listening to music and finding oneself weeping, for example, does not express a personal idiosyncrasy on his part, but is an experience with which many readers will be able to readily connect. Indeed, this reveals something true about reaching a mature state in one’s experience of life in which one can appreciate on an emotional level the

complexity of the human experience of life. Our experience is often deepened exactly in the way Nietzsche describes, in those situations where we find ourselves, often unwittingly, alienated from life. We weep when we hear music, then, because we have understood something poignant about life and our reaction to it. We may have learned, for example, that life is a tender and gentle thing, and that the people and things that populate existence are still be valued even when we have withdrawn from our gaze the typical veils of cosy enchantment that serve to cover over the fact that life is harsh, cruel, and may not at all be something gay. As the art form par excellence of the emotions or feelings, music has the capacity to magnify for us, in an incredibly powerful way, the experiences we have lived through, endured, and overcome. At the end of the aphorism we find the sufferer feeling kind and weary, and music is part of their restoration of health as they once again become receptive to the intensities of life. When we thus weep to music perhaps we are expressing a certain gratitude towards life, as well as experiencing a fundamental sympathy both with life and with ourselves. There is obviously an important movement that has taken place in the example Nietzsche provides in this aphorism, which might be construed in terms of a spiritual maturation, in which the sufferer is transformed from a position of intellectual conceit- edness to one anchored in a recognition of the “rich ambiguity of existence”, as Nietzsche sometimes like to express it (see, for example, GS 373, and also the treatment of the *Sinn* of music there).

Conclusion

Let me conclude by spelling out what I think is the contribution to an understanding of the emotions and of our experience of life Nietzsche is making in the aphorism. First, there is, as I have already mentioned, the insight Nietzsche is developing into the nature of one’s experience of a deep pessimism about life and his suggestion that this can be understood by reflecting on one’s moods, in particular the mood one might find oneself in when undergoing the kind of experiences he is outlining in the aphorism, notably the

experience of suffering from life. Second, there is the extraordinarily powerful insight Nietzsche develops about the need, in recovering from such an experience, to *depersonalize* the self. Nietzsche says this because here the self is precisely the problem. It is such in the sense that it is too attached to the experience it is undergoing and being subjected to; the self is, one might say, always in danger of feeding off its emotions, living too closely to them. Nietzsche is thus appealing to the need, should we wish to work through and conquer our experience of suffering and the way it afflicts us, of gaining a distance from the experience and ourselves, of going outside and beyond the self. In this way, we can exercise a high degree of subtle and appropriate reason in dealing with the experience and understanding exactly its meaning or significance. In short, on my reading Nietzsche is providing his reader in this aphorism with a quite specific set of insights into the character of a particular emotional experience, and in this case study he makes a remarkable contribution to our conception of what a philosophy of the emotions needs to focus its attention on. He does this with the clarity and power of a very precise description of a particular life experience.

Will to Power as Affect

Michael Begun

Introduction – Affect/s as Will to Power

That Nietzsche identified affect/with will to power seems clear especially from one much-discussed section of *Beyond Good and Evil*. Here, Nietzsche proposes that we should attempt to understand the so-called mechanical or “material” world as a “more primal form of the world of affects, in which everything still lies concentrated in a powerful unity” (BGE §36).¹ This “powerful unity”, moreover, is infamously revealed by the end of the section as none other than will to power, which Nietzsche defines in terms of this world of affects “seen from inside, the world determined and designated in terms of its intelligible character” (BGE §36).²

Unpublished notes that Nietzsche wrote during this period, which are important insofar as they help elucidate *Beyond Good and Evil* §36, suggest a similar understanding of affect/s as will to power. These notes mention, for instance, a “morphology of affects” as well as a “reduction of these to will to power” (KSA 12: 6[26]), and likewise propose a “derivation of all affects from one will to power” (KSA 12: 10[57]). A later unpublished note, whose value for Nietzsche scholarship may seem more dubious, due to its lack of any clear connection to work actually published by Nietzsche, nonetheless seems to even clearer about this identification. In one such note, Nietzsche proposes,

¹KSA 5, p. 54.

²KSA 5, p. 55.

under the title “psychology’s conception of unity (*Einheitsconception der Psychologie*),” to consider “will to power psychologically” (KSA 13 14[121]). Nietzsche elaborates that in describing will to power psychologically, one needs to consider it, in part, as a “primal form of affect, such that all the other affects are only the particular ways that will to power has formed itself” (KSA 13 14[121]). In these related published and unpublished passages, Nietzsche thus consistently suggests that will to power is meant to be not just one affect among others, but rather the very unity behind their multiplicity.

In writing ‘affect/s,’ I thus refer throughout this essay to passages in Nietzsche’s work where he uses the German term ‘Affekt,’ which he also sometimes spells ‘Affect,’ in both singular and plural forms. It is difficult to determine a single English term to use for translating Nietzsche’s various uses of the German one. Something like ‘emotion/s’ or perhaps even the somewhat less specific ‘feeling/s,’ is, however, clearly suggested, at least by the following characteristic lines from GMIII.15: “But the distinction is fundamental: in the first case, it is being harmed further that one wants to avoid; in the other, one wants to numb a torturous, secret pain (Schmerz) that has become unbearable through a more chaotic emotion/feeling (Emotion) and at least for the moment to remove it from one’s awareness, - for that one needs an affect (Affekt), an affect that is as wild as possible”³. My thesis in this essay is therefore that Nietzsche identifies will to power primarily with these affect/s, i.e. with feeling and emotion.

However, despite Nietzsche’s own clear textual identification of will to power with affect/s, it is hardly a consensus among Nietzsche scholars that he does, or really *should*, in fact make it. Even among some notable Nietzsche scholars who defend or propose fairly robust accounts regarding the function of affect/s in Nietzsche’s thought, moreover, there is not even any shared understanding regarding what Nietzsche thinks about will to power. While some among these scholars recommend more dismissive accounts regarding Nietzsche’s will to power, others argue for more robust accounts of will to power’s function in their interpretations of Nietzsche. What importantly unifies both sets of opposing positions on will to power, however, is

a sharp distinction, as opposed to an identification, drawn between affect/s and will to power.

This implicit consensus among scholars that there should be a sharp distinction between affect/s and will to power, especially paired with the notable *lack* of consensus among these same scholars regarding will to power itself, is perhaps surprising. For the implicit consensus clearly opposes the close identification between affect/s and will to power that Nietzsche makes in his texts. To consider this implicit consensus regarding the importance of such a sharp distinction, I first (in “1.”) will discuss some of the positions that share in it. Then, I intend (in “2.”) to argue on textual grounds, which I believe apply to all such positions discussed, that Nietzsche identifies affect with will to power in a manner that they do not acknowledge.

Recent Nietzsche Scholarship on Affect/s and Will to Power

The claim that Nietzsche identifies affect/s as will to power seems at odds with two major strains in Anglophone, essentially analytically oriented³, Nietzsche interpretation on will to power. These strains, moreover, are in turn adversarial with one another over the meaning of will to power. In particular, my claim is at odds with the way that both strains, already incompatible among themselves, nonetheless depict the relation between affect/s and will

³In the German continental tradition, both Heidegger, whose work I discuss briefly below, as well as Mueller-Lauter, who was in dialogue with Heidegger, present two distinct interpretations of Nietzsche on will to power that ultimately may be more fruitfully juxtaposed with one another. However, it is notable that neither particularly emphasize affect/s in their interpretations of will to power, though both *do* acknowledge (unlike the Anglophone scholars that I consider) Nietzsche’s identification of will to power with affect: “For the understanding of the essence of will to power in the metaphysical sense, Heidegger summarizes a few determinations of will that one finds in Nietzsche’s work: will as the dominion that reaches out beyond itself toward... will as affect (the attack of arousal), will as passion (the strong and wide-reaching pull of that which is), will as feeling (the state of having one’s own status) and will as command... Among these determinations that Heidegger mentions, the first one is my primary focus here,” Mueller-Lauter 1994, p. 47, fn. 64.

to power in terms of an implicitly sharp distinction. On the one hand, the first of these positions that I consider, which is most identifiable in the work of Maudemarie Clark and Brian Leiter, presents a rather robust account of the function of affect/s alongside a more dismissive account of will to power. On the other hand, the second strain, most identifiable in Peter Poellner and Paul Katsafanas, likewise presents a similarly robust account of the function of affects; but unlike the first strain represented by Clark and Leiter, this second strain combines the latter account with a less dismissive, and even a quite robust, account of will to power. Nonetheless, this second strain also depicts will to power for Nietzsche as something clearly, though implicitly, distinct from affect/s.

First, it is clear that both Leiter and Clark do share a robust, albeit still ambiguous, account regarding the role of affect/s in Nietzsche’s philosophy. This is due to the fact that they both similarly identify affect/s closely with their interpretation of what they together stipulate as Nietzsche’s “perspectivism,” an epistemological position that they attribute to Nietzsche. According to this position, as Clark and Dudrick most succinctly put it, “our cognitive capacities are always directed by our interests and affects”.⁴ My interest here does not lie in the particularities of Clark and Leiter’s interpretation of Nietzsche’s remark that “there is only a perspectival seeing, a perspectival knowing,” i.e. in their interpretation of they call his “perspectivism”. Instead, it lies in the way that they similarly have conceived of affect/s in their related accounts of Nietzsche, which happen to be based on this epistemological interpretation.

On this point of interest, Clark actually seems to follow Leiter’s earlier interpretation of GM II.12, i.e. the section in which Nietzsche makes this remark about what they regard as “perspectivism.” In particular, it is clear that Clark’s own account of Nietzsche on affect/s depends on the way that Leiter earlier conceives of “affect” in his interpretation of GM II.12, namely as con-

⁴Clark and Dudrick 2012, p. 172

sistently equivalent to “interest”⁵. Clark, however, while seeming to retain Leiter’s basic identification of “affect” with Leiter’s “interest,” adds further ambiguity by defining affect, not only in terms of “interest,” but also as “emotion,” “feeling,” and “passion,”⁶ and in a way that does not distinguish between these further terms.⁷ Clark, and more recently Clark and Dudrick, have built upon this basic account of affect (particularly in terms of expanding its application to a further cultural dimension, beyond their initial framing of it in epistemological terms). However, they never elaborate or disambiguate this basic conception of “affect” as “interest,” which even Clark and Dudrick thus treat as roughly equivalent terms.

Clark and Leiter also share a more unambiguously dismissive view of will to power. Here it is Clark rather than Leiter who seems to have originated their shared account, particularly in her 1990 work, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy* (full bibliographic information?). In this text, Clark presents an argument for the claim that Nietzsche’s “doctrine of life as will to power” is not meant by him to be true, but rather represents a mere “construction of the world from the viewpoint of his own ideal.”⁸ In the course of her argument, Clark admits that Nietzsche does offer a “detailed,”⁹ “clear and ex-

⁵Schacht 1994, pp. 343, 344, 346, 347, and especially 350, where he most clearly identifies “affect” with “interest”.

⁶As Clark is quoted from an earlier essay in Clark and Dudrick 2012, p. 172.

⁷On the other end of the ambiguity spectrum, Heidegger 1991 more carefully distinguishes between affect, passion and feeling in Nietzsche, while giving a very different answer to what is (more or less) my own leading question in this paper, namely, “to what extent is will to power the original form of affect, i.e. that which constitutes the Being of an affect in general?”, p. 44. However, Heidegger does not attribute such conceptual distinctions to Nietzsche any more than Clark and Leiter do, as suggested by the following: “... the questions (what are affect, passion and feeling?) remain unanswered [by Nietzsche]. Nietzsche himself often equates the three; he follows the usual way of representing them, ways still accepted today. With these three words, each an arbitrary substitute for the others, we depict the so called irrational side of psychic life...”, Heidegger 1991, p. 45.

⁸Clark 1990, p. 242

⁹Clark 1990, p. 212.

tended argument”¹⁰ in BGE §36 for what she calls the “cosmological doctrine of the will to power”¹¹ (i.e. “for interpreting the world as will to power”).¹² However, Clark denies that Nietzsche actually accepts the premises of this argument, suggesting instead that the argument is merely in a “hypothetical form.”¹³ She thus insists that he need not accept its conclusion, i.e. that we should interpret the world as will to power, as true. Clark concludes that Nietzsche simply would not accept his own argument’s premises—premises which, according to Clark, he frames in hypothetical terms to signal distance from them.

Moreover, Clark attempts to argue on independent grounds that Nietzsche actually ought to reject such an account of will to power, insofar as it implies the psychological thesis that all behavior is motivated by some desire for power. The reason for this, she states, is there is no way that “this could be a plausible or interesting hypothesis about human behavior.”¹⁴ She goes on to suggest that Nietzsche’s account of will to power could be interesting “only if will to power is defined so that at least some possible motives are not instances of it.”¹⁵ This would be the case, for example, if the desire for power, which Clark defines circularly¹⁶ as a desire for efficacy at achieving whatever

¹⁰Clark 1990, p. 218.

¹¹Clark 1990, p. 212.

¹²Clark 1990, p. 218.

¹³Clark 1990, p. 213.

¹⁴Clark 1990, p. 212

¹⁵Clark, 1990, p. 210. Though Clark does not say so, it seems safe enough to assume that she would include affects (at least as she and Leiter broadly construe them in terms of “interest”), among these other “possible motives” that she claims are needed to account for human action, alongside will to power.

¹⁶The reason I would identify Clark’s manner of thus defining power for Nietzsche as “circular” is that she appears to disregard how Nietzsche himself more interestingly proceeds to define “power” (*Macht*) in the *Antichrist*, not in terms of an “ability to do or get what one wants” (as Clark proposes), but rather (and also quite consistently) with his own conclusion about will to power, namely as “the feeling of power, the will to power”; see A §2, KSA 6, p. 170. Nietzsche makes this definition even clearer by using, as a synonym for power, the Italian word for “virtue”, “virtù”, which means both “excellence” and “power” and which

one desires, could be understood as (at most) a universal “second-order desire” for efficacy in attaining one’s desires (à la Harry Frankfurt, whom Clark even references in this regard). Clark thus ultimately concludes that Nietzsche should reject or modify his own conclusion, regardless of the merits behind any argument that he may be able to offer for it.

Most recently, Brian Leiter has persisted in defending Clark’s same decades-old conclusion. He thus maintains now that, although “Clark’s ingenious reconstruction is questionable at points its central conclusion – that Nietzsche does not accept the strong doctrine of the will to power – wins support from the other considerations already adduced.”¹⁷ One of these “other considerations”, however, just seems to be Clark’s own concern with what Leiter now would call the “strong doctrine’s” psychological implication that all behavior is motivated by power (which Leiter, akin to Clark, simply finds implausible and uninteresting).¹⁸ However, Leiter does adduce further and arguably specious “textual”¹⁹ grounds for attributing to Nietzsche the view that “will to power is simply one among various characteristics of reality – alongside

specifically for Nietzsche refers to one’s own “apex of force/power” (*Maximum von Kraft*) (as he proposes in EH “Why I Am So Wise” §1; see KSA 6, p. 279). Notably, such definitions have nothing to do with second-order desires, or even with (first-order) desires at all, but rather only with peak efficacy, what Clark simply would call the “ability to do or get,” see Clark p. 211.

¹⁷Leiter 2019, p. 58

¹⁸Leiter himself finds the suggestion preposterous, for instance, that he may be motivated by will to power to perform the mundane personal and professional tasks of his everyday life. This leads him to ask only rhetorically, “do I manifest the will to power by showing up to teach my classes? By holding my office hours? Do I express a desire for power when I shop for groceries? Buy furniture for the house? Cook dinner?”, Leiter 2019, p. 59.

¹⁹The textual grounds for this point seem fairly weak, as Leiter 2019 chiefly adduces a passage from *Ecce Homo* without context wherein Nietzsche merely lists “the terrible aspects of reality (in affects, in desires, in the will to power)”, Leiter 2019, p. 58. Leiter perhaps wants to suggest with his own italicization that this mention of what is more honestly translated as reality’s plural “terrifying characteristics” (*Furchtbarkeiten*) is supposed to justify his own conclusions about will to power. Leiter, however, seemingly ignores that Nietzsche, just prior in the same sentence from *Ecce Homo* that he only partially cites, *does* use a singular

affects and desires, rather than the essential core of them all.”²⁰ What seems clear, at any rate, is that Clark and Leiter’s position dismisses Nietzsche’s own conclusions²¹ on will to power at the same time that it suggests an account of affect/s that distinguishes these from it.

In contrast to Clark and Leiter, Poellner and Katsafanas represent a different, second strain of current Anglophone Nietzsche scholarship on affect/s and will to power. This second strain notably combines a more robust account of will to power with an interpretation of Nietzsche on affect/s that nonetheless distinguishes affect/s implicitly from will to power. Poellner and Katsafanas quite clearly differ both in their individual accounts of Nietzsche on affect/s, with regard to which they have been in dialogue²², as well as in their accounts of will to power, with regard to which they appear not to have been. However, each nonetheless seems to ascribe to *some* more robust account of Nietzsche’s will to power. Thus, despite the significant differences in their individual interpretations of Nietzsche on both affect/s and will to power, the key similarity between their accounts would be that, while both Poellner and Katsafanas affirm a robust account of will to power, they

noun to refer to these parenthesized *Furchtbarkeiten*, which he frames in terms of an “economy of the whole” (*Oekonomie des Ganzen*), KSA 6, p. 368.

²⁰Leiter 2019, pp. 56–57.

²¹For Clark does admit that Nietzsche “accepts at least the last of [the premises in his BGE §36 argument], which he apparently calls “my proposition” [i.e.]... will to power as the world’s “intelligible character” Clark 1990, p. 213. This, however, just seems tantamount to accepting a conclusion regarding will to power that Clark would insist that Nietzsche really should have rejected. Even Leiter admits that Nietzsche “sometimes makes remarks suggestive of such a view”, even in his published works, and thus can claim only that “some” of these suggestions are compatible with his and Clark’s suggestion “that will to power is but one among other motives or tendencies,” a suggestion that both maintain that Nietzsche (contrary to his own words) should have affirmed as well; see Leiter 2019, p. 56.

²²Katsafanas, for instance, consistently criticizes Poellner’s interpretation of Nietzsche on this point, most recently in Katsafanas 2016, especially on pp. 131–132, but already in Katsafanas 2015.

nonetheless propose accounts of Nietzsche on affect/s according to which affect/s are supposed to be distinct from will to power.

First, it is worth pointing out that Poellner's account of affect/s, which he presents most clearly in his 2007 essay "Affect, Value, Objectivity," is a strictly psychological one. In that essay, Poellner initially defines affect/s, or at least "certain kinds of affective states" (which he discusses there particularly with respect to the question of how Nietzsche would consider the objectivity of values), as "perceptual emotions"²³. What Poellner means with this formula for affect/s seems to be Nietzsche supposes these to be merely constitutive or creative of certain objective values. However, these are values that Poellner himself further qualifies as merely "phenomenologically objective," in the particular sense that these values "are essentially dependent on emotions and other affective states, such as hedonic bodily sensations."²⁴

From here, he goes on to elaborate that for Nietzsche affect/s may be more broadly construed in terms of "any mental episode which constitutively involves a pro- or con-attitude (or as I shall say, a favouring or disfavouring) with a distinctive phenomenology – some experience of attraction or repulsion." Poellner goes on to suggest, as examples, "a feeling of shame, an occurrent desire for something absent, as well as a bodily sensation experienced unqualifiedly as painful or pleasant."²⁵ Such affect/s, moreover, according to Poellner do not actually "discover a realm of values capable of existing independently of them." Presumably this is because Poellner's own characterization of the values as "phenomenologically objective" should leave open the possibility that values do not correspond to anything real, i.e. if the affect/s that create or constitute them turn out to be nothing but "projections of world-independent subjective states ('sentiments')."²⁶ Poellner thus con-

²³In Leiter and Sinhababu 2007, p. 228.

²⁴Poellner thus concludes, with regard to such phenomenologically-objective values, that "a world without such states would also be a world without value," in Leiter and Sinhababu, p. 227.

²⁵In Leiter and Sinhababu 2007, p. 229.

²⁶In Leiter and Sinhababu, p. 227.

cludes that "the metaphysical status of value", and thus presumably also that of affect/s in their role as constituting or creating such value, should be a matter of "indifference."²⁷ As such, it seems that Poellner's own interpretation of Nietzsche on affect/s is meant to be a strictly psychological/phenomenological account (as opposed to a metaphysical one) of what these affect/s and values really are.

Similarly, Katsafanas offers an interpretation of Nietzsche on affect that both draws upon and argues against aspects of Poellner's. The chief difference between their accounts concerns the relation that each sees between affect and value. Whereas Poellner tends to identify affects and values consistently, such that all affect/s for Nietzsche are supposed by Poellner to create or constitute values, Katsafanas makes a separate distinction in his interpretation, namely between affects that are induced by a "drive (*Trieb*)" and those that are not.²⁸ Katsafanas identifies only the former with values, thus making (compared to Poellner) a sharper distinction both among affects, values and drives, and also among different kinds of affect/s.

Though Poellner and Katsafanas differ in their interpretations of Nietzsche on affect/s and will to power, both provide an account of will to power that cannot identify it with affect/s. On the one hand, Poellner elsewhere in his scholarly work on Nietzsche attributes to the latter what he calls a "metaphysics of the will to power" as a "model of reality."²⁹ As such, Poellner's account of Nietzsche's will to power, which is thereby clearly metaphysical, would seem to imply that affect/s and values (at least on Poellner's interpretation of them as having only "phenomenological objectivity"), would not be identifiable with will to power.³⁰

²⁷In Leiter and Sinhababu, p. 258.

²⁸See Kail and Dries, p. 33ff, for Katsafanas' distinction between "discrete affects", which are not associated with drives or values, and "drive induced affective orientations", which are associated with both drives and values.

²⁹See Poellner, 1995, p. 266ff.

³⁰At the very least, Poellner does not identify affect/s and values with will to power in his interpretation of Nietzsche. For Poellner clearly distinguishes between the former, which he

On the other hand, Katsafanas, in distinction to Poellner, does not provide a metaphysical account of will to power. Instead, Katsafanas interprets Nietzsche's will to power in terms of a psychological account that considers human motivation. On Katsafanas' interpretation, Nietzsche's account of will to power implies that all human actions must be motivated psychologically both by what he calls a "higher-order aim" of "perpetually seeking and overcoming resistance" and also some other "first-order goal."³¹ Katsafanas further supposes, particularly in terms of this "first-order goal," that "all human actions are motivated by a distinctive kind of psychological state, the drive (*Trieb*)."³² According to Katsafanas, all human actions are thus motivated both by the "higher-order aim" of will to power and also by some other "first-order" goal that is supposed to be distinct from will to power. However, as discussed, Katsafanas also distinguishes carefully between drives and affect/s, and suggests here that only drives are essentially related to will to power. What Katsafanas elsewhere calls "discrete affects"³³ therefore seemingly can exist independently of will to power on his account, even if certain "drive-induced affective orientations" cannot. It thus would appear that Katsafanas, like Poellner, cannot identify affect/s with will to power on his interpretation.

What I thus conclude in this section is that two current major strains of Nietzsche scholarship do not account for Nietzsche's own identification of affect/s with will to power. Moreover, as these two strains seem representative of current Anglophone Nietzsche scholarship on affect/s and will to power, I would contend that Nietzsche's identification of affect/s as will to power has gone undertreated in the present literature. I now seek to rectify

asserts to have only phenomenological objectivity for Nietzsche, and will to power, which he sees as the basis of Nietzsche's metaphysics. However, Poellner's interpretation of Nietzsche on affect/s and values does leave open the possibility that perhaps "these should ultimately be interpreted realistically", i.e. somehow metaphysically, Poellner, p. 228.

³¹Katsafanas 2016, p. 249.

³²Katsafanas 2016, p. 250.

³³Kail and Dries, p. 34.

the situation by developing a deeper textual interpretation of this identification.

Nietzsche on Affect/s and Will to Power

I thus intend to show that Nietzsche's identification of affect/s with will to power is supportable on textual grounds, through a more complete survey of his writing on affect/s. My methodological assumption in shifting to an identification on deeper textual grounds is that the abovementioned scholarship uniformly ignores how Nietzsche came to write about affect/s and their relation to will to power. The importance of making such a case on textual grounds strikes me as speaking, not only to the antiquarian interest of having a more correct or precise interpretation of Nietzsche, but also to understanding Nietzsche's account of affect/s more fully, so that we can assess its philosophical merits. For although we can assess the merits of *Nietzsche scholars' accounts* of affect/s and will to power, this clearly is not necessarily, and here necessarily not, the same thing as assessing *Nietzsche's own account* of affect/s as will to power.

While Nietzsche's earlier work contains numerous references to affect/s, it appears that he began to consider writing explicitly about them only when he was composing *Dawn*. One of Nietzsche's notes, dated to roughly the early part of 1881 (when he composed *Dawn*), accordingly features the following list of headings:

1. § The human being with knowledge, how such a being comes to be, and its horizons
2. § Primordial morality
3. § Christendom
4. § The morality of the times (pity)

5. § Orientation toward one's most immediate surroundings, classes, peoples, etc.

6. § *Aphorisms on affects*³⁴

One can infer, first, from the approximate dating of this note, that Nietzsche intended the list initially as preparation for the project that soon became *Dawn*. From this, it seems reasonable to understand the list as a possible table of contents that Nietzsche would have envisioned for the individual books comprising *Dawn*.

For even though Nietzsche published *Dawn* with only five individual books (none containing a heading, or even an epigram, to indicate what Nietzsche intended it to be about), there are better reasons for thinking Nietzsche intended this list (with its mention of a section to be titled "aphorisms on affects" [*Aphorismen ueber die Affecte*]), as a table of contents for *Dawn*.

Aside from most plausible view (that this list was meant as a table of contents for *Dawn*), one could argue, less plausibly, that this list contains (a) a list of heading titles intended for some other work than *Dawn*, (b) a list of heading titles for six sections in *Dawn*, or finally (c) a randomly ordered list of heading titles without a clear connection to Nietzsche's other published or unpublished work.

First, to rule out (a), I claim that the list as a whole best fits thematically with *Dawn* (which purports to concern "thoughts on moral prejudgments").³⁵ Perhaps the second most viable candidate, after *Dawn*, would be *The Gay Science*, since the latter is the major work that Nietzsche published directly after

³⁴KSA 9 10[C54], p. 423.

³⁵I render the German term *Vorurteil* that Nietzsche frequently uses, perhaps elsewhere most notably in the heading to the first book of *Beyond Good and Evil*, in this more unconventional, but simultaneously less loaded manner in the subtitle of *Dawn* and elsewhere to reflect Hans-Georg Gadamer's assessment of its meaning, which I believe Nietzsche easily could share, i.e. *Vorurteil* "means a judgment that is rendered before all the elements that determine a situation have finally been examined," Gadamer 1989, p. 243. (The clauses and phrases are cumbersome enough to affect the meaning).

the former. However, this particular list of headings, with its more specific focus on morality in the majority of its headings, arguably fits the themes of that work (which Nietzsche also first published with just four books, before expanding it to five years later), even less well than it does *Dawn*.³⁶ Finally, it is worth noting that Colli and Montinari have categorized the note on which Nietzsche wrote this list as part of a collection that features mostly preparatory work for *Dawn*. What this shows is this list was more likely intended for *Dawn* than for another published work.

Second, to rule out view (b), at least two things should be considered. First, if the heading titles on this list were intended for six individually enumerated sections of *Dawn*, they most likely would correspond, given the enumeration, to the first six. However, the first six sections do not seem to correspond thematically to the six heading titles on this list. In fact, all six of the first sections in *Dawn* seem to correspond best to the first heading title on the list.³⁷ Second, and more compellingly, the most relevant final heading,

³⁶Perhaps it is also worth pointing out here Colli and Montinari's view that *The Gay Science* "initially was conceived by Nietzsche as a further expansion of *Dawn*," for evidence of which they adduce the January 29, 1882 letter of Nietzsche's to Peter Gast, where he writes of completing Books VI-VIII of *Dawn* and of planning to write two further books for it; see KSA 14, p. 230. Colli and Montinari further propose that a shift in thematic focus for the entire newer work, i.e. from seeing *The Gay Science* as an expansion of *Dawn* to a work deserving of its own new title, only came with Nietzsche's thought of the eternal return of the same, which he first wrote about in a crucial note, KSA 9 11[141], around this same period. If this view is correct overall, then *The Gay Science* may be more accurately seen as, at least partially and in respect to any thematic similarity, a continuation of *Dawn*.

³⁷In other words, my claim is that these six sections all correspond best to the first heading title on the list that I have been discussing, i.e. "the human being with knowledge, how such a being comes to be, and its horizons." The first heading title, for instance, proposes the origin of "rationality" (*Vernuenftigkeit*), and "its origin in unreason" (*ihre Abkunft aus der Unvernunft*); the second proposes the "prejudgment of the scholars (*Gelehrten*)"; the third, some mistakes in supposing that humans have ever obtained "deep insight" into the meaning of existence; the fourth, a warning "not to see the world more cacophonously as it is"; the fifth, the "greatest achievement of previous humanity" for which we owe gratitude; and the sixth, a distinction between science and "sleight of hand" (*Taschenspielererei*), wherein Niet-

“aphorisms on affects,” especially does not seem to fit the heading of any individual section at all, let alone the sixth (which instead features an analogy that Nietzsche uses to depict scientific understandings of “causality”) (D 6). Instead, the heading title seems to refer clearly to some collection of aphorisms, such as one would find, for instance, in one of *Dawn*’s books, rather than in any of its individually-enumerated sections.

Lastly, to rule out (c), the most compelling alternative view mentioned above, there are two conjoined reasons to consider. First, there is the already-noted thematic relationship between the first heading on this list and at least the first few sections of the published *Dawn*, which also arguably continues for both the rest of this first book as well as for the remaining four books that comprise the full work.³⁸ Second, although there is clearly no sixth book in Nietzsche’s *Dawn*,³⁹ many aphorisms in the work’s five books *do* exhibit a

zsch suggests that the scientist, as opposed to someone practicing sleight of hand, leads us to the truth. Again, I contend that these six sections relate most evidently to the first heading title on Nietzsche’s list; see KSA 3, pp. 19–20.

³⁸In the final section of *Dawn*’s First Book, Nietzsche suggests that there is a need for modern Europeans to expand the horizons of their knowledge beyond a basically religious framework, as he claims that the peoples of India, here reflecting Nietzsche’s title page epigram from the *Rig Veda*, already accomplished “four thousand years ago” (D 96), in KSA 3, pp. 87–88. And in the final section of the entire work at the end of its Fifth Book, Nietzsche seems above all else preoccupied with such orientation when he asks of these same Europeans “will it possibly be said of us in the future that even we, oriented as we are toward the West, hoped to reach India?” (D 575), in KSA 3, p. 331.

³⁹Perhaps one could counter at this point that there indeed *may have been* a Sixth Book of *Dawn*, namely, the one that Nietzsche indeed claimed to have completed in his previously-mentioned letter to Peter Gast, along with a Seventh and an Eighth, also expressing plans to complete Ninth and Tenth books, which would touch upon “a thought... that needs “millennia” to become what it is,” i.e. the thought of eternal return, which Nietzsche introduces at the end of *The Gay Science*’s Fourth Book. It thus could seem reasonable to surmise, based on the context of this letter that obliquely mentions eternal return in this manner, that these additional books and plans for books in an expanded *Dawn* would have been reused by Nietzsche immediately for *The Gay Science*, from which it follows that *The Gay Science*’s First Book, which bears no other subtitle or epigram suggesting anything immediately to the contrary, may be considered in some sense still as the Sixth Book of *Dawn*, i.e. the Book that

strikingly more specific focus on affect/s as such⁴⁰ than Nietzsche’s immediately preceding multivolume *Human, All Too Human*⁴¹ (as well as, perhaps more surprisingly, his major follow-up work, *The Gay Science*, where affect/s are rarely discussed explicitly).⁴² There is thus reason to believe this list, and its sixth heading, “aphorisms on affect”, probably relates to Nietzsche’s plans for *Dawn*.

It is crucial for my purposes here that Nietzsche first evinces a plan to write a section of his work more extensively on affect/s while composing *Dawn*. For this period of writing is also when Nietzsche begins to formulate

Nietzsche, at least based on what I am arguing, would have considered as his collection of “aphorisms on affect”. However, though the numbering and timeline both fit in a satisfying way, and there are key sections of *The Gay Science*’s First Book that concern affect/s (most notably for my purposes its §13 “On the Doctrine of the Feeling of Power”), there seem just as many (if not more) sections in this Book without any particular thematic focus on them. Moreover, Nietzsche never refers to affect/s literally in the First Book of *The Gay Science*, and only rather sparingly in the other Books comprising it in comparison to *Dawn*.

⁴⁰Aside from D 34, wherein Nietzsche notably defines affects in terms of certain “inclinations and disinclinations,” *Dawn* also features the first section in Nietzsche’s work chronologically considered with a heading mentioning affect, i.e. D 58 “Christendom and the Affects”, which Nietzsche there opposes both to “virtue” (*Tugend*) and “reason” (*Vernunft*), describing affect/s rhetorically here “in their most extreme intensity and splendor... as love of God, fear before God, fanatical belief in God, in blind hope for God”; see KSA 3, p. 59.

⁴¹My claim is based on the fact that, while there are indeed a few sections mentioning affect/s explicitly in both volumes *Human, All Too Human* (as well as many others touching on them implicitly), there are, unlike in *Dawn*, no sections in this work that have their *explicit* focus on affect/s.

⁴²There is, however, a large folio of notes from this period that contains many sustained reflections on affect/s, e.g. KSA 9 11[10, 73, 103, 127, 128, 182, 193, 220, 226, 241, 301, 314, 316, 319]. Colli and Montinari suggest that the folio contains most importantly “sketches for *The Gay Science*,” perhaps on the basis of its inclusion of KSA 9[141], which again features Nietzsche’s initial 1881 sketch of the thought of eternal return. However, given the proximity of Nietzsche’s plans for *Dawn* and *The Gay Science*, perhaps it is also plausible to see these notes as plans for the never completed “aphorisms on affect.”

his conception of will to power.⁴³ Aside from one stray reference in a notebook that seems to have been used mainly for early preparations for *Human, All Too Human*,⁴⁴ subsequent references to will to power appear among collections of notes related to his preparations for *Dawn*.⁴⁵ One thus may read some passages closely related to these notes in *Dawn* as Nietzsche's first implicit references to will to power⁴⁶. Moreover, just as Nietzsche's references

⁴³As I did with Nietzsche on affect/s, I base this surmise on the first chronological appearance of references to 'will to power' in his writing. Admittedly, Nietzsche evinces interest in the closely related theme of power much earlier in his work, as noted by Anglophone scholars writing on will to power since at least Walter Kaufmann, who first draws attention to Nietzsche's early unpublished essay "Homer's Contest" in this regard. However, even Kaufmann traces what he calls Nietzsche's "discovery of the will to power" to *Dawn*. See: Kaufmann 1974, p. 193ff.

⁴⁴See KSA 8 23[63], p. 425. Both Kaufmann and Volker Gerhardt, who have different views about the subsequent references, agree that this note does not concern Nietzsche's will to power as usually understood, "not as the basic force of a monistic metaphysics but as one of two cardinal psychological phenomena: [here Kaufmann quotes from the note] "Fear (negative) and will to power (positive) explain our strong consideration for the opinions of men" Kaufmann (1974), p. 179; Gerhardt goes a bit further, in my view too far, suggesting that for Nietzsche here, we are only interested in power as a "mark of freedom [Zeichen der Freiheit]," as our "pleasure in power is only explicable from the displeasure of our manifold dependence," Gerhardt (1994), p. 170.

⁴⁵These are KSA 9 4[239], p. 159, where Nietzsche reduces the affect/s of "boredom (*Langeweile*)" to will to power, KSA 9 7[206], p. 360, where he states that the ancient Athenians were more forthcoming in their discussion of will to power, and KSA 9 9[14], pp. 412-413, which concerns the confusing idea of a "renunciation (*Verzicht*)" of will to power and also bears a closer relation to *Dawn*. See also KSA 9 11[346], which admittedly may relate more closely to *The Gay Science*, given its discussion of the will to power behind the "scientific human being" p. 575.

⁴⁶I make this claim based on the fact, pointed out by Colli and Montinari, that the aforementioned note KSA 9 9[14] was part of a manuscript for *Dawn* itself; see KSA 14, p. 28, 643. I am not sure, however, to which passages in *Dawn* this note, which in a variant noted by the editors more clearly concerns the affect/s of "obedience (*Gehorsam*)" as a "negation of will to power," most closely reflects. D 191 or D 215 seem like the best candidates, the former for its peculiarly-similar contrast between "world-absconding (*Entweltlichung*)" with a "power of willing (*Macht des Wollens*)," and the latter for the explanatory suggestion it draws

to affect increase in his notes during the completion of *Dawn* and *The Gay Science* (in order to turn his attention to subsequently published and related major works, namely *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and *Beyond Good and Evil*), so too do his references to will to power.⁴⁷ This suggests he became more preoccupied with the theme of affect/s as he concentrated more on his conception of will to power.

This raises questions, however, concerning what happened to Nietzsche's plan to write this section ("aphorisms on affects") after he completed *Dawn*, and what such a plan has to do with this budding preoccupation with will to power. While there are also copious references to affect/s in Nietzsche's notes and published works following *Dawn*, there is no obvious section in any of these works to which this heading would refer most fittingly. What is most noticeable about Nietzsche's references to affect/s is how diffuse they are in his writings, both published and unpublished. There thus emerges not only the difficulty of determining what happened to Nietzsche's plan to write a section in one of his books that would feature these aphorisms on affects, but also that of determining what Nietzsche would have written about affects in these aphorisms. Lacking, as we seem to be, a clear singular locus where Nietzsche specifically sets out to write about affect/s as such, we are thereby left to piece together an interpretation of Nietzsche on affect/s from various passages in his published works and unpublished notebooks.

between obedience to a powerful person or to God and the vicarious "feeling of their/His power (*Gefuehl seiner Macht*) that this engenders in the obedient.

⁴⁷That is to say, the majority of Nietzsche's explicit references both to affect/s (in 227 unique passages in his published and unpublished writing, according to the KSA) and will to power (in 196 unique passages) are datable after the period in which he publishes the first edition of *The Gay Science* in August 1882. While affect/s are never once mentioned explicitly as such in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, the published work wherein Nietzsche first introduces will to power by name, a plethora of notes for this work's composition dated between 1882 and 1884 clearly show an interest in affect/s particularly related to *Zarathustra*'s themes, though none of these draws an explicit connection to will to power. It is thus only with his work on *Beyond Good and Evil* that Nietzsche begins to make this connection explicit.

At the same time, I would contend that this indication of Nietzsche's plan to write this set of aphorisms on affects nonetheless serves as an important temporal indicator to direct our interpretation toward the connection between affect/s and will to power. Clearly enough, the setting down of an intention to write such a set of aphorisms shows that, at least around the time that he penned this note, Nietzsche had begun to consider more seriously both what he wanted to say about affect/s as such, and also that he wished to say this about affect in the particular form of aphorisms. And there do appear to be many more references to affect/s from this point forward, including within the context of what are unmistakably aphoristic forms of writing. These explicit references, moreover, are mostly not in *Dawn*; and there are few in *The Gay Science*, and none in *Zarathustra*. Instead, they are most abundant in his notebooks from the period of these published works' composition, i.e. 1881-1885. As for the point about aphoristic form specifically, it appears that Nietzsche began to assemble various collections of unmistakable aphorisms in his notes from this period, particularly while working on *Zarathustra*.

This still leaves open the question, however, as to whether any of these collections of aphorisms contain even a draft for a work Nietzsche would have wanted to designate as *his* aforementioned aphorisms on affect. Some of these collections were given other headings, and thus at the very least no longer could have been for Nietzsche his "aphorisms on affects" by the point in time that he so titled (or retitled) them.⁴⁸ There is, however, one notable collection of aphorisms that is clearly related to the composition of *Zarathustra* and to which Nietzsche did not appear to give any heading. The first of its aphorisms, moreover, quite familiarly reads as follows: "Will to life? I

⁴⁸Nietzsche assembled one such, according to Colli and Montinari, in 1882, to which he seems to have titled variously "On High Seas", "Redolent Speech" and even "Beyond Good and Evil" (!), with the consistent subtitle of a "Book of Sentences" (*Sentenzen-Buch*); see KSA 10 3[1] pp. 53-107.

found in its stead always just will to power."⁴⁹ Moreover, though affect/s are rarely mentioned explicitly in this collection⁵⁰, the majority do seem to concern what reasonably could be construed as affect/s, at least in the broader sense of their relating to human feelings or emotions. For instance, the second aphorism concerns what could be called "fiery ambition (*Feuereifer*)", the third more clearly concerns the nature of love, and the fourth a sort of deeply felt, the third more clearly concerns the nature of love, and the fourth a sort of deeply felt "delusion of grandeur (*Groessenwahn*)", down to the last aphorism, the 273th, which touches intriguingly upon the social dimension of human affect/s in shaping even more radical forms of subjectivity, such as that of the *Ueberschensch*⁵¹, that seek to resist such influence: "At first I was in my place among the herd; now the herd is still in place within me."⁵² Based on the thematic connection alone, I would not go so far as to claim that this particular collection is directly identifiable as Nietzsche's "aphorisms on affects". However, the collection does appear to make more clearly what I consider to be an important connection between affect/s and will to power insofar as

⁴⁹KSA 10 5[1] no. 1, p. 187. The familiarity is with passages from Z II "Of Self-Overcoming," where Zarathustra similarly proclaims, "Only where there is life is there also will, though not will to life, but rather – so I teach it to you – will to power!" While Clark dismisses this proclamation as merely Zarathustra's, claiming it "articulates Zarathustra's cosmological vision, which may or may not also be Nietzsche's" (Clark 1990, 210), the fact that a similar aphorism appears at the beginning of a large collection of unpublished aphorisms (expressing views that are more obviously Nietzsche's own), ought to prompt some reluctance to accept Clark's suggestion.

⁵⁰That is not to say, however, that they are not mentioned at all; they are in four aphorisms, including in two, nos. 16 ("For someone who is much troubled by their own rationality, affect is a respite insofar as it isn't rational" KSA 10 5[1], p. 189), and no. 58 ("The will to overcome an affect is in the end only the will of another affect" KSA 10 5[1], p. 194), which speak to key tenets of the psychological views that Nietzsche came to develop.

⁵¹Though not mentioned by name in this aphorism, Colli and Montinari refer to a similarity with another note in which this "I" is so clearly identified: "The I first in the herd. The opposite of that: in the *Ueberschensch*, the you of many I's across millennia is made one..." KSA 10 4[188], p. 165.

⁵²KSA 10 5[1] no. 273, p. 220.

Nietzsche, in the aphorisms comprising it, seeks to understand the affect/s described there as essentially just forms of will to power. It is on this basis that I would propose the stronger claim that Nietzsche, either by the time either of writing⁵³ or at least assembling these aphorisms into a collection, already had begun to think of affect/s in terms of will to power.

However, what I really wish to conclude here goes beyond these suggestions about textual correlations indicating how Nietzsche's interests in affect/s and will to power may be related. For I wish to contend that, especially as Nietzsche became more preoccupied with affect/s in his writing, he tended ever more clearly to identify affect/s with will to power. My conclusion is thus that Nietzsche came to see affect/s just *as* will to power, perhaps already around the time that he wrote *Dawn*, or maybe only as late as he began work on *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, but at any rate certainly, as I think I've demonstrated *pace* both Clark and Leiter, as well as Poellner and Katsafanas, by the time that he composed *Beyond Good and Evil* §36.

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⁵³As Colli and Montinari point out, at least some of the aphorisms comprising the collection are from manuscripts dating to the period where Nietzsche was working on *The Gay Science*, KSA 14, p. 678.

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Will to Power as the “Primitive Form of Affects”

Bradley Kaye

Will to power has long been understood as one of the central concepts in all of Nietzsche’s work, and yet, Nietzsche describes the will to power in such vastly different terms that it may appear that he is contradicting himself. In places he writes that will to power is pathos, is the drive to conquer, and even as either passive or active force.

As Walter Kaufmann notes, the conception of the will to power did not “spring fully formed from Nietzsche’s brow like Pallas Athena.”¹ Plus, attempting to pin down a stable, veridical sense of the truth of a term would run counter to Nietzsche’s understanding of truth as a “mobile army of metaphors, metonyms, and anthropomorphisms...truths are illusions about which one has forgotten that this is what they are.”²

The question of determining the “will to power” as a matter of primitive forms of affects is not a matter of asking the classical ontological question of determining the quid (what is it?) and the quale (what are its qualities?).³

If the will to power is a condition of life, then truth for Nietzsche has a conditional basis that is grounded in the temporal pathos of the subject, a

¹Walter Kaufmann. *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, AntiChrist*. Princeton. 1950. Pg.153.

²Nietzsche’s famous line in *On Truth and Lying in an Extra-Moral Sense*.

³This is the sort of ontological method of questioning so common in the Platonic dialogues, allowing for a narrow set of perspectives available to propositional logic.

subject that transforms as it wills and is willed on the basis of who, what, where, when, why, and how it feels.

Making Nietzsche’s work productive and appropriate, will to power has often been conflated with mastery over poiesis⁴ which was the Greek conception of “making” and “bringing being into existence.” This paper is an attempt to argue that this is a misreading of a crucial Nietzschean concept, because in his final unfinished work Nietzsche was drafting a full-length monograph devoted to clarifying his ideas on the will to power.

In that text Nietzsche begins to refer to the will to power in much different terms than he does in earlier works such as *Beyond Good and Evil*. His new terminology reveals will to power as a process that gains command over the exposure of the primitive forms of affects.

Will to power must elevate through the pulsions given off by the primitive form of affect, a gut desire springing forth from a primordial base of instincts, and take command of higher and lower intensities of affect within the many souls of the self.

Self can be interpreted as both an individual self and a collective social-self, the intensity of social relations and attitudes within and beyond the individual. A point that I will return to in my discussion of Nietzsche’s coining of the term “ipsissimosity.”⁵

⁴Poiesis is the process by which new things are brought into being (famous readings on this point might be Heideggerians using the term ‘the Being of beings’ as if to signify mastery of Being over and above beings, or the novelty of creating new subjectivities among the Deleuzian readings of Nietzsche. Consider the famous, often misquoted lines at the opening of *What is Philosophy?*, where Deleuze and Guattari claim that philosophy is about creating new concepts, which is often misinterpreted as forwarding an ethos of novelty for the sake of novelty, with the overemphasis on ‘new’ and ‘creative’ rather than the will to power in the work of the concept itself. The point of creating new concepts is to provoke, and drive new interpretations that have a completely transformative effect upon all other concepts in the plane of immanence. Nietzsche’s philosophy of the will to power itself is one such concept.

⁵Ipsissimosity is Nietzschean neologism, from the word “ipsissima,” meaning “very own.” The pressure to fit in is manifest in the general formula trending towards healthiness. Truly

Nietzsche's views on affects have been misunderstood due to the methodologies of veritas, or the Roman conception of truth as correspondence between the mind and a thing. A methodology that utilizes veritas would look for the correct or incorrectness of Nietzsche's theses regarding the will to power. Nietzsche relies almost entirely upon the prior Greek sense of truth as aletheia, or unconcealment, exposure, and uncovering.

This is why his theses tend to vary and seem so eccentric in the sense of being unaccountable to a central, correct interpretation of truth. The primal form of affects can be concealed by layering different forms of repression, moral asceticism, and moralities cloaked as progress, all of which amount to little more than renunciation of that which cannot be extirpated from the being of beings - our primal nature.

Will to power is not about progressing beyond primal drives, as if the primal drives are the starting structure upon which the subject connects new forms of affect. It is that the subject and its will to power are an epiphenomenon of accumulated affects.

The affects are 'primordial forms' because the affects are temporally prior to the emergence of a subject and its will to power. Perhaps the above/beyond-Mensch is presaging the "*posthumen Mensch*."⁶ Beyond the end of the bios of a life, the epiphenomenon of that life can effect what is still here, and so the posthuman, the ghosts of history haunt the living, just as those who live now produce the forward karmic momentum into which future generations will be thrown.

standing out in a subjective way means you may appear 'sick,' a pathological outlier to the norm. If you take this statement in the context of Nietzsche's other points on sickness and pathos, many of which are outlined in this paper, it is clear that individuality is dangerous and hence provokes a feeling of being 'mortally sick.' Therefore, it takes an incredible will to power to sustain true individuality, amidst the *ressentiment* of those who will try to tear the individual down with their gloom-filled morality.

⁶Joyful Science. #365. "It is only after our death that we shall enter our life and become alive, oh, very much alive, we posthumous people!" This fragment is really about anti-production, the ghostly-epiphenomenon which counteracts the sociality of the actual.

"Primitive Form of Affects: the Commonwealth of the One and the Many"

What are the primitive form of affects? One early reference to this notion occurs in *Beyond Good and Evil*, where Nietzsche writes of "emotions themselves—as a more primitive form of the world of emotions, in which everything still lies locked in a mighty unity, which afterwards branches off and develops itself in organic processes (naturally also, refines and debilitates)—as a kind of instinctive life in which all organic functions, including self-regulation, assimilation, nutrition, secretion, and change of matter, are still synthetically united with one another—as a PRIMARY FORM of life" (*Beyond Good and Evil*, §36).

It appears to indicate the *Urbemensch* is breaking the bonds of reification where affects spur agency rather than acting upon the world as if it contains a ready made set of objective facts to be discovered, the will to power is driven by pathos because it creates its own valuation of truth.

For Nietzsche, an equilibrium of drives, forces, and affects is impossible, because no one is a citadel of conscience severed from everyone and everything. Affects are formed out of 'inclinations and aversions' which are never fully-constituted, tangled cords of passionate energy pulsing through the body, flowing through an immanent circuitry of these tangled libidinal knots which hold and release tension in a kind of emotional physicalism.

Under every thought there is a recoiled affect, not one particular drive, but an overall "primitive affective form" that the *ubermensch* has learned to control in self-mastery. The affect is uniquely important in Nietzsche's work because the will to power is the "the primitive affective form" from which all other affects derive," (*Will to Power*, §688) therefore passive and active will to power ebb and flow with the inclinations and aversions of the affects.

Will to power truly became the central concern of Nietzsche's philosophy in 1888. His final productive year. Subsequently, "the will to power is not a being, not a becoming, but a pathos." (*Will to Power*, §635) a quotation he writes

immediately after writing as follows: “We need ‘unities’ in order to be able to reckon: that does not mean we must suppose that such unities exist.”⁷

The will to power is a decentralization of ontology that springs forth from one point or term, from which differences are unfolded and recoiled back into itself as it seeks its most primordial possibilities of disclosure.⁸ Nietzsche then emphasizes the plurality of affects working upon the body by saying, “The will to overcome an affect is ultimately only the will of another, or of several other, affects.” (*Beyond Good and Evil*, §117).

Affects are in tension between the one and the many, vying for control of the commonwealth of the self. The key to directing the “will to power” is to carefully and patiently listen to the affects, as desire can attach to this, or that, producing potential in life as it wills itself towards intensifying power.

Nietzsche’s perspectivism is often crudely misread as resorting to an unsalvageable “metaphysics of subjectivity,” the notion that reality is that which presents itself to the mind of the subject, that which appears.⁹ I want to argue that it is wrong to read Nietzsche that way, because close readers of his

⁷I am not the first to put forth this thesis. For a similar perspective on will to power see “Nietzsche’s ‘Will to Power’: Politics Beyond (Hegelian) Recognition” by John H. Smith. *New German Critique*, no. 73. Winter 1998: 133-163. Smith claims, and I agree with his thesis, as follows: “Nietzsche redefines the terms of politics, since the will to power is not an individualized, self-identical entity modeled on a self-consciousness that engages in struggles with some other likewise self-contained individuals, but rather an internally self-differentiating force always experiencing affective interactions...” (pg. 133). This theme of necessary illusions stretches at least as far back in the Nietzschean oeuvre as *On Truth and Lying in an Extra-Moral Sense*. One can read Nietzsche’s writings as investigating the immanence of ‘necessary illusions’; as he matures as a philosopher, he moves further inward, interrogating the immanence of power as inscribed within the psyche of the subject.

⁸Probably the best book to show this is Pierre Klossowski’s *Nietzsche and the Vicious Circle*. 1997. London: The Athlone Press.

⁹Roderick M. Stewart. “Nietzsche’s Perspectivism and the Autonomy of the Master Type.” in *NOÛS*, volume 20, edition #3, September 1986, 371-389. Stewart does a good job in this article of arguing against this crude misreading of Nietzsche’s as a “metaphysics of the subject,” and positing a radically unique perspectivist approach to metaphysics based on a genealogy of power rather than perspective discursivity.

work must take into consideration that he describes the will to power as the *primitive* form of affect, and not miss the crucial point that Nietzsche did not instead write ‘subjective’ form of affect.

“Natural Drives Reinterpreted as Vices”¹⁰

When Nietzsche describes the historical time period when Christianity eclipsed Paganism as the dominant belief system in the West, a process that took several centuries, he points out that in order for this overturning to occur “natural drives had been interpreted as vices,” (*Will to Power*, §150). When the Christian metaphysics eclipsed the pagan metaphysics, active power shifts to reactive power.

“Natural drives” indicates a primordial form of affect that had been suppressed by the new interpretation that those natural drives needed to be suppressed and were to be understood as vices. This transformation at the level of ethos slowed down the immediatism of the affects, but it could not completely remove the primal form of affect from human beings.¹¹ What was understood as progress was, in Nietzsche’s opinion, little more than adding layers to the human psyche, which he points out in several places can be understood as embodiment (rather than the morals of ‘propositional logic’), with ‘higher’ and ‘lower soul, the lower vitality’ (*Beyond Good and Evil*, §30). How is one to understand these higher and lower intensities of affects?

Nietzsche means by “primordial,” as if the primal can be reified, are subterranean intensities. Aspects of the self where the strongest contrasts of force go unheard by the conscious subject, and perhaps the espoused virtues of the common people would be seen as vices to the *ubermensch*.

¹⁰Geoffrey Waite. *Nietzsche’s Corps/E: Aesthetics, Politics Prophecy, or the Spectacular Technoculture of Everyday Life*. 1996. Durham: Duke University Press.

¹¹Judith Butler. *Psychic Life of Power: Theories in Subjection*. 1997. Stanford: Stanford University Press. Gives one of the most astute readings of the Nietzschean ‘will to power,’ as formed directly out of the matrices of power from which the subject wills itself free. The subject is constituted by this power at the level of psyche.

Is this the most dialectical move Nietzsche can make? Perhaps, but because of this misdirection of our natural desires we are told by the weak that our human, all-too-human motivation should be grounded in something outside of ourselves and that we should suppress and distort our natural primal drives, which only makes us liars and strangers to ourselves.

Estranged in an untrue relation to our own physiology, the drive to listen to the pathos, perhaps with our “third ear” (*Beyond Good and Evil*, §246), becomes distorted and this process of suppression transforms the immediacy of these primal drives from reflexive to reflective.

If anything has happened in the postmodern era, this tendency towards infinite and open-ended reflective inactivity has worsened the distortion of natural drives into vices, as the immediacy of these drives has been further truncated by our technological social habitus.¹² It is important to listen with your ‘third ear’ so as to better attune with the primal forms of affects within the body.

To grasp the characteristic quality of the ‘primitive form of affect’ to the will to power, that affect is specific to the content contained within the form.¹³ Nietzsche is indicating that the will to power is inextricable to life and life is embodiment. All living forms possess affects as all living forms possess a will to power. To live is to feel and feeling is inextricable from willing.

¹²See Geoffrey Waite’s masterful *Nietzsche’s Corps/e: Aesthetics, Politics, Prophecy, or, the Spectacular Technoculture of Everyday Life*. Duke University Press. 1996.

¹³See Roberto Esposito’s *Bios: Biopolitics and Philosophy*. 2004. Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press. Esposito articulates a nuanced version of this point in the context of biopolitical political theory, writing as follows: “forms are relations of force that emerge periodically out of continuous conflict, with the well-known Nietzschean formulation that power doesn’t mean that life desires power nor that power captures, directs, or develops a purely biological life...life does not know modes of being apart from those of its continual strengthening...” page 78. In the previous quote that I draw our attention to, this continual strengthening of life can mobilize will to power and impact ‘affective forms’ even beyond the end of the bios of life - “the ‘posthumous Mensch,’ the specter that will reign an influence as a ghostly figure.” Joyful Science §365.

To feel is to be alive, to be alive is to will, even our logos is rooted in the body. Nietzsche makes this very clear in the aphorism *Will to Power* §254 when he writes that “Life is will to power,” and “Who interprets? Our affects.”

It is hearing with our third ear that allows the body to transmit ‘pathos’ of the will to power of self-overcoming, as activated by the affects. Hence, the primitive form of affects is within us; the content of that form may be subjectively unique to each individual. However, we must learn to hear the primordial voices of the affects within us, the lower levels of affective-resonance that impact our thoughts and behaviors, but that may remain concealed beneath learned suppression of those affective forms as ‘vices’ rather than as natural drives.

Nietzsche makes this point clearly when in *Twilight of the Idols* he writes as follows:

“Concerning the psychology of the artist For art to be possible at all—that is to say, in order that an æsthetic mode of action and of observation may exist, a certain preliminary physiological state is indispensable *ecstasy* the ecstasy of will, that ecstasy which results from accumulated and surging will-power.—The essential feature of ecstasy is the feeling of increased strength and abundance. Actuated by this feeling a man gives of himself to things, *he forces* them to partake of his riches, he does violence to them—this proceeding is called *idealising*. Let us rid ourselves of a prejudice here: idealising does not consist, as is generally believed, in a suppression or an elimination of detail or of unessential features. A stupendous *accentuation* of the principal characteristics is by far the most decisive factor at work, and in consequence the minor characteristics vanish.” (*Twilight of the Idols*, Skirmishes in a War With the Age, §8)

Similarly, humans may lean more towards repeating behaviors that activate affects that enhance surges of ecstasy. What is good is not intrinsically good, what is good is good because we desire it, regardless of what form those

feelings, desires, and affects may take. The only essentials are the affects by which life asserts its higher intensity of power. In the quotation cited above it should be clear that power does not necessarily mean power 'above' another entity, but power as a surge of ecstasy, a 'pulse' of life, an energizing feeling of livelihood, an awakening. Often you see Nietzsche refer to himself as the lightning in the clouds, and this is the rapturous ecstasy of a strong surge of power channeled through the body of the *ubermensch*.¹⁴

"Active forgetting" means that the natural drives newly crowned as 'vices' were no longer understood as 'suppressed,' and the illusion was forgotten, replaced by an illusion of a unified self, forming attachments and extensions upon this neo-primordial form of affects, sustaining life on the basis of the rationalization of past suffering—activating that which has been forgotten on the lower, deeper, and concealed levels of the soul.

It is a constant struggle to maintain the feeling of being alive when, as Nietzsche correctly states, "A road to nonentity is the desideratum, *hence all* emotional impulses are regarded with horror" (*Will to Power*, §155). Religions tend to produce disciplinary practices that restrain in the hopes of extinguishing the affects, leaving the subject a docile, numbed zombie.

A Nietzschean way of reinterpreting the Cartesian subject might be "I feel, therefore I live." Here, the fact that something qualifies as life means that it possesses a will to power, and the will to power consists of living beings as affective forms.

There is not a prior unified subject who synthesizes affects, but syntheses of affects from which a subject emerges. "The 'ego' - which is not one with the central government of our nature! - is, indeed, only a conceptual synthesis - thus there are no actions prompted by 'egoism'" (*Will to Power*, §371).

If the will to power is a 'primitive affective form' then it is a return to primal drives, however there is no structural essence to how those drives are formed. The will to power is not the primitive affective form as automati-

¹⁴"Body" as literal and figurative sense of the word. A bios as a physical embodiment and a power transferred through an oeuvre, Nietzsche's body of writings.

cally turned vicious and violent; there is not one unifying type of subject that embodies the will to power. Embodiment of the will to power is inherent to life and the subject emerges after its experiences of affects and its particular way of assembling those affects together.

Will to power as primal affective form is the intensification of power, not a mobilization towards a thing that is separate; there is almost never an instrumentality to Nietzsche's description of will to power. Power is that which extends life and enhances the feeling of power.

Hence, even a slave morality is a kind of will to power where the slave intensifies the feeling of power through resentment towards the master, by constructing necessary illusions in the form of myths that give the illusion of choice where there may be none, thereby creating a morality which intensifies the 'feelings' of power.

This elevates the lower into the higher intensities of the soul. Power entails the primitive aspect of will to power in the primal-affects because the most basic motivating force in all life is the maintenance of life itself. Will to power resonates within the higher and lower levels of 'pathos,' or strong affects within the embodiment of the subject.

Rather than 'logos,' as a kind of citadel of intellectual calculation where contradictions are made apparent through the use of propositional logic and then resolved through verification, Nietzsche is adamant that logos is pathos because the mind is the body, and the body is in a constant tension of subterranean, libidinal knots.

Logos is a further extension of the primitive affective forms that are felt through the tension of these knots. With beings consisting of many souls some strata resonate more passionately than others, synthesizing from points of relative instability to give the appearance of a unified whole, an 'ego'. Will to power may 'feel' that it desires something and have a belief about how to attain it, and it must somehow combine these fragmented affects into an intention.

Will to Power and “Ipsissimosity”

Nietzsche is not ascribing the kind of post-modern subjectivist relativism often associated with perspectivism. To be clear, Nietzsche was critical of self-referential conceptions of truth, for example in his critique of “ipsissimosity,” where he issues the following cautionary statement: “Is there anyone who has never been mortally sick of everything subjective and of his accursed ipsissimosity? - in the end we also have to learn caution against our gratitude and put a halt to the exaggerated manner in which the unselfing and depersonalization of the spirit is being celebrated nowadays as if it were the goal itself and redemption and transfiguration” (*Beyond Good and Evil*, §207).

The individual who truly believes they are a unique citadel of taste is either a narcissist mirroring the dullness of the culture, or that fatalist unfreedom of having only the ‘choice’ to express benevolent life-preserving joyful compassion in the form of mercy and charity.

The work in the work of this concept is clear, he is critiquing the ‘metaphysics of the subject,’ where one can get lost in the perspectivism of the subject is in saying that what arises to the mind is only what appears within the mind of the subject, and also an affect that is based on a false-dichotomy.

One should push beyond the “good and evil” of either mirroring a spiritual ideal and referring to morals as an external set of ideals towards which one must strive (e.g. to be more like Jesus, Mohammed, etc.) or being the narcissistic gnostic who places the self in front of the mirror and becomes entranced in the gaze of vanity.

His perspectivism consists of the extraordinarily influential hypothesis advanced in *Beyond Good and Evil* that there are numerous drives immanent within the self, writing that “every drive is tyrannical” (*Beyond Good and Evil*, §6).

Clarifying his point even further he continues “our body is but a social structure composed of many souls - to his feelings of delight as commander ‘L’effet c’est moi.’ (I am the effect) - what happens in every well-constructed

and happy commonwealth; namely, the governing class identifies itself with the success of the commonwealth” (*Beyond Good and Evil*, §19).

For Nietzsche some affects seem to take command as the governing class of the commonwealth within, rather than as a rational citadel, or command center of the logos. How can we know which affects will rise to take command of the commonwealth within? The answer is simple. There is no logical way to figure out the nature of affects because affects are incalculable.

Nietzsche advances the thesis that affects are irreducible to quantifiable forms of truth. Selves are pluralities of forces and affects that are behaving, acting and acted upon in turn by other affects differentially, in an almost completely contingent style. Yet Nietzsche is clear that every force either obeys or commands.

There is no ambiguity for Nietzsche. Inferior forces are not, through obedience, forces that become separate from those which command. Obedient forces are affected by forces which command and produce forms of struggle that veer off into *ressentiment* and become disguised within the form of other affects. A predominant affective form may appear to be a unifying force within the will to power, however, nested within the one-form there may be obedient, repressed, affective content nested within, clinging onto the primordial form as it is expressed.

Substantially, the difference between a last man and an *ubermensch* is the awareness of the *ubermensch* whereas the last man reacts without being anything more than a stranger to himself. An *ubermensch* can be above and beyond himself in the sense of being an observant self, the above and beyond is immanent within the *ubermensch* to have a differential perspective from above to watch, observe, reflect, and at the very least have an awareness of the commonwealth of affects.

One must beware of “The long and serious study of the average man, and consequently much disguise, self-overcoming, familiarity, and bad contact (all contact is bad contact except with one’s equals)...” (*Beyond Good and Evil*, §26), and not waste time with the last man who is trapped in a vicious circle

of decadent “hunger, sexual lust, and vanity as the real and only motives of human actions” (ibid.).

Because in the immanent commonwealth within the self, and in its outward manifestation in the ‘real’ commonwealth, the average men, the last men, are the ones most ensnared by *ressentiment*, most trampled down into obedient affects so as to be the most likely to disguise their obedience with rage and a desperate attempt to preserve life. The strong have to be protected against the weak:

“The fundamental faith simply has to be that society must not exist for society’s sake but only as the foundation and scaffolding on which a choice type of being is able to raise itself to its higher task and to a higher state of being” (*Beyond Good and Evil*, §258).

Free thinking is the most important element of philosophy, and in discussing his theory of affects; it is crucial to remember his statements that “there are no facts, nothing but interpretations” (*Will to Power*, §133). The herd has no concern for questions that would unravel the certainty that grounds their thoughtless reflexivity; and in critiquing the notion that selfhood is constituted out of a command center of the logos, or a rational citadel (the Aristotelean myth that Nietzsche tries to put to rest once and for all), the death of God could be understood as the vanquishing (socially and immanently within the self) of the reflexivity by which the herd clings to a central tethering point to hold together their certainty and avoid an authentic confrontation with nihilism.

“Will to Power as Pathos”

It becomes clear that Nietzsche never settles in on one definitive definition of the will to power, because he is a philosopher committed to a differential ontology.

The pathos of the will to power, to which all other affects connect, is an intense feeling of power.¹⁵ A primitive affect which supersedes ‘logos’ and ‘ethos’ as the motivational ground of the modern subject after the revealing of the monotheistic mythos of God as a necessary ‘unifying’ illusion. Affects, in drawing on ‘pathos’, or what appears in the monotheistic ‘unified’ metaphysics as folly, insanity, or pathology, is the free-play of loose, contingent affects.

This ability to take those contingently-strewn affects and unify them through a self-taught process of self-mastery is what the *ubermensch* provides for itself as a pulsion forward (social and immanently within itself) propelling itself into its higher purposes, a higher state of being.

What is refused or repudiated in the formation of the subject continues to determine that subject. What remains outside this subject, set outside by the act of foreclosure which founds the subject, persists as a kind of defining negativity. In saying that will to power is not a being, not a becoming, but a pathos there are linkages to the way affects are formed and the individual reacting to the realization that there is no higher power from above, overseeing the fate of the world.

Will to power is a kind of pathos, regarding which Nietzsche writes as follows: “Nihilism represents a pathological transitional stage (what is pathological is the tremendous generalization, the inference that there is no meaning at all): whether the productive forces are not yet strong enough, or whether

¹⁵One can argue that in the history of philosophy this suppression of the affects dates back at least as far as the Euthyphro dialogue lines 7c-e, where Socrates draws a distinction between the quantitative and calculative thought as making possible an objective standard of measurement by which to subject standard evaluations of piety and impiety. Whereas ‘pathos’ as a standard is unreliable, subjecting justice to subjective standards of pathos would lead to anarchy, violence, and volatile arguments; and no one would ever accept the outcome of a trial if the standards by which the case were to be judged were grounded in pathos. Nietzsche’s writing tries to overturn centuries of philosophical bias against pathos as the basis of truth.

decadence still hesitates and has not yet invented its remedies" (*Will to Power*, §13).

If one can squarely face the fact that there is no absolute nature to things, and still find the basis for willing the life that one wants, then that is the affirmative nihilism that fully and honestly sees the lack of meaning in the world and affirms it anyway.¹⁶

"I have misplaced my umbrella," the famous line that Jacques Derrida turns to in his pathbreaking work *Spurs/Nietzsche's Styles*,¹⁷ is from Nietzsche's unpublished notebooks, and my interpretation of this quote may differ from Derrida's. I think it indicates Nietzsche struggling with the *ubermensch* in the most authentic way.

The language of the *ubermensch* inscribes itself even into his most personal moments; when no one can see Nietzsche, he still writes in a way that confesses, even if only to himself, that he has no sacred canopy to keep him secure from the tears and rain, the sorrow of existence.

¹⁶Gilles Deleuze. *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. 1983. New York: Columbia University Press. In Deleuze's well-known interpretation of how the will to power functions as life-affirming anti-substantialism after the death of God, he writes as follows:

"Heidegger gives an interpretation of Nietzschean philosophy closer to his own thought than to Nietzsche's. Heidegger sees, in the doctrine of the eternal return and the overman, the determination of 'the relation of Being to the being of man as relation of this being to Being.' This interpretation neglects all that Nietzsche fought against. Nietzsche is opposed to every conception of affirmation which would find its foundation in Being, and its determination in the being of man."

(Nietzsche and Philosophy, pg. 220).

As was made clear in the prior citation of Esposito's work on biopolitics, Nietzschean forms are lines of flight that escape any apparatus of capture, including substantialist interpretations of ontology as the 'being of beings.'

¹⁷Jacques Derrida. *Spurs/Nietzsche's Styles*. 1978. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Derrida commonly referred to Nietzsche's calling into question 'nous,'¹⁸ or the faculty of thought that makes thinking possible, which discloses what is true and what is right, and which he exposes as a confused affect, befuddling the reader, and even himself.

There is no longer the safety of a clearly-defined metaphysical refuge. We are willing our lives, some actively, some passively. Affirmation of life culminates in the active will and the capacity for being affected; it is not merely that life seeks its own self-preservation, which would cast affects as a merely reactive force. Life seeks growth, development, and becoming. "Every living thing does everything it can not to preserve itself but to become more." (*Will to Power*, §688).

If all affects are the ground of the will to power and will to power is grounded in the affects, then the deepening and development of life is the development and deepening of the strategies of the will to power and the affects in the *ubermensch* preserve, enhance, and intensify the vigor of life.

Because the *ubermensch* is always willing beyond what is, but in the most honest way of staring straight into the abyss and loving one's fate, exposing the uncertainty with which the primitive forms of affect can seize the will to power. In stating that the will to power is a 'primitive form of affects,'

Nietzsche is indicating that will to power is an epiphenomenon, an after-effect resulting from the illusion of a synthesis of the affects. Will to power then produces the subject from these fragmented affective forms that occur prior to the emergence of the will to power. In writing, and putting in scare

¹⁸In *Spurs/Nietzsche's Styles*, Derrida spends eleven brilliant pages deconstructing what seems to be merely a frustratingly opaque throwaway line from Nietzsche's unpublished notebooks "I have lost my umbrella." Derrida expresses this by saying "We (nous) will never know for sure what Nietzsche wanted to say when he noted these words, nor even that he actually wanted anything." (pg. 123). We cannot be assured. Derrida utilizes "nous," of course, meaning a first-person plural verb in French, which is apropos since, as close readers of Nietzsche, we know how commonly Nietzsche calls on his audience in the first person plural as "we." As "we" enter the labyrinth, we are exposed in our solitude together. "I" have lost my umbrella just as we all have lost our refuge under the sacred canopy once provided by true-belief in God.

quotes, that “I have lost my umbrella,” perhaps the implication is that the *ubermensch* is insecure qua epiphenomenal to the affects. This is a reversal of many of his earlier theses on the *ubermensch*, will to power, and the self-mastery associated with those concepts.

What readers get is a much richer, nuanced, true-to-life version of the often-contradictory ways that life is an existential exercise into which we are thrown, with no ready-made template available towards which we can refer back repeatedly to gain reassurance.

The will to power is lived as a pathos. It is an experiment rather than a demonstration, because an experiment is experimental insofar as the results are still unknown, and there is a risk involved. A demonstration merely demonstrates what is already known, a platonic anamnesis, a remembrance and recollection of prior forms yet unveiled.

An experiment sets action into motion on a contingent basis because the outcome is yet unknown, and there is risk involved, hence, will to power can be understood in this regard as the uncertainty of pathos. This is a turn in the later Nietzsche that indicates he has made himself a student again, perhaps alluding to another who is foolish enough to have forgotten an umbrella (a meta-physical refuge from the storm).

An *ubermensch* would still venture out into the storm with or without the protection of an umbrella, not because there is certainty that they will survive, but because the illogical dilemma posed by this self-negating act (the act of being that could lead to the negation of being) is the penultimate ‘pathos’ of the life-affirming will to power, in its primitive form, one mobilizing an experimental sense of action—will to power as pathos, where life is at risk and life is affirmed in the act whereby one reinvents the self.

Nietzsche's Musical Affect and the Dancing Satyr

Caedyn Lennox

Art reminds us of states of animal vigor; it is on the one hand an excess and overflow of blooming physicality into the world of images and desires; on the other, an excitation of the animal functions through the images and desires of intensified life; -an enhancement of the feeling of life, a stimulant to it. (WP 802)¹

Nietzsche's fascination with the Dionysian is something which he held for the whole of his academic life. The Dionysian became the image for Nietzsche's quest to dismantle the Platonic Christian world view in favor of a life affirming philosophy. The Dionysian became the embodiment of his life affirming principle and for most of Nietzsche's thinking he would play around with this metaphor, but the core of this image never changed in any radical direction. Instead the Dionysian remained a constant within Nietzsche's thinking and as he matured as a thinker the Dionysian matured along with him.

In Nietzsche's earlier thought there is the split between the two life drives of the will, the Dionysian and the Apollonian, while in Nietzsche's later thought these two principles became merged into just the Dionysian. Although Nietzsche loses this duality the role which the Dionysian plays within Nietzsche's

¹*Will to Power*. Tr. by Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale. New York: Random House, 1968.

aesthetics stays relatively untouched from Nietzsche's early and later philosophy.

The Dionysian artist is the life affirming artist who creates from the position of a recognition of the nature of becoming at the heart of nature. It is the feeling of life swelling up within the body, an intensified feeling of power and emotions, it is what Nietzsche calls *Rausch*. *Rausch* is translated into English sometimes as intoxication, ecstasy, rapture, or many other words which aim to capture what *Rausch* means. In German it has the meaning of a 'rush' from its roots in the middle German word *ruschen*, it is a rush as in a movement. Nietzsche uses this word in such a way as to mean a rush of emotion, *Rausch* is an embodied state of a feeling of an overfullness of emotion and animal vigor, an intoxication with life.

In Nietzsche's earlier thought it was music which would bring the listener to the place of intoxication, in his later writing, it is affects. It is the ability of the Dionysian's artist to "play with intoxication" (DWW §1 32),² to play within the state of *Rausch*, where the creative potential of the life affirming artist is to be found and for this there needs to be a manner in which the artist can be transported to such a place. Therefore this essay will explore Nietzsche's early conception of music and his later concept of affects and show that both these principles are central to Nietzsche's understanding of the bodily state of *Rausch* and Dionysian artists need to create from a place of intoxication and a fullness of life. Moreover, this paper will show, that Dionysian art is never stable itself, but instead always in a state of becoming. For Dionysian art is the aestheticization of temporal space and an aesthetics which unfolds as it is constantly being created.

Nietzsche's idea of *Rausch* first finds voice in his concept of Dionysian intoxication, as found in *Birth of Tragedy*³ and his essay 'The Dionysian Worldview'. Dionysian intoxication is a "terror" and a "blissful ecstasy that wells

²'The Dionysian Worldview'. Tr. by Duncan Large. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

³*Birth of Tragedy*. Tr. by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Random House, 2000

from the innermost depths of man" (BT §1). Nietzsche compares this experience with the Bacchic dance and songs of the Dionysian festival (DWV §2 pg. 43). Within the movement of the dance there is a depersonalizing, a "self-forgetting" and a "collapse of the *principium individuationis*", where the dancer becomes one with the dance and "expresses himself as a member of a higher community" (BT §1). It is the experience of being lost in the crowd and getting caught up in the collective emotional experience of the group. The force of this group experience sweeps the individual off their feet and their autonomy slips into the steps and rhythms of the collective.

Within the concept of Dionysian intoxication there is an idea of a withdrawal, a movement away from the conceptual and towards the embodied state of nature. This is a movement away from what Nietzsche calls the Apollonian force, the world of "beautiful seeming" (DWV §1 p.30), which provides form and structure to the world of phenomena in order that it can be grasped and understood. For Nietzsche there is no fixed subject or self, no external *logos* or God propping up the world of phenomenal beings. Nietzsche rejects the Christian estimation that in the beginning there was the word, *logos*, and instead embraces the Hellenic primordial chaos as the starting point of creation. The Apollonian drive aims to cover over the phenomenal reality of becoming and impose a stability, a mask, over the chaos. The Dionysian unmasks the Apollonian forms and expose them to the decay of becoming. In this moment the temporary sense of stability and structure which the Apollonian provides dissipates, the Apollonian order withdraws to be replaced by a glimpse of Dionysian chaos.

It is these two drives, the Apollonian coming into being and the Dionysian passing away of beings, within the "mysterious primordial unity" (BT §1) of the will which is the creative force that allows the will to manifest the world as an aesthetic creation (BT §8). Nature is the aesthetic phenomena rather than humans perceiving the world as an aesthetic phenomenon. It is the overflow from the agonistic relationship between the Apollonian form and Dionysian chaos, the two artistic drives within nature, it is an internal conflict (*agon*) a strife of opposites. Nature becomes the artist of the phenomenal

world "without the mediation of the human artist" (BT §2). There is no actor in creation within this formula. Creation instead is a side effect from the tension within the primordial will, an over-flow from this internal conflict whose creation acts to protect humans from the horrors of existence.

Nietzsche sees this same artistic duality as the potential for human creativity. The Apollonian Nietzsche connects to the plastic arts, paintings, sculptures, and the like, while the Dionysian art form is music. Dionysian music consists of "the jarring force of tone and the absolutely incomparable world of harmony" (DWV §4 pg. 33) and a "musical dissonance" (BT §24). Music contains a strife of opposites, its consonance and dissonance clash, but harmony is created from this agitation and the progressive moment of the tones. Music moreover is incomparable to anything phenomenal for it relates back to the primal unity of the will. This is why for Nietzsche, music is a metaphor of the will for "the will is the subject of music but not its origins" (OMW p.110).⁴ *Music is an aesthetic representation of the Dionysian force of the will within nature.*

Dionysian music has the power to "elevate the naive men of nature to the self-forgetting of intoxication" (DWV §1, p.33) for in "Dionysian artwork-man would express himself not as *individuum*, but as species-man" (DWV §4, p.54). Dionysian music is an experience of the self as the expression of the primordial state of the will and a recognition that the self is also an expression of the reality of becoming. This is why music is an ex-static⁵ experience for it strips away the static form of self-individuation to reveal the dynamism of becoming behind the mask of being.

The static conception of self is the Apollonian illusion. People cling to forms and stability within the world for it grounds them to a sense of identity. People never look past the Apollonian dream images, they are like the sleepers of Heraclitus, living within a world of their own imagination while

⁴"On Music and Word". As found in *Between Romanticism and Modernism* by Carl Dahlhaus. Tr. by Walter Kaufmann. California: University of California Press, 1989

⁵From the Greek *ex* (ἐξ) meaning out from and *stasis* (στασις) meaning standing, placing, and still. The meaning then means a movement away from a place of stillness.

never waking to see the world behind the veil. Dionysian intoxication penetrates this illusion and forces the person outside of themselves. When one returns from the experience of Dionysian intoxication they look upon the Apollonian dream images with “horror” (BT §3) for they recognize the reality of becoming at the heart of nature. This horror is captured in the wisdom of Silenus, which states “what is best of all is not to be born, not to be but second, best for you is to die soon” (BT §3 and DWV §2 pg. 37). This is the folk wisdom of the Hellenic people who “knew and felt the terror and horror of existence” (BT §3).

Originally Nietzsche says the Greeks turned away from this reality, towards an “Olympian divine order” and the “Apollonian impulse towards beauty” (BT §3). Apollonian beauty became an affirmation of existence but one which negated reality by creating a mask of beauty and Olympic order. It became a way for the Greeks to endure existence, but at the expense of the denigration of life, and the masking over of the Dionysian.

The triumph of the Hellenic will came when there was a successful merger of Dionysian and the Apollonian creative forces into one art form, tragedy. Through the character of Silenus Nietzsche sees the folk wisdom of the Greeks as celebrating “an often unrecognizable wisdom” (DWV §2 36) of the suffering inherent in existence. Silenus and the satyrs are the expression of “the archetype of man, the embodiment of his highest and most intense emotions one who proclaims wisdom from the heart of nature” (BT §8). The satyrs become the recognition of the emotional state within humans and their irrational drives. Rather than turning their backs upon this reality, the Greeks embraced the wisdom of suffering and expressed it in the form of the tragic drama as an affirmation of life and existence.

Nietzsche claims that it was originally satyrs which made up the primitive tragic chorus and that within the tragic drama the chorus of satyrs “bears the same relation to the man of culture that Dionysian music bears to civilization” (BT §7). The satyrs are the image of primordial man who live behind “all civilization and remained the same despite the changes of generations and of the history of nations” (BT §7), just as music lives behind the Apollo-

nian dream image as a representation of the primordial will and the force of becoming. For this reason the Greek man of culture felt his own individuation melt away in the face of the satyr chorus. While the Apollonian comes to the surface of the tragic drama in the form of dialogue (BT §9) as an act of symbolism.

Nietzsche claims that this is the high point of Hellenic art for it seamlessly blends these two principles and gives voice to the whole of the human condition. Moreover this union is an affirmation of life and the tragic view of suffering. Tragedy becomes “nature’s healing power against the Dionysian” (KSA 3[32])⁶ and a way to “reconcile man and nature” (DWV §1 p.31) by being able to give meaning to the world of suffering. It is the Apollonian force which “tempered” (DWV §1, p.32) the Dionysian impulse as a way to be able to give form and meaning to the emotional excess of the Dionysian. The Apollonian is able to give form, but rather than turning its back on the Dionysian to create beauty to cover up this reality, it created beauty from the position of being intoxicated by the Dionysian, from the experience of *Rausch*.

What is important in Nietzsche’s understanding here is that the art which is created is a temporal art which is defined by movement. It is the image of the satyr dancing, playing his music, which brings the listener to an emotional bodily state yet it is done so in a manner which is guided by the Apollonian. The Apollonian gives form but not to something static and which has the ability to take upon a semblance of stable form but rather something which is dynamic in that it is a continuous repetition of creating. Music is dynamic in a manner which a painting never has the ability to be. Dionysian creativity in this sense is a dynamic creativity for it is an aestheticization of temporal space.

From his early writings Nietzsche hangs onto his view of aesthetics as a dynamic process. Although Nietzsche’s thought matures from this period Nietzsche’s aesthetic philosophy is indebted to his earlier musings and music

⁶Nietzsche: *Writings from the Early Notebooks*, edited by Raymond Geuss and Alexander Nehamas. Tr. by Ladislaus Lob. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. pg 20

in general. Nietzsche never let go of the idea of an aesthetics which did not hold a temporal quality. The Dionysian artist stood as something uniquely different from the Apollonian artist. The Dionysian artist creates from a position of saying yes to life, from a position of a feeling of fullness from life, *Rausch*, and this results in art that expresses this same dynamism inherent from creation as an unfolding of a process rather than a fixed substance.

Nietzsche in the *Gay Science*,⁷ writes “the world is overfull of beautiful things but nevertheless poor, very poor when it comes to beautiful moments” (GS 339). Beautiful things are the same as the beautiful seeming of the Apollonian plastic arts, they are stationary. A moment is an activity and in this sense it speaks more broadly to the whole of life. The Dionysian festival is one such beautiful moment whereby beauty is found in the activity, the movements and dance of the actors in time with the music and dialogue. Moments are defined temporally, they occur within the space of time and with its movements. A beautiful moment then is beauty unfolding over a space of time, it is Dionysian music as the aestheticization of the temporal space, aesthetics as an activity, as a representation of becoming, rather than aesthetics as static.

This idea gets taken up within the *Gay Science* whereby Nietzsche explores the possibility of creating an authentic expression of the self. The ability to give style to one’s character is a “great and rare art” (GS 290) Nietzsche claims. The creation of the self is the ability to “become the person that you are” (GS 270). Although the question then arises, how do you become the person that you already are? Nietzsche answers is that the self is something which is always in a state of becoming and there is never any point where there is a stable concept of the self as a self-contained being. The self is defined aesthetically in the activity of self-creating; it is a never-ending process, it is the continuous aestheticization of the self through the movement of time, and it is an aesthetic activity the same as music. For Nietzsche the ability to become the person which you are amounts to the ability to be able

⁷*The Gay Science*. Tr. by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Random House, 1974.

to legislate for yourself and break free of the “customs and opinions” (SE 1)⁸ of the socially created masks and be the creator of yourself (GS 335).

This idea is quite similar to Nietzsche’s earlier position discussed above but now it the self, rather than existence, for which meaning needs to be created. This opens up the possibilities on Nietzsche’s earlier position for now there is a plurality of meanings which are possible. Meaning is individualized to a single actor and each actor has the ability to legislate for themselves. The creation of the self is absorbed in the same duality of the Apollonian and the Dionysian, it is the same creative process for the creation turned towards the self. Then being able to give meaning to one’s own existence is always an ongoing activity, it is a continuous aesthetic temporal unfolding just as the creation of music. For this to be possible though, there must first be a breaking of the chains of social constraint, the breaking down of the Apollonian *principium individuationis*. Just as Dionysian music takes the listener to a place whereby one can unmask the static concepts of the Apollonian the self needs to look behind their own masks which are placed on their identity.

Though, Nietzsche no longer talks in this dualistic language of the will as the Apollonian and the Dionysian. These two principals have been absorbed into the one principle, the Dionysian, and the will is now the will to power. The will to power is the one basic force within the world which acts as a creative desiring that gives form to itself from a position of excess. The Dionysian is “explicable only in terms of an *excess* of force” (TI: ‘What I Owe to the Ancients’ 4)⁹, a feeling of *Rausch*, of power swelling inside the body. While “for there to be art, for there to be any aesthetic doing and seeing, one physiological precondition is indispensable: *Rausch*. *Rausch* must first have enhanced the excitability of the whole machine: else there is no art” (TI: ‘Skirmishes of an Untimely Man’ 8). A strong affective experience is a Dionysian experience for a strong affect excites the will to a feeling of

⁸‘Schopenhauer as Educator’. Tr. by Walter Kaufmann. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

⁹*Twilight of the Idols*. Tr. by Duncan Large. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.

great power (WP 135). It is a feeling of the activity of life, the will to power as life, and it is from this feeling of power, *Rausch*, that the will to power can actualize its creative potential.

Nietzsche believes that the feeling of great power is caused by great affect (WP 135). Affect for Nietzsche is something close to emotions, but it becomes more than that, for affects are the feelings and desires that arise from the experience and interaction with the phenomenal world. Affects are the way in which the world is presented to the observer in an emotional and bodily capacity. Nietzsche claims that "will to power is the primitive form of affect, that all other affects are only developments of it" (WP 688). The will to power is a will to desiring, a will to more, to expand and grow, it is the desire to create from yourself and from the life force within yourself. It is the creative outbursts from the excess of the suns gift giving virtue (Z 1 "On The Gift-Giving Virtue").¹⁰ It is the feeling of excess, the feeling of the fullness of life, the Dionysian or *Rausch*.

Nietzsche critiques of a logocentric epistemology stems from his acceptance of the Dionysian principle of becoming. Epistemic knowledge is "arrived at by selecting one element from the process and eliminating all the rest, an artificial arrangement for the purpose of intelligibility" and Nietzsche says "this simply does not occur" (WP 477). Taking one element out from the process creates an artificial permanence akin to Apollonian illusion thereby negating the activity of the being as a process of becoming. Nietzsche says "between two thoughts all kinds of affects play their game" (WP 477), and it is affect and the activity between the thoughts which are being negated in epistemic thought. Although, further to this quote, Nietzsche says that the affects "motions move to fast, therefore we fail to recognize them" (WP 477). Affects are the movement of life and becoming which lie behind the phenomenal world.

The static existence is the one which negates the affects and the life principle. It is a turning away from life towards the Apollonian and a retreat into

¹⁰Thus Spoke Zarathustra. Tr. by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Penguin Books, 1976.

the illusions of static existence. The priest fears "sensuality" and considers it "the most serious threat to the order" (WP 139) of his world. Nietzsche says that the priest wants to be the only one with knowledge and that there is only one way to obtain it. This is the lowest order of man who wants "emancipation from the senses" and an "absence of affects" (WP 139). This becomes the "inertia" of the herd virtue where "one would rather obey an existing law than create law oneself" (WP 279). It is the passions and affect that "man must free himself from" (WP 383) for they challenge the order and structure of their static way of life. The result of this thinking is what Nietzsche calls the 'last man', "no shepherd and one herd! Everybody wants the same, everybody is the same: whoever *feels*" different goes voluntarily into a madhouse" (Z: Prologue §5). These positions stem from a lack of affect or a turning away from affect, they are a saying 'no' to life, while the common factor is their stasis, their lack of activity. This position is the same position as Nietzsche's earlier example of a turning away from life and the covering over of the world of becoming with Apollonian beauty. The denial of affects is a denial of the Dionysian reality of emotional existence.

In place of a logocentric epistemology Nietzsche proposes a "perspectival theory of affects" (WP 462). Nietzsche claims that,

There is *only* a perspectival "knowing"; and the *more* affects we allow to speak about one thing, the *more* eyes, different eyes, we can use to observe one thing, the more complete will our "concept" of this thing, our "objectivity," be. (GM III 12)¹²

Perspectives are a way of seeing the world of phenomena while affects are the way in which the world is revealed to the observer. The world of the phenomena is a series of passing away and coming into being, phenomenal beings are in a constant state of becoming and the knowledge of them

¹¹My emphasis added

¹²*Genealogy of Morals*. Tr. by Maudemarie Clark and Alan Swensen. Indiana: Hackett Publishing Company, 1998.

is always the knowledge of the dynamic process of their being. Affects are the experience of this dynamic process as it is a way that the body interacts with the world of becoming behind the masks of being. This is why more affects and ways of seeing one thing becomes desired, for it strips away the Apollonian masks of seeming and lays bare the process of becoming. Affects function in the same manner as music in that they reveal the Dionysian reality behind the phenomenal world. The difference here is that Nietzsche is applying the legislative power, as shown above in the discussion about giving meaning to the self in the *Gay Science*, to beings in phenomenal reality. Instead of the self as being a work of art now all of life and phenomenal beings become a work of art, but just as the self, it is a work of art that is subject to becoming and therefore never finished. It is a temporal aesthetics. The more eyes and affects one has on an object penetrate past the masks of beings and towards the reality of becoming to see the object from the vantage point of the moment and its inherent movement.

Perspectives become their own form of art for it is “art that permits us to wear masks” (WP 132), art as the Apollonian beauty which attempts to cover over the reality of becoming. This is what Nietzsche means when he says “to impose upon becoming the character of being – that is the supreme will to power” (WP 617), it is being or art, which is the mask which is imposed upon becoming. It is something which covers over the nature of becoming, hides the activity behind beings. In Nietzsche’s early thought it was music and the Dionysian force of intoxication which unmasked the Apollonian form and beauty. In Nietzsche’s later philosophy it is Affects which serve the same purpose. Moreover when life is void of either of these two principles life becomes static. So not only do affect and music penetrate past the Apollonian masks, but they also allow the individual to affirm life and embrace the emotional reality of human existence, and from this embrace life has the power to take over and possess the individual and caste them into the state of *Rausch*, and it from within this space that life affirming Dionysian art is possible.

For Dionysian art is the expression of the life activity and therefore art is always in a state of becoming. The world herself is an aesthetic phenomenon,

the phenomenal world is art as the self is art, and behind art there is always becoming, there is always activity. This is why “the will to overcome an affect is ultimately only the will of another, or several other, affects” (BGE 117). Affective experiences break apart the *principium individuationis* of Apollonian seeming by experiencing behind the mask and towards the activity of becoming. The Dionysian artist is the one who is able to give form to oneself and the world around them because “the Dionysian artist’s creating is play with intoxication” (DWW §1 32), creating comes from a place of *Rausch*. It is music which serves this function in Nietzsche’s earlier thinking while in his later it is affect, but the function which each of these serve is the same. For “one must still have chaos in oneself to be able to give birth to a dancing star” (Z ‘Prologue’ 5). Dionysian creativity is the acceptance of life and the principle of becoming, it is allowing the activity of life to overflow within you and swell up inside of you, *Rausch*, and it is the ability to affirm these passions and sublimate them into a rhythm which controls the musical passions, it is the aestheticization of the temporal space, creativity is the image of the dancing satyr.

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Nietzsche's Ethics of the Future: Creative Valuation and the Life of Self-Development

Alex Obrigewitsch

You must change your life.

—Rainer Maria Rilke, “Archaic Torso of Apollo”

Every animal is driven to pasture with a blow.

—Heraclitus, Fragment 11

Nietzsche's future, his posthumous life, which incorporates our past, present, and future interpretations and evaluations of his work, is riddled with complications and misunderstandings.¹ His conception of existence as the struggle of absolute differences leads to him devaluing and debasing democracy in the political sphere, as well as utilitarianism and deontology in the ethical sphere – for all three come down to an essential equality of human beings (in terms of rights, calculability, and rationality, respectively). What sort of ethics might this strange figure profess, then? Based on a fundamental misunderstanding of the central concept of his thinking, the will to power, combined with the willful propagation and proliferation of this very misunderstanding by Nietzsche's sister and the Nazi party, the myth of Nietzsche as a

¹Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, in *The Basic Writings of Nietzsche*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann (Toronto: Random House, 2000), “Why I Write Such Good Books,” §1: “The time hasn't come for me yet: some are born posthumously”; and in the “Preface,” 1, to the same work, where Nietzsche makes the now famous proclamation, “Above all, do not mistake me for someone else.” Such mistakes have conceived of a monstrous birth.

fascist philosopher was born. Though even a minimally thoughtful reading of his work would render this myth invalidated, this remained the very problem in the way of clearing up the misconception surrounding Nietzsche's thought and his name. For beyond the deplorable editing work that the Nazi philosophers did to transform Nietzsche's message, the very association of his name to fascist parties and figures dissuaded many from touching his works. Thankfully there were a few thinkers early on who fought to expose this myth for what it was, and to let Nietzsche's thought speak for itself.² Much work has since been done as well, and continues to be argued in the pages of Nietzsche scholarship. But the question remains a contested one: what exactly is Nietzsche's ethics?

In his *On the Genealogy of Morality*, Nietzsche studies the historical lineage of our moral values, in order to uncover their origin. In doing this, he discovers that, like all things human, they are rooted in our nature, our manner of life.³ Nietzsche then diagnoses “modern morality” (essentially Judeo-Christian values) as an illness, as life-denying, and proposes to create a different ethics, based upon a revaluation or transvaluation of all values (See GM III §26-27).⁴ Such a transformation of our values would be a radically new ethics; but the book that he was to write elucidating this ethics of the future was never written, due to his sudden descent into madness. Nietzsche

²Cf., for example, Georges Bataille, “Nietzsche and the Fascists,” in *Visions of Excess*, ed. and trans. Allan Stoekl (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985); and Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974). Kaufmann did much to make Nietzsche readable in English, both by his translations and the work done in this book, where he works through the myth in order to uncover its falsity as a defamation of the truth.

³Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, “from ‘Homer's Contest,’” in *The Portable Nietzsche*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann (Toronto: Penguin, 1976), page 32: “When one speaks of *humanity*, the idea is fundamental that this is something which separates and distinguishes man from nature. In reality, however, there is no such separation: “natural” qualities and those called truly “human” are inseparably grown together.”

⁴Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, trans. Maudemarie Clark and Alan J. Swensen (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998).

provides us with a critique of morality, but does he offer anything to replace it? Looking to his notebooks, posthumously collated and published as *The Will to Power*, in conjunction with scattered hints and traces throughout his corpus, it is possible to garner an understanding of what such an ethics of transvaluation might be. By combining elements from these sources with an understanding of Nietzsche's metaphysics and ontology (which is inseparable from his ethics, as shall be seen), I aim to dispel the misperception that Nietzsche's ethics espouses conflict with others, egoism, and promotes violent spectacles of dominant power displays. Rather, it shall be shown that the conflict and domination is not expressed externally, upon others, but rather inwardly, in relation to oneself. Nietzsche's ethics explicates a way of living by means of creative valuation, a life of affirmation and self-overcoming, aimed at development and improvement, as well as increase, of one's life and character. An *ethos*, then, in the Greek sense, aimed ever towards the future, in line with human life, as well as life more generally.

The thought of Nietzsche could rightly be considered a *Lebensphilosophie*, in that its content and concerns can always be traced genealogically back to the fundament of life. Life is, for Nietzsche, a vital force of expression, an *élan vital*, which works itself through all things. It is inextricably bound up with the will to power, which is an interminable intensification of life, whose expression is the increase of power, of force, of affective potential. Daniel W. Conway describes the will to power as "the irrepressible surge of life [which] legitimates the continual obsolescence of formerly vital forms and the continual creation of new forms,"(538) which connects it with another concept intertwined with life in Nietzsche's thought, that being "self-overcoming." Self-overcoming is the movement of the obsolescence of what was and the continual creation of what will be, to which Conway refers. It is inherent in the futurity of life, as the rolling wave which consumes what was in bringing forth what is to come, the cascading triumph of life of which Percy Shelley wrote. Nietzsche refers to self-overcoming as "the law of life the law of the *necessary* "self-overcoming" in the essence of life" (GM III §27). Self-overcoming is essential and necessary for life because life is will to power, it

is this seething force which seeks expression as perpetual intensification and increase. And the "forms" to which Conway refers? These "forms" are the forms of life (in the Wittgensteinian sense) which manifestly express the will to power, the arrangements of the fundamental differential forces or affects which underwrite what we consider "reality." What the will to power wills in self-overcoming is a new valuation, produced by a new hierarchy of forces, affects, or drives – this manifests itself as a different form of life, a different way of living and acting, and thus a different way of affirmatively relating oneself to life.

The real, according to Nietzsche, is an illusion, an error. For reality as perceived by the senses or through consciousness is a by-product of forces and drives, and their affective interpretation. This means that every fact, insofar as it is always already interpreted (not thematically by consciousness, but "unconsciously" by the forces and drives that make us up, that we "really" are), is not separate from value.⁵ Everything appears as though "colored" or filtered by our moral evaluations which shape our world by means of our form of life.⁶ Our morals and values are thus "symptoms and sign languages" (WP §258) which can be semiotically translated back to the arrangement or conflictual relationship of struggle between our passions and fundamental affective forces. And this is precisely what allows Nietzsche to diagnose the metaphysical illness ailing humanity, the *Weltschmerz* which has plagued us since at least the late nineteenth century – it is our system of values, our form of life, and thus the arrangement of our passions and drives, what we desire and affirm and what we prohibit and repress, which is producing our mass

⁵Cf. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale, ed. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1968), §260: "we first *make* a thing painful by investing it with an evaluation. The extent of moral evaluations: they play a part in almost every sense impression. Our world is *colored* by them."

⁶Cf. WP §256: "I understand by "morality" a system of evaluation that partially coincides with the conditions of a creature's life."

depression. Nietzsche links this to the historical effects of the ubiquity of Christianity and its life-denying desire for the “otherworldly.”⁷

Valuation, then, is a creative process – it prescribes and precludes the possibilities and the relations open to our lives. Everything that is possible is framed by a certain valuation which determines or delimits our reactions and our responses to these phenomena. As Nietzsche puts it, “there are no moral phenomena, there is only a moral interpretation of these phenomena” (WP §258).⁸ And the problem of our “modern morality” is that it creates a set of values, an ordering of our drives, which denigrates and denies the possibilities of life; it negates the will to power in its possibility for expansive expression, enforcing its diminishment in the name of meekness and equality. In such a degradation of life Nietzsche diagnoses the source of modern nihilism, as the “secret pathway to nothingness,” the propensity to extinction which preordains the death of the future (GM II §11). In other words, our systems of morality (for, as mentioned above, utilitarianism and deontology, for example, also function by means of treating all humans as essentially equal) are, for Nietzsche, unethical, in that they lead to the denial of life and its intensifying expressions.

Equality is impossibility in a world as Nietzsche understands it – a world composed of the effects of struggles between differences. The only ones who promote equality are those who seek to benefit from it – the weak, the weary, and those who fear struggle and suffering (who fear life). But to impose what is good for the lowest common denominator upon all people, based on a valuation which effects all life? This Nietzsche sees as a failing on our part – a lapsing into death in the most ignoble and ignominious manner. Our systems of morality, then, are holding us back from our potential, denigrating us by means of “equality” which denies us sovereign and singular creativity as a living individual through a movement towards stasis and unity at

⁷This claim abounds in Nietzsche’s works. For perhaps the most explicit expression in relation to morality, see GM.

⁸Cf. BGE §108.

the expense of difference, distance, and struggle (promoting death at the expense of life, in other words).⁹ Luckily for us, morality is not a categorical determination of reason; because it is a historical product of our lives, based upon our valuations, there remains the possibility of transforming our lives by transforming our values. But how would we do this? This is the proposal of Nietzsche’s ethics of the future – his future ethics, which is also an ethics for the future of humankind.

In order to overcome this empty form of life prescribed for us by our modern moral values, Nietzsche demands the exigency of a transvaluation of all values, a self-overcoming befitting a transformative ethics aimed at the affirmation of life.¹⁰ Such a move would entail the creation of a never before seen form of life, a new transfiguration of our selves by means of a re-configuration of our fundamental forces, a reinterpretation of our becoming away from the ascetic ideal of *the Genealogy* and towards that future being, the *Übermensch*.¹¹ Of course, the *Übermensch* is another raucously misunderstood aspect of Nietzsche’s thought. Far from the “blond beast” that the Nazis attempted to portray it (and consequently themselves) as, the *Über-*

⁹Cf. WP §285; and Paul J. M. van Tange, “Nietzsche and Ethics,” trans. Thomas Hart, in *A Companion to Nietzsche*, 395.

¹⁰A pair of important notes concerning the transvaluation – first, the word itself. While most translators utilize the term ‘revaluation’ in translating ‘*Umwertung*,’ I believe that this translation does not adequately capture the radical change that this move entails. On top of this, the ‘*um-*’ can mean not only ‘re-’ as in ‘repetition,’ but also ‘to get around’ or ‘in another way.’ Thus I see ‘transvaluation’ as better capturing the spirit of the sign.

This leads to the second point, concerning the misunderstanding of the transvaluation, part of which may arise for readers if it is translated as ‘revaluation.’ The transvaluation is not simply another inversion of the morality that was inverted by the slave-revolt in morality. It is not a return to the master morality of *the Genealogy*. As I am aiming to show in this paper, Nietzsche’s ethics is future-oriented, and desires what can only be new, creative growth, and not simply a return. For perhaps the most surprising case of such a misunderstanding, see Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, 111–112.

¹¹Cf. Nietzsche, GM III §8; and Friedrich Nietzsche, Z:1, “Zarathustra’s Prologue,” §4, and “On the Way of the Creator.”

mensh has nothing to do with racial superiority.¹² Granted, all the talk of domination and mastery in relation to passages concerning this figure are fair prey for misinterpretation. But when read carefully it becomes clear that the object of this domination and mastery by the *Übermensch* is not another, but rather themselves. The *Übermensch* is the figure who has undertaken the transvaluation of values, wrenched themselves and their fundamental drives free from morality in order to overcome the sickness of humanity enthralled by life-denying values. They are the figures who have overcome themselves, what they were becoming (dying, entropic humanity), and transformed themselves through making themselves virtuous by assigning themselves values that are in accordance with life, and allow for the active expression of affective growth, of the will to power. And such a making virtuous is domination, domination of oneself, as Nietzsche expresses.¹³ Valuations disclose for us different “ways of being, modes of existence,” by means of rearranging our drives and fundamental life-forces, our affective states and the responses or actions they produce, based upon possibilities for becoming, for acting, that allow for the greatest growth.¹⁴ By creating values which are in line with life, with increase and intensification, we are dominating ourselves, controlling our affects, our passions, our drives, as well as their expression, by means of mastering them, and thus of mastering ourselves.¹⁵ This has another important determination for our understanding of the *Übermensch* as well. For if they are to be understood as the beings who are becoming more than was previously “humanly” possible by the bounds of the defini-

¹²Aiding this misinterpretation is the use of the phrase “blond beast” in GM I §11 and II §17. But here Nietzsche is not referring to the *Übermensch*, nor to any future people, but rather to the master class of the past, the historical “beasts of prey.” Again we see the effects of misinterpreting the transvaluation for understanding Nietzsche’s ethics.

¹³See WP §304.

¹⁴Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche & Philosophy*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), 1; also, cf. page 68, where Deleuze writes that “Becoming-active is affirming and affirmative.”

¹⁵Cf. WP §915, where Nietzsche refers to this training and mastery of the will by means of testing valuations to determine the most life affirming as “a gymnastics of the will.”

tion of the human as the morally fettered form of life, and by means of a transformation of their lives by means of transvaluation, then they needn’t be Hegelian World-Historical individuals; in fact, with enough determination, will-power, force of life, enough struggle and suffering, might not any person become an *Übermensch*?

The *Übermensch* is the figure for the being of futurity – their being is a becoming, and they become by means of overcoming themselves, dominating their willing and developing their existence as a creative will to life.¹⁶ Keith Ansell-Pearson rightly notes that the transvaluation which is undertaken based upon the “ideal” of the *Übermensch* is “a process of complicating our evolutionary conditions of existence. In one sense we are becoming ‘more’ human; in another sense we are becoming ‘more than’ human” (239). Because our lives are informed or en-formed, framed and shaped, by means of our values, our ethical form of life is determinate of our natural evolutionary process. By continuing on the devolutionary and ultimately nihilistic path set by “modern morality” we tend towards “the last man,” and eventually extinction.¹⁷ But by taking upon ourselves the transvaluation of all values, we may perhaps redirect the path of our evolutionary life, towards a greater becoming, becoming greater, becoming *Übermenschen*. And there is nothing standing in the way of any person attempting such a feat. True, it may be a more difficult undertaking for some rather than others, but that is just a fact of nature, for each of us is different and there is no equality. But, at the same time, it is not as though the *Übermensch* is an ideal of perfection, an ethical telos that we strive to attain. No person is “farther away” than any other, for there is no “end” to this ethics. As long as they are engaged in self-overcoming, breaking away from “modern morality” in a creative attempt

¹⁶As Nietzsche notes in GM II §12, “the will of life appears active and form-giving.” It is active in that it allows for greater activity in expressing one’s will to power, and it does this by means of configuring the hierarchy of our drives by means of life affirming valuations.

¹⁷On Nietzsche’s conception of the last man, as opposed to the *Übermensch*, see Z: I “Zarathustra’s Prologue,” §5. Cf. his conception of mediocrity which accompanies the future figure of the last man and their will to equality and non-differentiation in BGE §262.

at bettering themselves by means of dominating their will through assigning values for themselves and their lives, then each person is on the way to becoming an *Übermensch*. And *Übermenschlichkeit* is not a static form of being; rather, it is *this very process of becoming*, by means of affirming life and expressing one's will to power through the effects of transvaluation. Nietzsche's ethics of the future is thus a non-teleological ethics, for the increase of power and intensification of life are potentially limitless.

And so we return to the future. For it is the future that has been guiding this thought all along. Being, in accordance with life, is always transcending and overcoming itself – it is as becoming. “To impose upon becoming the character of being,” Nietzsche writes in a famous passage, “that is the supreme will to power” (WP §617).¹⁸ Our metaphysical notions (or fictions, errors even, Nietzsche would say) such as ‘being’ too must be overcome in the overcoming of our all too human foibles – we must come to think how all of being is but a becoming, an expression of life and the will to power. Here too there is a directedness towards the future, what is to come, but again divorced from teleology. In overcoming or translating our thinking beyond Metaphysics, Nietzsche defines our essence as a sort of non-essence, by means of an elision of definition. He writes that “man is the as yet undetermined animal” (BGE §62).¹⁹ This means that what distinguishes us from the other living creatures is not some essential element or quality, but rather the lack of such a feature. What differentiates us as living beings is that we exist as what Heidegger calls temporality – we do not exist in a present, but are a future that is thrown forth from out of what the past renders possible. We are the future animal, ever becoming what we will have been. But this essentially ecstatic existence, ever outside of any being-present, is not directed at any telos, any logical end or goal prescribed through its becoming. Be-

¹⁸Cf. Deleuze, *Nietzsche & Philosophy*, “Preface to the English Translation,” xi: “becoming has being and only becoming has being.”

¹⁹Cf. GM III §13, where Nietzsche describes the human as “the eternally future one who no longer finds any rest from his own pressing energy, so that his future digs inexorably like a spur into the flesh of every present.”

coming is not subject to a final being; being is nothing else than becoming. As Nietzsche expresses it in a passage from his notebooks, “humanity has no goal, just as little as the dinosaurs had one; but it has an *evolution*: that is, its end is *no more important* than any point on its path.”²⁰ The becoming itself is what matters – becoming for its own sake, becoming divorced from being and from ends. Because life exists as perpetual becoming, is manifest as self-overcoming and the expression of intensification signified by the will to power, life can only be seen as a telos that is ateleological; its end being infinitely deferred, or else attained to only by means of ever transgressing what it was, overcoming itself as end, and projecting itself further into the future.²¹ Thus this ethics is in line with the character of our existence, of our life – it is aimed ever at a future which is yet to come, just as we are ever striving to become more, become better, than we are now. In this sense we might tentatively suggest that Nietzsche's ethics of the future could be considered a sort of character ethics (in the sense of the Greek *ethos*).²²

Much has been said of this ethics at the level of life and affects, but in concluding it might be wondered how this will manifest at the semiotic level of human life and actions. I believe that assuming the transvaluation as the ethical guide to one's life will express itself as a constant goad to bettering oneself, much like taking up Aristotelian ethics. Certainly this is no simple task, and

²⁰Cited in Gregory Moore, “Nietzsche and Evolutionary Theory,” in *A Companion to Nietzsche*, 525.

²¹It is for this reason that Daniel W. Conway fails to acknowledge the radical break from teleology in Nietzsche's ethics. While Conway recognizes the attempt at such a break, he believes that Nietzsche falls back into teleology in positing life as the telos of the will to power and his ethics. See Conway, “Life and Self Overcoming,” 539, as well as 542-6.

²²I might suggest here the parallels between Nietzsche's ethics as espoused herein and the virtue ethics of Aristotle. Both are, broadly speaking, a naturalistic ethics of character, focused on virtue, and operating by means of perpetual struggle to become better, the major difference of course being Aristotle's rationalism and teleology. In proposing such a comparison, I am reading these thinkers in direct confrontation and opposition to the interpretation proposed by Alasdair MacIntyre. Cf. his book, *After Virtue*, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), Chapter 9, “Nietzsche or Aristotle?”

will involve constant struggle and perhaps even suffering on occasion, but all for the aim of an expanded experience and feeling of life – a more valuable life. This also means that sedentary idleness and complacency in one's life will no longer be tolerated. While others cannot command or dominantly compel us to act so as to overcome or better ourselves, the requirement remains, shall we say, biologically imperative. For it is up to each individual to do all they can to better themselves by taking this ethics upon their own lives – and every sense of overcoming or growth could thus be seen as a miniature victory, insofar as it is an expression of the will to power and thus of life. And if they choose not to do so, to remain within the moral framework of our modern day perhaps, then this too is their choice and their responsibility – but they shall only continue down the path towards disappearance, slowly fading away as the people who have chosen the path of life, of self-overcoming, struggle to become more than they now are. It is important to note that Nietzsche's ethics, again, is not one of cruelty towards others, domination and enslavement; rather, it is focused on the self, on self-betterment and development by means of overcoming. It is an ethics, not a politics, and it is a mimesis of life in that it is principally a perpetual struggle not with others (as in a Hobbesian Nature), but rather against oneself, what or who one presently is. Our nature, the summative expression of our existence, not to mention the Good, remains indeterminate, ever futural. Aligning ourselves with life, aiming to become better by self-overcoming, projecting ourselves into the future – might we thus consider ourselves good? Would such a life of becoming through transforming and translating our affective formations not be, according to Nietzsche, "the good life" (taking into account its remaining beyond traditional moral valuations of good and evil)? This would have to be the assumption, given that the Good is not a teleological end, but is expressed through the movement of becoming itself.

Of course, only the future will tell. All we can do, in light of the future's silence in the present, is to act so as to meet it – to actualize ourselves into the future, by taking up the ethical imperative to become, irrespective of being and what we might now be taken to be. We must each of us, singularly, change

our lives, so as to become our future – to become the one that we are, as inscribed transvaluatively by the affective ordering of life, of a life of future-oriented self-overcoming.

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Zarathustra's Disgust: Rejecting the Foundation of Western Metaphysics

William A. B. Parkhurst

"Giving an affect a name is one step beyond the affect. The deepest love, e.g., does not know what to call itself and asks appropriately: 'am I not hate?'" (KGW VII 1 3[1]. p.56.12)

Research on disgust as an emotion has lagged behind research on other emotions due perhaps to the same repulsion it confronts. Disgust is disgusting. In a recent study by Olatunji it was found that there are 10-20 times more papers per year on fear and anger than on disgust (Olatunji). Despite this, there has still been a large number of investigations into the importance of disgust in a variety of areas. Disgust plays an essential role in our socialization, in selecting our friends, sexual partners, social group, and even our moral concepts (Vivario, "Core, Social and Moral Disgust", 185). Despite the comparative lack of research on disgust compared to other emotions, the empirical work has blossomed in the last decade. There is a greater understanding of the neural-correlates of disgust including insula and its interconnected circuits (Murphy et. al.; Wicker et. al.; Schäfer et al.; Fusar-Poli et. al.; Kirby and Robinson). There has also been research conducted on the importance of genes for the experiences of disgust regarding taste and smell (Reed, "Diverse Taste"; Reed "Genetics of Taste and Smell"). This has also included research on the neuro-functional relationships disgust plays within our moral experiences (Chapman and Anderson; Chapman and Kim et. al.; Whitton et.

al.; Vicario "emotional Appraisal"; Vicario, "Morality and Disgust"; Tybur et. al.; Landy; Jones; Eskine). A few studies have also suggested the importance of disgust for communication and education (Curtis). A communicative and pedagogical approach to disgust has been found effective, for example, in hand washing rates (Drummond et. al.; Judah et. al.).

However, one area of research that has been lacking is philosophical use of disgust to pedagogically diagnose and communicate something foundational to the western tradition; misanthropy. I explore this possibility through an analysis of the pedagogical use of disgust within the texts of Friedrich Nietzsche.

Disgust (*Ekel*) plays a foundational role in Nietzsche's philosophy in a variety of ways. Nietzsche's use of "*Ekel*" and other cognates occur in many important passages in Nietzsche's published work.¹ Nietzsche often uses the term as scientists tend to today. Usually something that causes disgust to arise is diseased, decomposing, or contagious in some way. Typical objects of disgust are feces, corpses, urine, and taboo sexual acts. Nietzsche associates disgust with these kinds of objects such as; excrement (urine and fe-

¹*Ekel*: BT 7, 19, "Attempt at Self-Criticism", 5; UM DS 4, 6; UM HL, 1, 2, 4, 7, 9; UM SE, 2, 3, 5; UM RWB, 2, 3, 5, 8, 11; HAH I 149; HAH II VM 111, 286; WS 7, 211, 213, 246, Preface 3; D 56, 109, 136, 202, 273, 483; GS 49, 76, 86, 107, 277, 295, 302, 306, 318, 335, Pref. 1, 347, 364, 373; Poems 10 "Rimus remedium. Or: how sick poets console themselves."; Z I Pref. 2, 3, Z I 6; Z II 6, 11, 13, Z III 2.2, 5.3, 10.2, 11.2, 12.14, 12.28, 13.1, 13.2; BGE 10, 26, 119, 203, 210, 224, 227, 241, 253, 258, 269, 270, 278, 282; GM II 24, III 7, 13, 14, 19, 26; CW postscript; A 38, 39; TI "Untimely" 36, 48, "Ancients" 4; EH "Wise" 8, Z 8, "Destiny" 6; NCW "How I Broke Away From Wagner" 1, "The Psychologist has a Word" 3.

Ekelhaft: UM HL 9; HAH II VM 2; GS 86.

Ekels: HAH II WS 246; GS 39, 49; GM II 7; EH "Why I am so Wise" 8.

Ekelhafte: UM SE 4, 5; HAH II WS 174; GM II 7.

Ekel: BT 3 (cf. DW 3); UM RWB 11; GS 109; Z III 7, Z IV 4, 5.

Ekelhaften: UM SE 8; HAH I 217; D 56; GM I 11.

Ekeln: HAH II WS 368; GS 292; Z III 12.14.

Ekelhaftes: D 203.

Ekelgedanken: BT 7 (cf. DW 3 & *Die Geburt des tragischen Gedankens* 3).

Ekelhafteste: GM II 14.

ces), bad smells, decay, overindulgence, and saliva (UM HL 1; GM II 7; HAH II 111; D 109). However, Nietzsche is very clear that disgust plays an important functional role within argumentation as well (HAH II WS 7; HAH II WS 211).

Further, Nietzsche also gave disgust a deeper role within his philosophy. Throughout Nietzsche's work, disgust at existence itself forms one of the central problematics of philosophical inquiry. Early in Nietzsche's career he encountered Schopenhauer's work that argued we can justify the absurdity of existence through aesthetic experiences (particularly of music), an ethics of compassion, and ascetic self-denial and resignation. For Nietzsche, in the *Birth of Tragedy* and other early writings, nihilism and disgust [*Ekel*] at existence can be assuaged or justified through music (BT 24-25; DW 1). Following some lines of thought in Schopenhauer, Nietzsche's early work saw the aesthetic justification of existence as a discharge of disgust [*Ekel*] at existence that resulted in an ascetic, will-negating mood (BT 7; DW 3).

Nietzsche eventually saw this will negation through music as participating in, and glorifying, the denial of life at the core of the ascetic ideal (GM III 5-6, 28; A 7). In later writing Nietzsche vehemently rejected these Schopenhauerian solutions to suffering and disgust as simply an escapism which treats the symptoms of disgust but do not make way for affirmation or overcoming (HAH I 103; D 63; GM pref. 5). In Nietzsche's mature period, it becomes clear that Schopenhauer did not think pessimism to its depth and the Schopenhauerian solutions to nihilism and disgust were untenable (BT ASC 6; BGE 56; GM 5-7). In his late works, Nietzsche clearly suggests that the philosophy of Schopenhauer is only a formula for resignation, not affirmation (EH BT 2; TI "Ancients" 5; BT ASC 6). Instead of simply treating the symptoms of this foundational disgust with human experience, Nietzsche wanted to think this disgust with all existence and the human condition to its depths and overcome it. This explains why disgust plays a pivotal role in one of his most central ideas: eternal recurrence.

The idea of eternal recurrence is, perhaps, Nietzsche's most contentious idea because scholars find it difficult to agree, even in broad terms, about what it means. However, Nietzsche himself, in his autobiography *Ecce Homo*,

describes it as "the unconditional and infinitely repeated circular course of all things" (EH BT 3). The idea is that every event, every action, and every experience that occurs in the universe will repeat in the same way, not only once, but an infinite number of times. One important place Nietzsche puts the idea forward is his work *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Nietzsche goes so far as saying that eternal recurrence is the fundamental conception of the work (EH Z 1).

In the penultimate section of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, "The Convalescent," Zarathustra encounters his most abysmal thought and eternal recurrence. Both of these involve disgust. Until this point in the text, Zarathustra had been trying, and failing, to think his most abysmal thought. In the beginning of the section, Zarathustra finally draws up his courage to think his most abysmal thought. Upon doing so, Zarathustra cries out, "Disgust [*Ekel*], disgust [*Ekel*], disgust [*Ekel*] - woe is me!" (Z III 13.1). Zarathustra then collapses. In the second part of the section, Zarathustra is wrestling with his most abysmal thought off stage and the reader only hears a report about it from the final part of the section. In the final part, Zarathustra recalls his wrestling with the thought and again claims, "Ah, Disgust! [*Ekel*]! Disgust! [*Ekel*]! Disgust! [*Ekel*]! - Thus Spoke Zarathustra, and sighed and shuddered; for he remembered his sickness" (Z III 13.2). After Zarathustra has recovered from his sickness, he is finally able to affirm the value of life and existence in the final section of the book and affirms again and again, "For I love you, O Eternity!" (Z III 13.2).²

Scholars tend to take Zarathustra's most abysmal thought [*abgründlicher Gedanke*] simply to be eternal recurrence [*ewigen Wiederkunft*] or determinism more generally (Seung, 188; Loeb, *The Death of Nietzsche's Zarathustra*, 102; Loeb, "The Gateway-Augenblick, 94; Loeb, "Find the Übermensch", 169, 175n18; Cutrofellow 346; Shapiro 39; Gillseppe 115). However, when one pays close attention to the text, these are distinct and not necessarily coexten-

²This is the actual ending of the book. Part IV was published privately and distributed to only a few friends. In the end, Nietzsche asked for all the copies back.

sive (Nehamas 148; Clark 262). Nietzsche is very clear to distinguish his most abysmal thought and the eternal recurrence of his most abysmal thought.

The first indication that eternal recurrence and the most abysmal thought are distinct occurs in “On the Vision and the Riddle.” In this section, Zarathustra relates a vision to a group of sailors. In that vision he is conversing with a dwarf who is referred to as the spirit of gravity. The dwarf gives a cosmological interpretation of eternal recurrence stating, “time itself is a circle” (Z III 2.2). However, Zarathustra claims, “you do not know my abysmal thought! That - you could not endure!” (Z III 2.2). This implies, first, that the dwarf understands eternal recurrence cosmologically and, second, this is not the same as knowing Zarathustra’s most abysmal thought. They are, therefore, not coextensive.

Further, Nietzsche’s own reading of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* in *Ecce Homo* supports reading eternal recurrence and Zarathustra’s most abysmal thought as separate. He writes that the psychological problem of the Zarathustra type is,

how someone with the hardest, the most terrible insight into reality, who has thought ‘the most abysmal thought’, can nonetheless see it *not* as an objection to existence, not even to its eternal return, but instead finds one more reason in it for *himself to be* the eternal yes to all things, ‘the incredible, boundless yes-saying, amen-saying’... (EH Z 6)

The most abysmal thought is considered an understandable objection to existence. Eternal recurrence just amplifies that thought because it must eternally return. This means that the most abysmal thought is not eternal return itself. It is something that returns within each recurrence. Therefore, the most abysmal thought is something distinct from eternal return itself. This conclusion is textually born out in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. In the section “The Vision and the Riddle,” Zarathustra sees a vision of a young shepherd who is choking on a snake that has crawled into his throat and bit him. Near

the end of the section Zarathustra asks the sailors who the shepherd was in the vision but receives no answer.

In the section directly following “The Vision and the Riddle” it becomes clear that Zarathustra was the young shepherd in the vision, and it is his most abysmal thought that will bite him in the future. Zarathustra states,

At last my abyss stirred and my thought bit me.
Ah, abysmal thought, which is *my* thought! When shall I find
strength to hear you burrowing and no longer tremble?
My heart rises to my throat when I hear you burrowing! Even
your silence wants to choke me, you abysmal silent one!
As yet I have never dared to summon you up: it has been enough
that I - have carried you about with me! (Z III 3).

Therefore, what bites Zarathustra later in the text is specifically his most abysmal thought.

In the penultimate section of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, “The Convalescent,” Zarathustra finally encounters his most abysmal thought firsthand. Zarathustra recalls the encounter stating, “that monster crept into my throat and choked me! But I bit its head and spat it away from me” and Zarathustra continues, “The great disgust with man - it choked me and had crept into my throat” (Z II 13.2). So, Zarathustra’s most abysmal thought is his great disgust with man.

The text gets even more specific about the disgust. The great disgust with man is that even the greatest of men are still small and all-too-human. Further, it is textually demonstrable that this disgust with man is distinct from the eternal return of this disgust. Zarathustra claims,

Once I saw both of them naked, the greatest man and the smallest man: all-too-similar to one another - even the greatest, all-too-human!
The greatest all-too small! - that was my disgust at man! And the eternal recurrence even of the smallest! - that was my disgust at all existence! (Z III 13.2)

This passage demonstrates that Zarathustra's most abysmal thought causes his great disgust with man, however, this is distinct from the eternal recurrence of his most abysmal thought which causes his great disgust with all existence. So, not only can we see that the most abysmal thought and eternal recurrence are not identical, but that this also seems to be the way Nietzsche himself interprets it in *Ecce Homo*.

It is important to note that the eternal return of "the smallest", that creates a disgust at all existence, does not mean disgust only about the smallest man, rather, all of humanity has become small. It is not simply the small man that creates disgust but mankind itself including great men. This has been previously pointed out by Seung and Loeb (Seung 164; Loeb, "The Dwarf, the Dragon and the Ring of Eternal Recurrence", 99). What this means is that great men cannot justify the value of existence. In *Human, All-to-Human* Nietzsche rejects the attempt to justify existence through great men, excluding all other human beings, as a type of "impure thinking" (HAH I 33).

What eternal recurrence does is amplify an opinion already held by Zarathustra and blows it up to unreasonable proportions. In so doing, it allows us to really think the most abysmal thought to its depths. The most abysmal thought is a pessimistic thought. That it, the most abysmal thought concludes that there is no value to existence. This value judgment Nietzsche sees at the foundation of western thought. It is implicit in our value systems in philosophy ever since Socrates. Nietzsche states in *Twilight of the Idols*, in the section "The Problem of Socrates,"

The wisest men in every age have reached the same conclusion about life: it's no good [...] Even Socrates said as he died: 'living—that means being sick for a long time: I owe Asclepius the Savior a rooster'. (TI "The Problem of Socrates" 1)

Here Nietzsche's interpretation is that Socrates owes Asclepius, who is the God of doctors, a rooster because he has been cured of the disease that is life (GS 340). The idea that this world is a disgusting disease we should flee from is implicit in the western tradition. This includes various forms of Platonism

and Christianity. Until we confront this foundational disgust with earthly existence, we cannot fully affirm life.

According to Nietzsche, one of our fundamental problems is that we do not know how to justify the meaning of our existence. The meaning of suffering is unjustifiable, and this makes life itself repulsive and disgusting. It is not simply that we suffer but that we suffer *in vain*. Nietzsche writes, "The meaninglessness of suffering, *not* suffering itself, was the curse that lay over mankind" (GM III 28). One way we can deal with this is to fit our suffering into a larger metaphysical or religious scheme in which we can *redeem* our suffering. Nietzsche claims that the "insanities of Metaphysics" are an attempt to answer the question of the "value of existence" (GS Pref. 2). By redeeming suffering through metaphysics, "the tremendous void seemed to have been filled; the door was closed to any kind of suicidal nihilism" (GM III 28). Our disgust for human existence and the purposelessness of human suffering, if left to its own, would lead to suicide. If we were honest about the conditions of our existence it would be unbearable. Nietzsche writes, "*Honesty* would lead to nausea [disgust/*Ekel*] and suicide" (GS 107). We can either cure this foundational disgust or provide symptomatic treatment.

Symptomatic treatment functions as a type of therapy that only treats the symptom not the cause (GM III 16, 17). We can flee this disgust and treat its symptoms by either metaphysics or universal compassion. Metaphysics provides a reason for our suffering in some larger structural system that provides a justification for our suffering. Universal compassion, on the other hand, allows us to empathize with and ease the suffering of humanity. When we treat the symptoms of disgust for the human condition in this way, there is a sense in which life is preserved. One is no longer forced to suicidal nihilism. However, and Nietzsche is very clear about this, while not suicidal, such treatments are still unhealthy and essentially passively nihilistic.

Nietzsche tightly links the tendency of disgust for this world to Christianity. In 1874 Nietzsche claims that the ideals of Christianity make us disgusted by our own naturalness (UM SE 2). In his 1886 new forward to *The Birth of Tragedy*, "An Attempt at Self Criticism," he writes,

From the very outset Christianity was essentially and pervasively the feeling of disgust [*Ekel*] and weariness which life felt for life, a feeling which merely disguised, hid and decked itself out in its belief in ‘another’ or ‘better’ life. (BT “Attempt at Self-Criticism” 5.)

Christianity, therefore, demonstrates a disgust for everything human and finite. In positing heaven, Christians are trying to escape the world which they find disgusting and intrinsically valueless.

This critique also extends more generally to the metaphysical tradition that posits some transcendent afterworld in distinction to this world. As Nietzsche writes, this “metaphysical *need* [*Bedürfniss*]” indicates a sickness, passive nihilism, a world weariness and aversion to life (HAH I 26, I 37, I 153; GS 151; cf. HAH I 222; GS 1 [need “*Bedürfniss*” for metaphysicians], 110 [need “*Bedürfniss*” for truth]; cf. BGE 59). To have this kind of *metaphysical need* is a sign of weakness and decay. “Needing” metaphysics is a weakness and “impotence” that comes from deep sickness, deep suffering, deep “distress” with life and this world (Z I 3; GS Pref. 2; cf. Z I 4, I 8). As Nietzsche says in the 1887 preface to *The Gay Science*,

In some it is their deprivations that philosophize; in others their riches and strengths. The former *need* [*nöthig*] their philosophy, whether it be as a prop, a sedative, medicine, redemption, elevation, or self alienation. For the latter it is merely a beautiful luxury [...] (GS Pref. 2)

For Nietzsche, the need for metaphysics can be seen as a form of nihilistic revenge on a life one finds disgusting. To falsify the world by means of conceptual schemes is to take revenge upon it. This world of flux and change seems degraded when we compare it to a transcendentalized and deified world. Nietzsche writes,

Here and there one encounters an impassioned and exaggerated worship of “pure forms,” among both philosophers and artists:

let nobody doubt that whoever stands that much in *need* [*nöthig*] of the cult of surfaces [metaphysics] must at some time have reached *beneath* them with disastrous results.

Perhaps there even exists an order of rank among these burnt children, these born artists who find enjoyment of life only in the intention of *falsifying* its image (as it were, in a long winded revenge on life): the degree to which life has been spoiled for them might be inferred from the degree to which they wish to see its image falsified, thinned down, transcendentalized, deified. (BGE 59)

Metaphysical and theological systems which posit some form of backworld [*Hinterwelt*] or afterlife can be seen as a symptom (Z I 3; HAH II 17; cf. KGW VIII 2 11[99]). That is, they are the result of a predisposition to see everything that is this-worldly as disgusting. It demonstrates an implicit pessimism about the value of existence.

Comfort from Suicidal Pessimism

Metaphysical systems, be they Christian or Platonic, give us comfort. They allow us to fit seemingly meaningless and purposeless suffering into a broader picture where the value of existence can be justified. These systems are intended to save us from suicidal nihilism. Without these systems of comfort, if we really thought pessimism through to its depth, it would be unbearable. The meaninglessness of suffering would hang upon us as the greatest weight.

In *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Essay II section 14, which is to some extent a commentary on “The Convalescent” in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche describes what has a calamitous effect: profound disgust and great compassion. In this section he is describing how man’s weakness and smallness make them resentful and vengeful against life. He writes,

What is to be feared, what has a disastrous effect like no other disaster, would not be great fear, but *disgust* for humans, likewise

great *compassion* for humans. Supposing these were to marry someday, then immediately something uncanny would inevitably come into the world, the “last will” of humanity, its will to nothingness, nihilism. (GM III 14)

Disgust and compassion are central features of diagnosing sick predispositions towards life that result in nihilism.

This raises the question as to why such a combination is so very nihilistic? Nietzsche had this fully worked out by 1881 when he published *Dawn*. Disgust at all existence itself in an individual is not necessarily a bad thing for humanity itself since those individuals will select themselves out of the species via suicide. It confirms the wisdom of the satyr Silenus which Nietzsche quotes in *The Birth of Tragedy*, “The very best thing is utterly beyond your reach not to have been born, not to *be*, to be *nothing*. However, the second-best thing for you is: to die soon” (BT 3). That is, an unpolluted and clear-sighted pessimism that became conscious of this kind of disgust at all existence would lead to suicide. However, such pessimism and disgust does not self-extinguish when it is combined with compassion. Nietzsche writes,

If, like the people of India, one establishes knowledge of human *misery* as the *goal* of all intellectual activity and remains faithful to such a horrible objective throughout many generations of spirit, then, in the eyes of such people of *inherited* pessimism, *feeling compassion* acquires, in the long run, a new value as a *life-preserving* power that makes existence bearable, even though it seems, for all the disgust and horror it evokes, worth tossing away. As a sensation containing pleasure and meting out superiority in small doses, feeling compassion becomes the antidote to suicide. (D 136)

While a disgust at all existence might cause one to commit suicide, if one has compassion for others then one will remain in this sick state for a long time.

However, this compassion only functions as an antidote to suicide if it is not thought through completely. If it is thought through to its depths, as Zarathustra does, it unravels and compassion can no longer justify existence. In fact, universal compassion is an argument against the value of existence. Early in Nietzsche’s career we can find seeds of the thought that universal compassion and empathy lead to nihilism. In *Human, All-Too-Human* he argues that the exceptional person able to really think compassion to its depth, would reveal their own nihilism. He writes,

Thus, for the ordinary, everyday person, the value of life rests solely upon him taking himself to be more important than the world. The great lack of imagination from which he suffers makes him unable to empathize with other beings, and hence, he participates in their fate and suffering as little as possible. By contrast, anyone who really could participate in such things would have to despair of the value of life; if he did manage to conceive and to feel the total consciousness of humanity within himself, he would collapse with a curse against existence - for humanity as a whole has no goal and consequently the individual cannot find anything to comfort and sustain him by considering the whole process, but only despair. (HAH I 33)

This section in *Human, All-Too-Human* is illustrative of what it means to think compassion through to its depths as Nietzsche suggests in *Beyond Good and Evil* 56. Universal compassion seems to initially provide an antidote for suicidal nihilism. However, when we think universal compassion through it becomes unbearable. It is difficult to justify the seemingly unjustified suffering in one’s own life. If one expands this to one’s friends and family, it becomes even more difficult. Expanding this to the human species in general makes it even more difficult to affirm the value of life. If one goes one step further and applies the eternal recurrence of such universal compassion it becomes completely unbearable.

The above section from *Human, All-Too-Human* I think is helpful for understanding Zarathustra's experience in "The Convalescent." This form of compassion that seeks to do away with all things in life that are painful simply has a misconception of life. This approach to life sees what is difficult and what is challenging as a problem to be solved, eradicated, and cured. The end goal of life would simply be a lack of discomfort. However, this ignores that perhaps what makes us most human is striving against what is difficult and expressing our strength against opposition. Nietzsche writes in *The Gay Science*,

The 'religion of compassion' (or 'the heart') commands them to help, and believe they have helped best when they have helped most quickly! Should you adherents to this religion really have the same attitude towards yourself that you have towards your fellow men; should you refuse to let your suffering lie on you even for an hour and instead constantly prevent all possible misfortune ahead of time; should you experience suffering and displeasure as evil, hateful, deserving of annihilation, as a defect of existence, then you have besides your religion of pity also another religion in your hearts; and the latter is perhaps the mother of the former - *the religion of snug cosiness*. (GS 338)

The tendency towards compassion that eternal recurrence exaggerates shows us something about the anesthetic vision of the good life the western tradition has created for itself. The best life is the painless life. When this is exaggerated and thought through to its depths it is shown not to be life affirming but actually a kind of life negating pessimism.

Such a view is completely compatible with the suicidal nihilism present in the wisdom of Silenus presented earlier, "The very best thing is utterly beyond your reach not to have been born, not to *be*, to be *nothing*. However, the second best thing for you is: to die soon" (BT 3). This is precisely the pessimism of Socrates that Nietzsche introduced directly before his first presentation of eternal recurrence in *The Gay Science*. Nietzsche writes, "[Socrates]

said: 'O Crito, I owe Asclepius a rooster.' This ridiculous and terrible 'last word' means for those who have ears: 'Oh Crito, life is a disease'" (GS 340). The need to 'cure' the problem of life reveals that Socrates, and the western tradition generally, sees human life itself as a disgusting disease.

Nietzsche does not mean disgust at a particular person but disgust at being a living embodied human in general. This disgust is not only outward but internalized. Most treatments of disgust involve the object of disgust being something exterior to oneself. However, in the moment of thinking though eternal return of the most abysmal thought, one is also part of the disgusted category. In this sense, this great disgust involves shame (*Scham*) at being human. Nietzsche writes,

The darkening of the sky above humanity has always increased in proportion to how humans' shame at humans has grown. The weary pessimistic gaze, the mistrust of the enigma of life, the icy No of disgust at life [...] On their path to becoming "angels" (not to use a harsher word here) humans have bread themselves that ruined stomach and that coated tongue through which not only the joy and innocent of the animals have become repugnant to them, but even life itself has become distasteful. (GM II 7)

Disgust and universal compassion go hand in hand. They are not separate phenomena but form the basic nihilistic instinct at the foundation of western metaphysics and Christianity. The combination of these two leads to nihilism.

The most abysmal thought reveals the foundational disgust at the human condition that we consistently find within the western tradition. Metaphysics, from Plato through Kant, is a kind of escapism founded on a disgust with the this-worldly conditions in which humans live.

The centrality of disgust that Nietzsche diagnoses at the foundation of western philosophy, however, is not hopeless. Throughout his career Nietzsche uses the metaphor of disgust as something that must be overcome

[*überwinden*] (UM DS 6). The most abysmal thought provides the opportunity for such an overcoming. As Gooding-Williams writes, “Zarathustra regards his abysmal thought to be a good reason for becoming a sublime and leonine being who *rejects his abysmal thought*” (Gooding-Williams; 373). If we philosophically reflect on the deep role that disgust of human finitude plays in western metaphysics, we may be able to heal ourselves and become convalescent. By thinking the most abysmal thought to its end, we will confront the hidden origin of our systems of thought. Nietzsche tells us that thinking pessimism to its depths, may actually point to an opposite ideal. An ideal that affirms life.

In *Beyond Good and Evil* 56, a section addressing eternal recurrence, Nietzsche writes that thinking pessimism to its depths provides the possibility of life affirmation,

Whoever has endeavored with some enigmatic longing, as I have, to think pessimism through to its depths [...], looked into, down into, the most world-denying of all possible ways of thinking [...] may just thereby, without really meaning to do so, have opened his eyes to the opposite ideal. (BGE 56 [Kaufmann trans])

For Nietzsche, it is important that we come to terms with our foundational disgust with the human condition so that we may be able to overcome it and affirm the kind of life we have.

Nietzsche writes, “Anyone who has ever thought this possibility through to the end knows one more nausea [*Ekel*/disgust] than other human beings - but perhaps also a new *task!*...” (BGE 203). This new task requires that we reevaluate the systems of thought that have led us to this point and seriously consider if they are a healthy perspective to have on life.

One could consider life quite differently from the start. Struggle and difficulty in life are not something that we ought to get rid of. Rather, is what makes us truly human. To be presented with a challenging situation is not necessarily a bad thing but an invitation to rise to the challenge. Trying times can be an opportunity to let our courage and power truly come forward. We

can see the difficulties in life as a way to test ourselves and exert our inner determination upon the world. It is only when we are pushed to our limits that we truly express our full potential. Perhaps we should welcome a challenging life because it will forge us, like a piece of iron between hammer and anvil, into something truly great. Hardship might allow us to become our full selves, to become who we truly are.

Such a view of life is absolutely antithetical to disgust and universal compassion. Such a view embraces hardship as one’s highest hope! Rather than feeling disgust and compassion, one ought to see the potential for courage. In the section entitled “On the Vision and the Riddle”, Zarathustra suggests,

Courage is the best slayer: courage also slays pity. But pity is the deepest abyss: as deeply as man looks into life, so deeply does he also look into suffering.
But courage is the best slayer, courage that attacks: it slays even death itself; for it says: “was that life? Well then! Once more!” (Z III 2.1)

If one thinks pessimism and the most abysmal thought to their depths, one reveals a basic disposition of western metaphysics that is not necessary. By seeing the depths of life denial, the opposite ideal emerges,

the most exuberant, lively and world-affirming human being who has learned to reconcile and come to terms with not only what was and is, but also want to have it again as it was and is, for all eternity, insatiably shouting *da capo* [from the top (play it again)]. (BGE 56)

Such an individual would not be crushed by the weight of universal compassion and disgust when he hears about the thought of eternal recurrence. Such a being is not disgusted by life at all. Rather, hearing that this life would repeat again in exactly the same way would bring them great joy and reason for celebration. A life affirming person of this type would say upon hearing

this, “You are a god, and never have I heard anything more divine” (GS 341). Such a reaction would indicate that one has thought pessimism through to its depth and found the opposite ideal of life affirmation. Such a predisposition would embrace the hardships and challenges in life and to affirm what is difficult. One would love one’s fate, *amor fati*, because hardship is what is necessary to forge one into what one is. This world affirming perspective would want nothing to be different and love every moment of life because life is inherently valuable. Nietzsche writes,

My formula for human greatness is *amor fati*: that you do not want anything to be different, not forwards, not backwards, not for all eternity. Not just to tolerate necessity, still less to conceal it [...] but to *love* it...” (EH “Clever” 10)

To love life this way is to have overcome one’s disgust with being human beings qua human being. To fully embrace being human, all-too-human, is to overcome our foundational disgust with everything this-worldly.

The foundational disgust with mankind that sparks the need for metaphysical backworlds and theological afterworlds must be thought through to its end. Linda Williams holds that the thought of eternal recurrence functions as a mirror that shows us our true selves. It allows us to see our predispositions towards life. However, it is not simply a diagnostic tool or litmus test because thinking the thought of eternal recurrence through does more than just reflect our image back to us. Rather, it magnifies and over exaggerates our own predispositions and the predispositions of western metaphysics. By exaggerating our predispositions, it shows us just how strange this disgust with human finitude really is and gives us the opportunity to overcome it.

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Nietzsche on Moods, Passions, and Styles: Greek Inspirations

Martha Kendal Woodruff

Seid von mir begrüßt, liebe Stimmungen, wundersame Wechseleiner stürmischen Seele, mannichfach wie die Natur ist, aber großartiger als die Natur ist... Ich bin in diesem Augenblick nicht mehr so gestimmt, wie ich es beim Beginn des Schreibens.

Dear moods, I salute you, marvellous variations of a tempestuous soul, as manifold as nature itself, but more magnificent than nature... I am no longer this moment in the mood I was in as I began to write.

—Nietzsche, “Über Stimmungen” (1864)

I.

Throughout his works, despite all changes, Nietzsche remains dedicated to the belief that the affective realm—the entire sphere of moods, passions, emotions, feelings—lies far deeper than reason and provides the real motivation for our pursuit of knowledge, ethics, and art. But Nietzsche avoids a simple binary opposition of “emotion versus reason” and instead suggests that our drive for knowledge itself has an affective origin in our psychology. The early Nietzsche frequently uses the term “the pathos of truth [*Pathos der Wahrheit*]” to suggest that even our striving for truth arises from an affective

need. This position has ancient origins: the Greek meaning of *philo-sophia* as love for wisdom suggests an affective heart, a particular kind of love, as the root meaning of philosophy. One reason for Nietzsche’s love of the Greeks lies in this ancient sense of philosophy as a kind of love and as a way of life. Indeed, Nietzsche’s revaluations of moods and passions arise from his readings of the Greeks. Only through his revivals of the Greeks, I argue, does Nietzsche find the resources he needs to develop an alternative understanding of affects that differs from both Christianity and modern pessimism.¹

Granted, Nietzsche does not have a single “theory of the emotions” in the contemporary analytic sense. Rather, Nietzsche’s understanding of our affective life evolves. In his unique way, Nietzsche not only analyzes moods and passions, but evokes them rhetorically, arouses and guides the emotional responses of his readers. At times within one work, even within one paragraph, Nietzsche’s writing moves from one mood to another and influences the reader differently. The question of mood thus proves to be inseparable from the question of style. Nietzsche deliberately engages in a wide range of styles of writing, by shifting voices and by experimenting with genres, to show his perspectivism and to open each reader’s perspectives.² Thus a range of styles communicates a range of moods, ways of thinking and feeling.

In this study, I trace the development from mood to passion, from *Stimmung* to *Leidenschaft*, across early to middle works. In one of his earliest essays, titled “On Moods” from 1864, the young Nietzsche explores the amorphous, atmospheric, ever-changing nature of moods. In this rich essay, which has not yet received much critical attention, Nietzsche writes under the influence of Romanticism, but several statements anticipate his mature ideas.

¹For more of my work on Nietzsche and the Greeks, see my articles (Woodruff 2002a, 2002b, 2007). For more of my work on Nietzsche’s styles, see my article on animals and styles (Woodruff 2004).

²Here I follow Alexander Nehamas: Nietzsche seeks to demonstrate his perspectivism through “his adoption of a vast, and so far largely unnoticed variety of literary genres and styles: his purpose is in this way to make his presence as an individual author unforgettable to his readers” (4-5).

While certain philosophers have ignored or disparaged moods as less important than emotions, because the former appear to lack a concrete object, Nietzsche shows the unique significance of *Stimmung* and inaugurates a tradition of thought. Then, in his lectures of the early 1870s on the Pre-Socratics, Nietzsche turns his attention to the moods and ways of life of these early thinkers. In *Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche focuses on the contrast between the moods of Apollonian calm self-restraint and those of Dionysian ecstatic self-loss, and more generally on the healing emotions of tragedy.

In the middle works, Nietzsche continues his interest in moods but shifts the focus to the psychology of self-liberation for the future. In the trio of works on “free spirits,” *Human, All Too Human*, *Daybreak*, and *Gay Science*, Nietzsche now includes passions (*Leidenschaften*), emphasizes the contrast between Greek and Christian evaluations of affects, and stresses the need for different moods for doing philosophy as the “joyous wisdom.” Finally, in later works, Nietzsche examines affects historically and linguistically: how do emotions depend on the changing values given to them by language, religion, and culture? While the late Nietzsche ceases to write of *Stimmung*, for reasons we shall explore, he maintains his core belief in the pivotal role of passions, drives, and feelings.

For three main reasons, we will benefit from studying Nietzsche on moods and passions. First, tracing this development helps us to understand the evolution of Nietzsche’s thought more generally, especially his psychological insights into creativity and morality. Second, it helps us to appreciate Nietzsche’s inheritance from the Greeks and his influence on major thinkers of the Twentieth Century. For instance, consider the philosophical role of moods in Existentialism, from nausea as discussed by Sartre, to the absurd as examined by Camus, to the existential anxiety as emphasized by Kierkegaard and Heidegger. Third, if we wish to understand public moods today, especially the political mood of resentment, we need to learn from Nietzsche’s richly nuanced discussions, informed by his readings of Greek classics.

II.

In the early essay “On Moods” from Spring 1864, Nietzsche, only 19 and still at Schulpforta, writes under the influence of Romanticism.³ Beginning his life-long characteristic approach, Nietzsche both explores the philosophical significance of moods and arouses moods for the reader: “I am writing about moods, insofar as I am right now in a certain mood; and it is fortunate that I am just in the mood for describing moods” (NR 21). The writing moves from one mood to another by evoking seasonal changes. After first naming Easter (“A fine rain is falling outside”), the essay moves to another season: “Mild summer evening, twilight streaked with pallor. Children’s voices in the lanes, in the distance noise and music” (NR 22). Then the essay concludes with dramatic lines that call to mind the style of *Sturm und Drang*: “Storm and rain! Thunder and lightning! Right through the middle! And a voice rang out: ‘Become new!’” (NR 23).⁴

Moods for the early Nietzsche involve opposition: “our temperament is conditioned by these old and new worlds, and the current situation of the conflict is what we call ‘mood’ [*Stimmung*] or also, with some disdain, ‘temper’ [*Laune*]” (NR 21). These “quarreling parties” represent our ever-changing moods. Such emotional strife actually benefits us: “conflict is the constant nourishment of the soul” (NR 22). Continuing his interests from “Homer’s Contest,” Nietzsche valorizes strife in the Greek tradition of *agon*, noble competition.⁵

To elaborate this positive view of psychological strife, Nietzsche revives the Platonic metaphor of the soul as a city with conflicting parts:

³As Stanley Corngold notes, the young Nietzsche is especially influenced by the moods of Hölderlin’s poetry (68–69).

⁴As Graham Parkes notes, this essay brings to mind “radical hylozoism, or panpsychism,” a continuum between human and organic spheres (48). Parkes further explores Emerson’s influence on this early essay (42–48).

⁵For more on Nietzsche and Greek agonistics, see Christa Davis Acampora’s *Contesting Nietzsche* (2013).

Moods thus arise either from inner conflict or else from external pressure on the inner world. Here there is a civil war between two enemy camps, there an oppression of populace by a particular class, by a small minority... The soul destroys and thereby gives birth to new things, it fights energetically, and yet gently draws the opponent over to its own side for an intimate union (NR 22).

While Nietzsche does not name Plato's *Republic* here, he was already immersed in the study of Greek classics and would have known Plato's political metaphor for the soul. Following the Platonic idea of soul as microcosm, Nietzsche explores the way *Stimmung* can be both internal and external, both emotional climate and public atmosphere.⁶

Here and elsewhere, Nietzsche celebrates the musical connotations of *Stimmung* as "attunement."⁷ In German, *Stimmung* has significant musical and aural cognates, such as *Stimme* (voice), *stimmen* (to tune), *Übereinstimmung* (agreement, concord), and *Stimmgabel* (tuning fork, as in *Twilight of the Idols*). In this essay, Nietzsche mentions that he has played Liszt's *Consolations* many times: "now I feel how its tones have penetrated my being and continue, spiritualized, to resonate within me" (NR 21). Similar to the reverberations of music, moods linger and create harmony or disharmony in the soul. To evoke a certain mood, Nietzsche exclaims: "Listen! Music!" (NR 21). This early essay contains important terms, such as *Trieb* (drive) and *Macht des Willens* (power of will), and anticipates mature ideas, such as self-overcoming.

⁶This view anticipates Heidegger's: "A mood [*Stimmung*] assails us. It comes neither from 'outside' nor from 'inside' but arises out of Being-in-the-world" (*Being and Time* §29).

⁷For a history of the word and concept of *Stimmung*, see Leo Spitzer's *Classical and Christian Ideas of World Harmony* (1963). On music, see Georges Liébert, *Nietzsche And Music* (2004).

III.

In the early 1870s, Nietzsche continues his interest in *Stimmung*, intensifies the focus on the Greeks, and adds a historical dimension to the study of affects. In *Birth of Tragedy* (1872), Nietzsche makes the philosophical role of mood central to the contrast between Apollo and Dionysus: the former has a mood of "measured restraint, freedom from the wilder emotions, calm of the sculptor god" (BT §1). By contrast, the Dionysian polarity has a mood of wild excess and *ek-stasis*, as "standing outside oneself." Individuals lose their boundaries in the "mysterious primal unity" (BT §1). Even when Nietzsche does not explicitly use the term *Stimmung*, he focuses on the healing powers of moods and emotions in tragic art.

Nietzsche first mentions *Stimmung* by referring to Schiller's belief that lyric poetry grows out of a "musical mood" (BT §5). Schopenhauer's theory of music provides the essential background: "Hence it has always been said that music is the language of feeling and of passion, just as words are the language of reason" (WWR §52). Schopenhauer's metaphysics of music influences Nietzsche's belief that music reveals the deepest levels of reality and arouses passionate responses: "Dionysian music in particular excited awe and terror [*Schrecken und Grausen*]" (BT §2). Yet early Nietzsche still needs to overcome Schopenhauer's pessimism.

The second mention of *Stimmung* occurs as part of the effort to avoid this danger. When spectators turn from the emotive force of Greek tragedy back to ordinary life, they encounter a "chasm of oblivion" between the tragic and the mundane. The result is "nausea, an ascetic, will-negating mood" (BT §7). On this early view, Schopenhauer's pessimism represents the risk of modern nihilism, for which Greek tragedy presents the cure. After introducing the mood of nausea (which Sartre will develop as an existential affect), Nietzsche suggests the remedy: "Here, when the danger to [the] will is greatest, art approaches as a saving sorceress, expert at healing" (BT §7). Art transforms our responses to suffering: the sublime works as "the artistic taming of the horrible," while the comic represents "the artistic discharge of the nausea of

absurdity" (BT §7). Both the sublime and the comic offer to heal suffering through transformations of moods.

In the next section, Nietzsche again discusses *Stimmung*, this time that of the spectators of tragedy: "Now the dithyrambic chorus was assigned the task of exciting the mood of the listeners to such a Dionysian degree that, when the tragic hero appeared on the stage, they did not see the awkwardly masked human being but rather a visionary figure, born as it were from their own rapture" (BT §8). Lastly, regarding Nietzsche's view that Euripides, under the influence of Socratic rationalism, replaced Dionysian ecstasies with "fiery affects" (BT §12), we should note that *Affekt* has a slightly negative connotation as a more technical term than *Stimmung*.

In *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks* (1873), Nietzsche opens the essay by asserting that the lives, personalities, and moods of the Pre-Socratics matter more than their arguments alone: "whoever rejoices in great human beings will also rejoice in philosophical systems, even if completely erroneous. They always have one wholly incontrovertible point: personal mood, color" (PTA, Preface). Here Nietzsche differs from a dominant tradition of modern analytic philosophy that stresses arguments alone. Instead, Nietzsche introduces the theme of *philosophy as a way of life*, which becomes an influential way of interpreting Greco-Roman thought for Foucault, Hadot, and others. When Nietzsche writes of the *Stimmung* of these earliest Greek thinkers, he does not mean to reduce their thinking to "mere" psychology but rather to situate it in an individual and cultural attunement to the world, in a way of Being-in-the-world, in the Heideggerian phrase. The fact that these Pre-Socratic thinkers lived in unique ways, from the secretive community of the Pythagoreans to the reclusive Heraclitus, demonstrates that they lived their philosophy as "great individual human beings" and as part of "the republic of creative minds" (PTA Preface 1). The ultimate test of philosophical positions lies not in abstractions but in the lives of the philosophers. One

vivid statement summarizes the point: "The philosopher's product is his *life*—That is his work of art" (*Writings from Early Notebooks*, 182).⁸

IV.

In the trio of works from his middle period, *Human, All Too Human* (1878–80), *Daybreak* (1881), and *Gay Science* (1882), Nietzsche expands his interest from *Stimmung* to *Leidenschaft*. These middle works introduce moods of radical questioning and uncertainty about old truths and old religions, yet also joy at new possibilities for thinking and living.⁹ Nietzsche continues to focus on *Stimmung* but for different purposes: for the development of "free spirits," for the future of self-liberation and self-knowledge, and for the sake of diverse styles and genres for writing philosophy. From new moods and passions emerge new modes of writing and thinking. Style communicates mood.

In "The Wanderer and His Shadow," the sequel to *Human, All Too Human*, in a pivotal section titled "A kind of cult of the passions," Nietzsche urges the reader to transform passions:

It was up to you, and it is up to us, *to take from* the passions their terrible character and thus prevent their becoming devastating torrents... let us rather work together on the task of transforming the passions [*Leidenschaften*] of mankind one and all into joys [*Freudenschaften*] (WS, HH §37).

Here Nietzsche coins a clever term by substituting the word for pleasure, *Freude*, for the word for suffering, *Leiden*, which normally forms the first half of the word *Leidenschaft*. In a similar way, the Greek verb *paschein* means "to suffer" and is closely related to *pathos* and, via Latin *passio*, to the word "passion." Etymologically, these terms remind us that we *suffer* the passions.

⁸For this passage, I acknowledge Graham Parkes (99).

⁹On this point, I agree with Sampsa Saarinen: "From *HH* onwards, Nietzsche seeks to communicate a philosophical mood, a mood conducive to living a philosophical life that unites skepticism with joy" (241).

But Nietzsche here and elsewhere (specifically in *WS*, *HH* §§53, 65, 88) implores readers to transform passions, to change sufferings into joys. Neither repression nor explosion of passions would be the goal for those “free spirits” who seek deeper self-knowledge.

Self-transformation through passions promises a distinctive style of both character and writing. Style in the broadest sense means a way of thinking and communicating one’s unique *ethos*, character. Style, far from being merely decorative, thus takes on an ethical significance. Nietzsche argues that the best style communicates the best character: “that of the spiritually joyful, luminous and honest man who has overcome his passions. This will be the teaching that there exists a best style: the style corresponding to the good man” (*WS*, *HH* §88). Further, style can acquire political significance, as Nietzsche advocates a new ideal of a cosmopolitan communication: “That is why everyone who is a good European now has to learn *to write well and ever better*... To write better, however, means at the same time also to think better” (*WS*, *HH* §87). The phrase “good European” indicates a cross-cultural openness in thinking and writing, a style open to diverse traditions and against narrow parochialism.¹⁰

In *Daybreak*, Nietzsche continues to explore the connections between thinking and feeling, to contrast ancient and modern modes of experiencing emotions, and to revive Greek passions as antidotes to the dangers of both Christian “otherworldliness” and Schopenhauer’s pessimism. For instance, this passage makes an explicit contrast: “The passions become evil and malicious if they are regarded as evil and malicious. Thus Christianity has succeeded in transforming Eros and Aphrodite—great powers capable of idealization—into diabolical kobolds and phantoms” (*D* §76). In two other key sections, Nietzsche stresses the joy that Greek thinkers found in the search for knowledge: one should “hear the continual rejoicing which resounds through every speech and counter-speech of a Platonic dialogue”

¹⁰As David Krell writes, Nietzsche became “one of the principal critics of European (and especially German) nationalism, imperialism, and militarism” (*The Good European*, 1).

(*D* §544). Indeed, the Greek love of argument was so passionate that it could even blur the distinction between Apollonian and Dionysian: “In those days, souls were filled with drunkenness at the rigorous and sober game of concept, generalization, refutation, limitation” (*D* §544).

Further, Plato and Aristotle, “as fundamentally different” as they were, agreed that “what constituted *supreme happiness*,” not only for humans but for the gods, lay in the pursuit of knowledge, “in the activity of a well-trained inquisitive and inventive *mind*” (*D* §550). As in *Birth of Tragedy*, so too in this work Nietzsche critiques his own age by a revival of Greek passions and beliefs, especially their reverence for sexuality and fertility, and their joy in seeking knowledge.

On the history of morality, Nietzsche asserts: “we have to *learn to think differently*—in order at last, perhaps very late on, to attain even more: *to feel differently*” (*D* §103). Again, this mode of thought seeks to destabilize the dichotomy between thinking and feeling. Finally, Nietzsche warns that the excessive intellectual passion of his age might be risky: “Knowledge has in us been transformed into a passion... Perhaps mankind will even perish of this passion for knowledge!” (*D* §429). Philosophy on this view, far from being only abstract and logical, contains such strong passions that they might become dangerous, if not transformed and guided towards life.

V.

The *Gay Science* seeks new moods and styles for doing philosophy and for cultivating the humanity of the future.¹¹ Nietzsche opens this work by writing of the need for “the saturnalia of spirit” and “the hope for health, and the intoxication of convalescence” (*GS* Preface §1). The shift in content, to a liberating “alliance” between wisdom with laughter (*GS* §1), demands a shift in the moods and styles of Nietzsche’s own writing and correspondingly of

¹¹As Kathleen Higgins puts it, this work is “carefully orchestrated” and draws on elements of music, drama, and comedy (8).

each reader's moods and styles. Rather than the traditional pursuit of "truth at any price," Nietzsche asserts that what we truly need is life, more than truth:

The problem of the total health of a people, time, race or of humanity... what was at stake in all philosophizing hitherto was not at all "truth" but something else—let us say, health, future, growth, power, life (GS Preface §2).

Thus, Nietzsche casts himself in the role of "philosophical physician," an important idea from early essays, to diagnose the hidden ailments and needs of a culture: there can often lurk "an unconscious disguise of physiological needs under the cloak of the objective, ideal, purely spiritual" (GS Preface §2). In fact, Nietzsche poses the question of whether most previous philosophy has been "an interpretation of the body and a *misunderstanding of the body*" (GS Preface §2). To understand human beings deeply, we must engage in the careful examination of all affects as embodied and as evolving, incorporating biology, psychology, medicine, philology, and history into philosophy—that is, the method of a Nietzschean genealogy, well before the *Genealogy*.

Passions have their own history. Nietzsche contrasts Greek and early Christian views of the passions: the Greeks "loved, elevated, gilded, and deified" the passions (GS §139). As noted, recall that Eros, Aphrodite, and Dionysus were divinities worthy of reverence for the Greeks; hence human erotic desire had a divine source. By contrast, Nietzsche asserts that St. Paul and others interpret the passions as "dirty, disfiguring, and heartbreaking" and even aim for "the annihilation of the passions" (GS §139). Therefore, the revaluation of passions and moods will be essential to any new philosophical, religious, or artistic movement.

In "Elevated Moods [*Hohe Stimmungen*]" (GS §288), Nietzsche writes of a higher ideal for any human being: "To be a single great mood incarnate—that has hitherto been a mere dream and a delightful possibility; as yet history does not offer us any certain examples" (GS §288). Such an elevated mood would open new possibilities for being human, and correspondingly new

challenges. Consequently, the surrounding sections urge bold exploration: "Embark! There is yet another world to be discovered—and more than one" (GS §289). Nietzsche urges readers "to live dangerously! Send your ships into uncharted seas!" (GS §283).

Again, Nietzsche intertwines mood and style: "To 'give style' to one's character—a rare and great art!" (GS §290). I interpret this to mean that we should impose "an artistic plan" (GS §290) upon the creative chaos within us, to give shape to what is shapeless, even ugly. Nietzsche argues that the free self-imposition of "the constraint of a single style" promises "finest gaiety" to "strong natures" (GS §290). By contrast, Nietzsche suggests that "weak characters without power over themselves hate the constraint of style." That in turn leads to resentment and the yearning to punish others: "Whoever is dissatisfied with himself is continually ready for revenge and we others will be his victims" (GS §290). If resentment arises from a sense of inferiority in oneself and envy of others, then ethical self-cultivation in the Aristotelian tradition might be one remedy.¹²

Style leads to self-expression, then self-knowledge, then character formation. A single sentence puts the point most dramatically: "to improve one's style—means to improve one's thoughts" (GS §131). Art thus informs ethics, in the broadest sense of *ethos* as character. Artistry goes far beyond the walls of museums; we should learn from artists and architects about perspectives so as to become "artists of our own lives" (GS §299). As "artists of our own lives," our values, emotions, and actions can be artistic creations in the broadest sense.

Neither style nor mood could be a disembodied, cerebral concern. Hence Nietzsche repeatedly rejects Cartesian dualism and stresses the role of the body in knowledge:¹³

¹²In *Daybreak* §556, Nietzsche follows the Aristotelian tradition and lists four "cardinal virtues": honesty, bravery, magnanimity, politeness.

¹³As Robert Solomon suggests: "Cartesianism is the problem. Nietzsche's biologism is the answer" (81).

...this art of transfiguration is philosophy. We philosophers are not free to divide body from soul as the people do; we are even less free to divide soul from spirit. We are not thinking frogs, nor objectifying and registering mechanisms with their innards removed: consequently, we have to give birth to our thoughts out of our pain (GS Preface §3).

To transform styles and moods means to revalue embodiment.

Finally, Nietzsche confronts the moral-theological crisis of his age and announces for the first time his famous statement: “God is dead... And we have killed him” (GS §125). Yet Nietzsche urges us to recover from that traumatic loss and to reinterpret it as liberation. Indeed, one could view the entire project of the “joyful wisdom” as a sustained effort to change the mood of philosophy from nihilistic despair to cheerfulness. Within one key section titled “The meaning of our cheerfulness” (GS §343), which opens Book V, titled “We Fearless Ones,” Nietzsche moves from a mood of cultural despair over the past to one of joyous openness for the future. First, Nietzsche describes the death of God as a scarcely understood cause of collapse of “the whole of our European morality.” That in turn leads to a “sequence of breakdown, destruction, ruin, and cataclysm [*Abbruch, Zerstörung, Untergang, Umsturz*]” (GS §343). This loss portends a “monstrous logic of terror.” Yet in the next paragraph, Nietzsche urges his readers to transform these moods into their opposites:

They [the consequences] are not at all sad and gloomy but rather like a new and scarcely describable kind of light, happiness, relief, exhilaration, encouragement, dawn [*Licht, Glück, Erleichterung, Erheiterung, Ermuthigung, Morgenröthe*]. Indeed, we philosophers and “free spirits” feel, when we hear the news that “the old god is dead,” as if a new dawn shone upon us... the sea, our sea, lies open again; perhaps there has never yet been such an “open sea” (GS §343).

VI.

In conclusion, we return to a question with which we began: why does Nietzsche drop the word *Stimmung* in late works? Corngold suggests a persuasive answer: it is probable that “Nietzsche’s abandonment of the category Mood is dictated by his rejection of Romantic-Idealist aesthetics” (Corngold 85). While a full discussion of the late works goes beyond the boundaries of this study, suffice it to say that Nietzsche continues his fascination with passions and affects, including related phenomena such as drives and desires. *Zarathustra*, rather than analyzing moods and passions from a clinical distance, dramatically enacts moods of comedy, tragedy, and parody, with moments of laughter, hope, confusion, and irony, as in a Platonic dialogue.¹⁴ In *Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche turns to history and psychology to uncover hidden, even forbidden passions in the history of morality. The famous opening line insists we must discover the deeper self: “we are unknown to ourselves, we men of knowledge” (GM Preface).¹⁵ In *Twilight of the Idols*, Nietzsche dramatically asserts: “attacking the passions at the root means attacking life at the root” (TI “Morality” §1). In *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche emphasizes the significance of philosophical style(s):

To communicate a state, an inward tension of pathos, by means of signs, including the tempo of these signs—that is the meaning of every style... I have many stylistic possibilities—the most multifarious art of style that has ever been at the disposal of one man... Before me, it was not known what could be done with the German language—what could be done with language in general (EH “Books” §4).

¹⁴On *Zarathustra* as a tragi-comic drama, see the works of Robert Gooding-Williams and Lawrence Hatab, among others.

¹⁵What of “women of knowledge” who read Nietzsche? See *Feminist Interpretations of Nietzsche*, among other works.

This passage revives the Greek term *pathos* and the phrase “inward tension,” as in the earliest essay on moods. We come full circle, from early works to late, on the *Leitmotif* of mood and style.

By tracing the evolution of Nietzsche’s thoughts on affects, from moods to passions to drives, we have simultaneously traced the philosopher’s changes, inheritances, and influences. At a time when the politics of resentment spreads, Nietzsche’s probing psychology into *ressentiment* helps us understand this toxic movement. We have also explored the connections between mood and style, affect and communication. Any truly original mode of writing will change the tone of philosophy.¹⁶ Last but not least, through Nietzsche’s revivals of the Greeks, we have once again discovered how the ancients are still our contemporaries and how they can guide us in times of crisis.¹⁷

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¹⁶On the significance of philosophical and literary styles, see the first chapter of Martha Nussbaum’s *Love’s Knowledge*.

¹⁷For valuable help with this article, I gratefully acknowledge Jeffrey Champlin, Barenboim-Said Akademie, Berlin; Kaitlyn Creasy, California State University, San Bernardino; and Cater Wang, Philosophy research assistant, Middlebury College.

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Vital Strategy: Nietzschean Practices of Slowness and the Preservation of Fragile Life

Dong Yang

increscunt animi, virescit volnere virtus
– Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*

Why has the pleasure of slowness disappeared?
– Milan Kundera, *Slowness*

It is now trite to mention the reciprocal nature of affect, that it involves interactions between two or more bodies, that affectivity means precisely the capacity for acting and being acted upon, that feeling is a type of passion whose formation depends on the synthetic intensity of external forces. The Deleuzian celebration of Spinoza's relational body and the rhizomic or connective function of affect—though mostly true—may also have fostered a misunderstanding of affect as something intrinsically good, even addictive and narcotic, a view that ignores the dark side of affect that Spinoza keeps reminding us of in *Ethics* “[...] there is of good and evil in the affects” (Spinoza 114). For human beings, who are modes or finite *natura naturatas* in the Spinozian system, affects are necessary, but not necessarily joyful. Excessive and intensive affects block the process of the mind's formulating adequate ideas pertaining to true causes or even stifle the flourishing of life by forcibly decomposing the relations on which a composite body lives. How,

then, would one deal with such a precarious state of life with its unbalanced thrusts of external forces? To tame the (destructive) power of affects—what Spinoza calls the “human bondage”—demands some practical means of proceeding that recognizes our vulnerability, especially in the initial and frail stage of life. My argument is that such a practical guide to taming destructive affects may be found in Nietzsche's autobiographical *Ecce Homo*, which recounts his lifelong endeavor to emancipate life from external and subjugating affects. Through a series of comments on both the first half of his life and his previous works, Nietzsche narrates the way he manages excessive affects from the external world, by *slowing down* his reactive affectivity, especially when he is troubled by sickness and hardships in life. Such a strategy aptly renders both the interactive and durational nature of affect as well as the dynamic processes of bodily interactions. To appreciate the Nietzschean art of slowness when facing seemingly unbearable affects, one needs to revisit the Spinozian theory of affect and Deleuze's further explications of that theory. I seek to demonstrate that for Nietzsche, the ability to alter and extend the duration of affect formation in the face of excessive external force is central to dealing with one's fatality and actively cultivating the will to power. The vital strategy of slowly reacting to destructive affects entails an implicit reevaluation of the value of slowness that would justify the Spinozian-Deleuzian theory of affect, which shows that affect works upon the relations between simple bodies and causes changes in speed. Slowness does not signify passivity and sickness but serves as a pragmatic methodology for cultivating one's *conatus* and preparing for the formation of common notions in order to generate actions. It already presupposes an overcoming of a naturalist tendency in the human psychology of *ressentiment* that drives one to reverse the master-slave power relation through ruse and revenge. Such slowness allows immersion in the Dionysian tragic spirit that resolutely affirms and celebrates life even with the awareness of its unavoidable hurdles and sufferings. As Nietzsche writes, “He reacts slowly to every kind of stimulus, with that slowness which a protracted caution and a willed pride have bred in him—he tests an approaching stimulus, he is far from going out to

meet it" (*EH* "Wise" §2). The slow and contemplative reactions in advancing knowledge of the external world—with innate joyfulness and certainty in the self—help prevent instant destruction of the relational rhythm of the body and free one from conforming to the bondage of affective power. Nietzsche thus provides us with practical tactics to deal with seemingly unbearable external affects at the beginning of our affective lives, when passivity and the state of affairs of being affected occupy most of our experience.

In his early work of the 1960s, Deleuze discerned common philosophical themes in Nietzsche and Spinoza, centering on their understanding of the body as a vibrant composite of forces and relations; and their shared project of seeking ways of overcoming the natural passivity of human beings by improving their *conatus* or will to power. In their view, the process of actualizing such potentiality may be impeded by the natural inclination to succumb to passive and decadent affects, and subsequently to see one's power of acting diminished. Nietzsche's strategy of slowness seems to function as a hypothetical and educational solution: to ward off immediate reactions to the sudden arrival of multiple affects and instead slow down, to lengthen the time needed to form any actual feeling, in order to leave time for evaluating and reevaluating whether the external forces are agreeable or not. The strategy of slowing down one's reception of external affects serves as a necessary condition for the individual cultivation of the active will to power.

Spinoza and affective human bondage

As Deleuze points out in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Spinoza and Nietzsche share a common inquiry into the notions of the body and force or affect, as well as a rejection of the dominance of the mind over the body:

Spinoza suggested a new direction for the sciences and philosophy. He said that we do not even know what a body *can do*, we talk about consciousness and spirit and chatter on about it all, but we do not know what a body is capable of, what forces

belong to it or what they are preparing for. Nietzsche knew that the hour had come [...] Like Freud, Nietzsche thinks that consciousness is the region of the ego affected by the external world (Deleuze: 1983, 39).

The rediscovery of the logic of bodily interactions mediated via physical affections and understood as mental affects is later adopted as perhaps the golden maxim of the rather young field of affect theory. In their collaborative efforts to lay out affect as an explicit subject of study, Melissa Gregg and Greg Seigworth recognize Spinoza as a foundational thinker in his systematic elaborations on affectivity as the essence of all modes and as a theoretical apparatus for decoding how power functions in nature: "In what undoubtedly has become one of the most oft-cited quotations concerning affect, Baruch Spinoza maintained 'No one has yet determined what the body can do'" (Gregg and Seigworth 3). Since the publication of Gregg and Seigworth's book, affect theory has taken more pragmatic and planetary directions concerning its practical applications to global political and cultural affairs (12). Spinoza's perennial question is still largely left unresolved and underdeveloped, especially when one considers it in the context of its initial enunciation:

For indeed, no one has yet determined what the body can do, that is, experience has not yet taught anyone what the body can do from the laws of Nature alone, insofar as Nature is only considered to be corporeal, and what the body can do only if it is determined by the mind. For no one has yet come to know the structure of the body so accurately that he could explain all its functions [...] the body itself, simply from the laws of its own nature, can do many things which its mind wonders at (Spinoza 71-72).

The radicalness of Spinoza's claim intensifies exponentially once we move past the first sentence. To understand the mechanism of the body, Spinoza addresses the importance of attending to the body beyond the laws of Nature,

which alone are incapable of uncovering the causal relation in the variations of the body, and treating it as a subsidiary and passive entity that functions merely within the reign of the mind guided by the mechanical natural laws. Further, Spinoza outlines the particular topics that one needs to consider when studying the body, “the laws of its own nature” that presumably at times operate on its own, and in ways that determine the functions of the body. In other words, the way a body works depends on its very relational composition alone, rather than the command of the mind. In the end, Spinoza speculates that what the body does may exceed the range of our rational understanding, or its actions could provide new sources for the accumulation of knowledge. We may thus arrive at the conclusion that for Spinoza the body is not merely subject to the directions of the mind; rather, its distinctive and independent capabilities of affections offer novel knowledge to the mind, and hence its degree of importance is *no less than* that of the mind. To comprehend the mechanism of bodily actions under the law of Nature at first is to think spatially and temporally, in terms of both the relational and physical structure of the body that constantly undergoes changes, and the processive formation of any affect that necessarily involves a temporal variation from a physical affection of the body to the mind’s understanding of it. The two categorical dimensions of time and space consequentially lead to an awareness that identifies affect as an effect rather than a cause and provides instructional directions for disentangling the way bodily interactions take place and develop. Nietzsche’s strategy of slowness for dealing with excessive affects, as I later show, results precisely from his insights into the mechanism of affect formation.

a. The Spinozian parallelistic cosmos and the primacy of the body

How, then, should we approach the structure of the body as well as the ordinal duration from affection to affect? The answers can be found in Spinoza’s *Ethics*. Though the geometrically constructed work encompasses a myriad of subjects of philosophical inquiry, one fundamental project resides in Spinoza’s

attempt to free the captive human mind from passive affects by delineating the dynamic transition in the faculty of understanding from inadequate to adequate and tracing backward from emotional effects to their causes. That which is said to be free, according to Spinoza, “exists from the necessity of its nature alone, and is determined to act by itself alone” (2). Such a divine state of being, however, has yet to be taken as a rational end for humans, as they tend to lack the power to control and moderate external affects, so that, as Spinoza observes, “[...] men are commonly ignorant of the causes of their appetites [...] they are conscious of their actions and appetites, but not aware of the causes by which they are determined to want something” (115). The epistemological task Spinoza undertakes is thus to clarify the dynamic process through which the mind obtains adequate ideas and subsequently understands both the cause and effect of external affects so that the bodily individuals are capable of acting freely and concurrently knowing their actions. With respect to the organization and structure of the *Ethics*, however, we note that the Spinozian epistemology of affect is strictly situated within his univocal metaphysical system, such that the limited and modal power of affectivity develops only in analogous reference to the model of God, or absolutely infinite nature.

A structural triad constitutes the Spinozian system: a substance or god, attributes or the medium through which it generates essential expressions, and finite modes as its production. Such a system functions as an inclusive entirety where substance encloses all modes mediated via attributes in an immanent and indirect way, whose sustenance is perfect and independent of any external entity.¹ The infinite essence of the substance—as the power of affectivity—enables interaction and communication between elements in the system, which, because of God’s perfect qualities of acting and knowing, are immediately and absolutely understood and affirmed. As *natura naturans* (naturing nature), substance expresses God’s essence and produces its crea-

¹See “IP15: *Whatever is, is in God, and nothing can be or be conceived without God*” (Spinoza 10).

tures, necessarily. Spinoza continues to demonstrate that the divine power of acting and suffering affect maintains an equilibrium—his capability of generating affects in the process of creating modes has the same valence as the capability of being affected. Though following the same affective dynamism, finite modes only share a limited portion of the essence and power of God. Therefore, lacking power², modes are capable of exercising the power of acting and being acted upon, and they can actualize these capabilities in a great many ways. The affective capacity of each individual mode varies in accordance with the amount of reality or perfection it contains.

Equipped with only finite affectivity, modes at the initial stage maintain a passivity in both body and mind, being unable to understand external causes adequately. Hence, a temporal duration is required for the process of knowledge formation between the attribute of Thought and that of Extension.³ Spinoza asserts that modes, initially, have only inadequate ideas that provide partial understanding of their experience and by no means explain the causes of affects, nor the ways to generate and maintain existence. Given his axiom that man thinks⁴, the transition from inadequate ideas to adequate ones must proceed through a series of affective encounters with external singular en-

²For Spinoza, power, or the capacity for expressing and suffering affects, is understood as the actualized quality of essence. Consider the absolute case of God, “IP34: *God’s power is his essence itself*” (Spinoza 25). In the same vein, for modes with only a limited quality of essence, the overall quantity of their power is necessarily less and, not in the state of *causa sui*, their essential power needs to be actualized and developed.

³Unlike the Cartesian assertion in *Meditations* that only two attributes—Thought and Extension—exist, Spinoza regards such an assertion as a result of the limitations of human intellect. In *Ethics*, Spinoza defines the attribute in terms of essence: “ID4: *By attribute I understand what the intellect perceives of a substance, as constituting its essence*” (Spinoza 1). And since God’s essence is infinite (derived from “IP11: *God, or a substance consisting of infinite attributes, each of which expresses eternal and infinite essence, necessarily exist*” (Spinoza 7), the quantity of attributes must be infinite too.

⁴In IIA2. This is the case even though, based on his note that “we know that we think” (Spinoza 32), it seems that the actualization of such an axiom presupposes a reflexive consciousness that addresses both the thought object and the activity of the self.

ties as the sources of contemplation: “IIA5: *We neither feel nor perceive any singular things, except bodies and modes of thinking*” (5). We may deduce further that the two sources of affective understanding, for Spinoza, reside in both the body and the mind—the expressive mode under the attribute of Extension in constant movement or rest or an idea under the attribute of Thought as a result of knowing a body. In other words, the two sources for the transition from inadequate to adequate ideas are both related to the extensive and expressive body, the difference depending on whether such a relation is direct or indirect. It is from this perspective that we may approach Spinoza’s statement concerning the connection between body and mind: “[...] we understand not only that the human mind is united to the body, but also what should be understood by the union of the mind and body” (40). Spinoza then presents his seminal argument: “[...] no one will be able to understand it adequately, or distinctly, unless he first knows adequately the nature of our body” (40). The body, for Spinoza, is thus not only considered central to our process of knowledge formation, but also holds *primacy* in his epistemology, and by establishing such a ground, he liberates the body from the dominance of the mind over the body which has reigned throughout the history of philosophy. Borrowing a Leibnizian term, Deleuze characterizes the Spinozian system as a form of parallelism that stresses the mutual and equally potent influence between mind and body:

One of the most famous theoretical theses of Spinoza is known by the name of parallelism; it does not consist merely in denying any real causality between the mind and the body, it disallows any primacy of the one over the other. If Spinoza rejects any superiority of the mind over the body, this is not in order to establish a superiority of the body over the mind, which would be no more intelligible than the conversely was said that when the body acted, the mind was acted upon in turn (the rule of the inverse relation, cf. Descartes, *The Passions of the Soul*, articles 1 and 2). According to the *Ethics*, on the contrary, what is an

action in the mind is necessarily an action in the body as well, and what is a passion in the body is necessarily a passion in the mind. There is no primacy of one series over the other. (Deleuze 1988, 18)

The significance of Spinozian parallelism, Deleuze contends, lies in its modal correspondence, its isonomy of principles, and subsequently the equality of being for all modes. The series of modes of each attribute finds a corresponding sequence—in the form of idea or body—in the other perceptible attribute and depend mutually upon each other for their being, as Spinoza says: “IIP7: *The order of and connection of ideas is the same as the order and connection of things*” (Spinoza 35). In addition, as Deleuze understands parallelism, it is implied in the notion that there is “an equality of principle between autonomous or independent series” (Deleuze 1990, 108). That the modes function under the same principle in different attributes, consequently, prevents the superiority of one form of modal being over the other, which underlines Spinoza’s effort to overturn the Leibnizian model that presupposes a preeminence of principles, namely, the mechanistic laws that determine the movement of modes. The immanence of substance in the Spinozian system -- meaning the cause of his existence is grounded only in himself -- establishes God as the univocal causality for all -- “the viewpoint of an immanent God and immanent causality” (109) -- and because of his concomitant acting and understanding, the modal sequence of all attributes necessarily unfolds in accordance with the substance’s principle. The first two formulations then lead to a third one, which demonstrates the identity of being: the univocal principle of causality of substance and the correspondence of modes ensure the equality of being of all modes, the only difference being the attributes to which they belong, and thus all modes are the affections of God’s expressions. The Spinozian parallelistic system allows the body to be the first order of inquiry into the mechanism of affect.

b. Affect, or the unavoidable

It is curious how Spinoza distinguishes the different ways of existence in substance and its productions (the modes), especially considering Spinoza’s reflections on the causal connections between essence and existence. Though free substance’s existence is already immanent in its essence (IP11, IP34, IP35) and the modes are described as affective effects of the substance’s actions of knowing and acting—or expressive productions—that participate necessarily in its essence, Spinoza refuses to simplistically grant the same substantial pattern of being to modes: “IIA1: The essence of man does not involve necessarily existence, that is, from the order of Nature it can happen equally that this or that man does not exist, or that he does not exist” (Spinoza 32). To be *causa sui* of one’s own existence, action and the understanding of that action need to come from the essence alone, without any dependence on external affections. That is, such action should be guided by adequate ideas that explicate both the causes and the effects, but such a state of perfection exists only in God, and the passage to acquiring this power is the rational end for man. For human beings, as one of the infinite number of finite modes in all-inclusive Nature, Spinoza remarks, passively suffering affections from external causes is unavoidable: “IVP2: *We are acted on, insofar as we are part of Nature, which cannot be conceived through itself, without the others*” (118). At the same time, such a process implies a chance to change, by potentially enabling the transition from inadequate ideas to adequate ones: “IVP4: *It is impossible that a man should not be a part of Nature, and that he should be able to undergo no changes except those which can be understood through his own nature alone, and of which he is the adequate cause*” (118). Spinoza refuses to consider human beings as exceptions in his parallelistic cosmos, and as Aurelia Armstrong aptly asserts, Spinoza’s insistence on the *causa sui* immanence within the individual and his view of the affective expansion of the body together engender an incompatibility that prevents the eventual arrival of absolutely freedom of man:

While it is true that Spinoza envisages process in ethical perfection as a matter of gaining an understanding of ourselves as parts of a more encompassing whole and that he views the process as involving an expansion of the boundaries of atomic individuality, his affirmation of the strict immanence of human being in nature precludes the possibility of a total liberation from external determination and, therefore, from the passions (Armstrong 13).

Given the unavoidable condition of affect, how does a mode engender and maintain its existence? For Spinoza, the existence of any entity is linked to the intensive power of essence—or its affective capacity: “To be able not to exist is to lack power, and conversely, to be able to exist is to have power” (Spinoza 8). Additionally, as stated in the previous section, though in the Spinozian system, affective interactions operative parallelistically with respect to both the body and the mind, the body serves as the primary condition for the existence of any idea, including a reflexive one grounded by another idea. Central to our understanding of the variation in the degrees of power of existence of modes is the question of the mechanism of the compositional changes in the body while it undergoes external affections. As Deleuze clarifies, “[...] a mode’s essence is a determinate degree of intensity, an irreducible degree of power; a mode exists, if it actually possesses a very great number of extensive parts corresponding to its essence or degree of power” (Deleuze 1990, 202).

The keys to decoding the relation between variations of the body and the formation of affect can be deduced from Spinoza’s definition of affect: “D3: *By affect I understand affections of the body by which the body’s power of acting is increased or diminished, aided or restrained, and at the same time, the ideas of these affections*” (Spinoza 70). Despite the perhaps potentially confusing definition (i.e. affection and affect together denote the consequence of a body’s being acted upon), affect contains both a synchronic and a diachronic sense, the former entailing the reflexive and affirmative understanding of the inten-

sity of the affective encounter; and the latter, the progressive and durational change of the structural and relational composition of the body. In other words, the concept of affect is understood by Spinoza (and later Nietzsche) as encompassing both the temporal and spatial domains, and the practice of taming and moderating affects can be rendered in these two directions.

Spinoza does not interpret the notion of the body from a physiological perspective; rather, he seeks the means by which one body is extrinsically distinguished from the other, and thus external relation—the result of similar or different speeds—serves as the essential criterion. All bodies are constantly in a state of either movement or rest, sustained or changed unavoidably by the affects from external bodies. An individual—for example, a human being—is composed of a collection of simple bodies and a set of relations, and such a composite of individual bodies would have its internal relational structure and state of movement and rest altered, depending on whether the extensive bodily affections agree with the existent relations. The number of simple bodies as well as the various relational construction within an existing individual together expresses the power of essence in its capacity of being affected in a great many ways. Such affective power pertaining to its very essence increases or decreases through interactions with extensive bodies, causing the feelings of joy or sadness respectively (IIP53, IIP55). Spinoza asserts that for every existing mode, there is inherently a striving for self-preservation stemming from one’s own essence (or *conatus*)—“The striving to preserve itself is the very essence of a thing” (127)—and the more agreeable external affects one experiences, the more the power of affectivity becomes actualized for longer durations of existence. Deleuze lucidly formulates the gradational trait of the *conatus* between different kinds of bodies:

A simple body’s *conatus* can only be the effort to preserve the state to which it has been determined; and a composite body’s *conatus* only the effort to preserve the relation of movement and rest that defines it, that is, to maintain constantly renewed parts in the relation that defines its existence (Deleuze 1990, 230).

External bodily and intellectual affects act directly upon various modes of a composite body under different attributes, but both cause variations in the essential power and relational speed of the *contatus*. Recall that Spinoza's observation that most men—equipped only with inadequate ideas—are not capable of executing their intellect and thinking backwards from effects to the causes, and thus live constrained by passions—the human bondage of affects. To emancipate oneself and act freely in accordance only with reason, Spinoza states, the ideas that one explores for one's understanding need to be adequate, which means that such ideas must contain both the effects and the causes of external affects and at the same time serve as the sole guidance for their active actions. Continuous external affects agreeable to the *conatus* and relational structure would foster the generation of common notions, which indicate to the affected mode the common features of the external affecting entity with respect to the composition of the individual or the organization of relations and are by nature universal and adequate. Continuous external affects that are agreeable to the *conatus* and relational structure of a body may foster the generation of common notions. Such common notions indicate to the affected mode those features of the external affecting entity that are common to the composition of the individual or the organization of relations of the individual, and these common notions are by nature universal and adequate. Common notions trigger the faculty of understanding in that they enable individuals to perceive extensive affections with adequate ideas that reveal both their causes and their effects and, perhaps more importantly, allow them to act in accordance with reason and produce joyful actions rather than passions.⁵

⁵For a comprehensive analysis of the process of the transition from passive joy to active joy, see Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, 273–288.

Nietzsche: in the middle of affective life

The affective transformation Spinoza depicts, from passion to action through the cultivation of common notions, stresses primarily the beginning and the end of the course of the formation of reason. Singular individuals consisting of multiple simple modes start with a lacuna filled with inadequate ideas that are incapable of determining the causes of external affects; they may subsequently—in a great many ways—gain freedom in the practice of actions conditioned solely in themselves under the direction of reason. Much more needs to be said, however, about the affective life during the process, especially considering Spinoza's warning of the destructive potential of external affections: "IIP4: *No thing can be destroyed except through an external cause*" (Spinoza 75). Relational structures constantly encounter agreeable or disagreeable affects of various degrees of intensity, and have essential power increased or diminished as a consequence of the change in their compositional form. However, the preservation of the state of movement conditioned by our *conatus* seems always to fail when receiving excessive and destructive affects that would immediately break down the relations and terminate the vitality of the individual. How then do we practically live an affective life and minimize the precariousness of the process? Nietzsche's autobiographical work *Ecce Homo*—in which he recounts his journey of managing excessive affects and regaining control over his fatality—may serve as a set of invaluable strategies for addressing the Spinozian problematic. Together they comprise a relay of tactics for living—theoretically and practically—an affective life, and as Armstrong rightly argues, though Spinoza and Nietzsche are profoundly influenced by the Stoic therapy of desire (that unrealistically advocates complete detachments from passions), they choose to meet the Stoics only half way. That is, they contemplate how to live a fateful life of inexorable affect as such with joy and affirmation: "[...] although both philosophers follow the Stoics in conceiving of ethics as a therapeutic enterprise that aims at human freedom and flourishing, they part company with Stoicism in refusing to identify flourishing with freedom from passions" (Armstrong 6).

Any postulation or tracing of an absolute beginning or end already suggests a temporal difference—a present that differs from the contracted past that already is. The Spinozian conception of affective lives for modes as the productions of God is preceded by the formation of the entirety of Nature: “IP1: *A substance is prior in nature to its affections*” (Spinoza 2). The beginning of a new modal life necessarily takes place within a network of infinite modes; hence we arrive at Deleuze’s famous reflection on the spirit of empiricism, “Things do not begin to live except in the middle” (Deleuze and Parnet 55). At the age of forty-five, a time Nietzsche deems to be fully ripe to look back on his bygone past, he designates the term “fatality” to denote precisely such a middle state at the beginning of his life, situated between his dead father and a living mother:

The fortunateness of my existence, its uniqueness perhaps, lies in its fatality: to express it in the form of a riddle, as my father I have already died, as my mother I still live and grow old. This twofold origin, as it were from the highest and the lowest rung of the ladder of life, at once *décadent* and *beginning* – this if anything explains that neutrality, that freedom from party in relation to the total problem of life which perhaps distinguishes me (*EH* “Wise” §1).

Fatality—one central theme of this book indicated in the title “How One Becomes What One Is”—contains such a twofold form of existence that is in the middle of a life, embodying and also prone to the tendencies of life and death: one becomes immediately subject to the two poles of life or death after being born, a necessary consequence of living as one mode amongst an infinity of other modes. Fatality is a given that disobeys the rule of non-contradiction because of the middle. As Derrida explicates it: “[...] my fatality derives from my very genealogy, from my father and mother, from the fact that I decline, in the form of a riddle, as my parents’ identity [...] I am between the two: this lot has fallen to me, it is a ‘chance,’ a throw of the dice” (Derrida 15). The Nietzschean project of reflecting upon and glorifying his

earlier life—in the middle of his own life and with no one else but himself as the intended audience—“And I tell myself my own life” (*EH* “epigraphy”)—begins from a beginning that is already in the middle, and hence an exact temporal locus is impossible to assign.⁶ For Derrida, the deliberate inclusion of a signature and omission of the date signify Nietzsche’s awareness of the double and constantly-shifting middle-ness of autobiographical writing and its supposed beginning: “This difficulty crops up wherever one seeks to make a *determination*: in order to date an event, of course, but also in order to identity the beginning of a text, the origin of life, or the first movement of a signature. These are all problems of the borderline” (Derrida 13). A fixed temporality regarding the narration of a particular life is therefore impossible, which further illustrates the Nietzschean notion of fatality: a seemingly decided trajectory that is uncertain in itself, a time-insensitive flux of becoming that refuses to be cut and enclosed by any static border. The parental figures that manifest in the text do not refer to concrete individuals, but have been deconstructed into states of a-personal pure vitality and refluxed back into the plurality of floating forces. *Ecce Homo* thus needs to be read as a sketch of the everlasting fatality of becoming, with no traceable absolute origin or predictable futurity, and the Nietzschean strategies aimed at processing excessive affects for the preservation of an ongoing life hence serve to ameliorate the overly idealistic tone of Spinoza’s *Ethics*. According to Babette Babich, such an obscure and seemingly self-effacing narrative style exerted in Nietzsche’s autobiography—the double attempt of both disclosing and dissolving his *persona*—evinces his esoteric approach to an enigmatic life of uncertainty: “For Nietzsche, a life in the ‘grand style’ expresses a life at one with the knowledge of the essential dissimulation at the core of life, the basic illusion of existence, and the artist’s resolve to continue his or her part in the

⁶Sarah Kofman delves into Nietzsche’s correspondences and argues—based on his usage of a metaphor “high noon”—that for Nietzsche, the age of forty-five means not simply the median but the exact mean point of his life: “*Ecce homo* was not intended to be Nietzsche’s last book. The correspondence of the period presents it as a threshold book, a ‘high noon,’ facing two ways: it closes one door and opens another” (Kofman 51).

illusion” (Babich 108). On his solitary road to reevaluating and overcoming the bestiality and decadence of humanity, Nietzsche refuses naïve optimism but shares a continual vigilance and circumspection towards the corporeal and representational world of unpredictable and imminent precariousness.

In addition to the untimely understanding of the body in terms of relation and affect that binds Spinoza and Nietzsche together, another line of thought connects them, namely that affect constitutes an irreducible and collateral aspect of our very life. In *The Will to Power*, Nietzsche offers his definition of life as an assemblage of various forces:

What we call ‘life’ is an assemblage of forces sharing a nutritive process. Essential to this nutritive process are all so-called sensations, ideas and thoughts, i.e. (1) a resistance to external forces, (2) an arrangement of internal forces according to forms and rhythms and (3) an estimation of what to absorb and what to excrete” (WP §641).

Not only do we formulate an awareness of Nietzsche’s vision of life as a process of encountering and controlling the multiplicity of forces; the quoted aphorism also displays the rudimentary principle by which Nietzsche approaches external forces and adjusts the organism within to interact with, absorb, or resist the disagreeable affects, through a series of cautious ruminations. A living individual—in line with its Spinozian conception—incorporates a capacity for being affected in a great many ways, and an affect as such in the Nietzschean context could denote either physical affections (sensations) or mental affects (ideas and thoughts). Life becomes preserved or diminished through the continuous affective exchanges and variations of power valences between external and internal forces. As Alexander Nehamas observes: “[...] Nietzsche in effect claimed that nothing in the world has any intrinsic features of its own and that each thing is constituted solely through its interrelations with, and differences from everything else” (Nehamas 82).

The attempt to deconstruct truth as the result of interactions between forces that are constantly changing, conditions Nietzsche’s skeptical point

of view on the notion of fact and objectivity—our understanding depends on the perspective in which a given thing is evaluated in accordance with the forces. He invents the term perspectivism—as opposed to scientism or positivism—to address the never-ending process of knowledge formation as a result of the impacts of plural affects: “It [the world] may however be interpreted differently; it has no meaning hidden behind it, but rather innumerable meanings which can be assigned to it. Hence ‘perspectivism’” (WP §481). The practice of perspectivism, thus, is tied closely to epistemological efforts to make sense of the world, and stresses not the objective givenness of appearance but rather the subject’s interpretative reactions to appearance. It liberates the passive condition of the human senses and emphasizes the seminal function of human agency in the construction of knowledge. As Nehamas states, “Perspectivism implies that in order to engage in any activity we must necessarily occupy ourselves with a selection of material and exclude much from our consideration [...] What is seen is simply the world itself from that perspective” (Nehamas 50).

Perspectivism, thus, expresses the functions of the human capabilities of sensing, selecting sensory input, and adjusting one’s own internal forces in the process of affective interactions. Similar to the Spinozian endeavor to cultivate external agreeable affects to promote and nourish our understanding through the formations of common notions, Nietzsche does not offer a completely negative evaluation of affect, but also recognizes the potentially positive role that affect may play. He declares that the affected subject should be able to discern the various types of external affects—rather than immerse themselves in the cluster of plural passions—and choose the right strategies for guiding their reaction: “*Blindly yielding* to a passion, without regard to whether it be a generous, compassionate or hostile one, is the cause of the greatest evils” (WP §928). But the kind of affects that are agreeable or beneficial to us are not necessarily the most pleasurable or indulgent ones. In *Ecce Homo*, by recounting his experience in the early years of dealing with sickness, Nietzsche—again in line with his belief in perspectivism—says that passive affects do not necessarily foster negative and detrimental

consequences; rather, they may generate positive results and help increase vitality, as long as one possesses the will to life and health:

A being who is typically morbid cannot become healthy, still less can he make himself healthy; conversely, for one who is typically healthy being sick can even be an *energetic stimulant* to life, to more life. Thus in fact does that long period of sickness seem to me *now*: I discovered life as it were anew, myself included, I tasted all good and even petty things in a way that others could not easily taste them—I made out of my will to health, to *life*, my philosophy (*EH* “Wise” §2).

To formulate a discourse of life and health, to perceive and appreciate the organism as the condition for self-formation and preservation, the experience of what-is-not or the contrary is indispensable. The regained health after illness entails an epistemological difference from the previous healthy state in the triggered consciousness of the constitution of the body; as Rodolphe Gasché interprets the beneficial role of illness, “Now, this morbid state, one of extreme weakness, a state which also corresponds to an aberration of the instincts, is, according to Nietzsche, a preparation for a refining of the organs, in as much as the illness is at once the culmination of decadence and an interruption of that decadence” (Gaché 9). We should not, in Nietzsche’s view, ascribe any arbitrary and fixated values to the affect of sickness; on the contrary, underneath the manifest exhaustion of the corpus conceals a latent impetus for recovery, flourishing, and more life. Since his first monograph, *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche had already endorsed the Schopenhauerian view on the interpretation of life as suffering and pain. This idea remains consistent throughout his philosophical life; for example, in *The Gay Science* Nietzsche considers life a reductive process that sifts endlessly those who are weak and lacking will to power: “What is life? –Life – that is: continually shedding something that wants to die; Life – that is: being cruel and inexorable against anything that is growing weak and old in us” (GS “Book One”

§26). What separates Nietzsche and his teacher years later are their contrasting views of how one should react to the world and life after realizing one’s undesirable condition. Nietzsche fiercely rejects the reactive tendency (influenced by the psychology of bad conscience) to seek external justifications by positing certain higher forms of being, a method manifest in Schopenhauer’s doctrine and Christian beliefs. As Deleuze puts it, “[...] suffering was used as a way of proving the *injustice* of existence, but at the same time as a way of finding a higher and divine *justification* for it” (Deleuze 1985, 19). The problem resides in the attempt to negate the will to power, the natural capacity of being affected in order to grow and develop oneself. For Nietzsche, along with the natural inclination of humans to indulge ourselves in pleasure, there is also a potential courage to explore and control our own fatality; he notes in *The Antichrist*, “Better to live among ice than among modern virtues and other south winds!...We were brave enough, we spared neither ourselves nor others: but for long we did not know where to apply our courage [...] We thirst for lightning and action, of all things we kept ourselves furthest from the happiness of the weaklings, from ‘resignation’” (A §1).

To live an active life and advance our will to power, Nietzsche affirms, the sources of judgment and action need to be solely grounded by the subjective self, and the art of slowness when managing excessive and harmful affects thus becomes crucial in achieving the goal of self-dependence. In *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche ascribes positive and vital value to his strategic technique of stretching the duration *between* the moments of being acted upon and reacting through the organizations of internal forces, in order to extend and save time for ruminations and judgments with respect to the quantitative and qualitative nature of the incoming affects. He states,

He has a taste only for what is beneficial to him; his pleasure, his joy ceases where the measure of what is beneficial is overstepped. He divines cures for injuries, he employs ill chances to his own advantage; what does not kill him makes him stronger. Out of everything he sees, hears, experiences he instinctively

collects together *his* sum: he is a principle of selection, he rejects much. He is always in *his* company, whether he traffics with books, people or landscapes: he does honour when he *chooses*, when he *admits*, when he *trusts*. He reacts slowly to every kind of stimulus, with that slowness which a protracted caution and a willed pride have bred in him—he tests an approaching stimulus, he is far from going out to meet it. (EH “Wise” §2).

With the clichéd but nonetheless truthful line “what does not kill him makes him stronger” included, this passage provides a set of practical maxims that function as a sufficient instruction manual for managing external affects. Indicating Nietzsche’s subjective stance on life that one should joyfully control one’s own fatality, the passage unveils his understanding of the nature of affect: it is neither good nor bad in itself, and its effects—agreeable or not—depend on the choice or selection by the subject. Therefore, Nietzsche argues that a reflexive judgment is required to function alongside sensory experiences and examine if the affect would bring joy, that is, an increase in the Will to power. To accurately exercise such a reflexive judgment and use it to advance our choice-making, Nietzsche continues, the duration in a reciprocal affective process needs to be extended, to conduct a thorough and cautious evaluation and avoid the potential to be destroyed. Such a strategy echoes the abovementioned notion of the nutritive process in an affective interaction, which involves initial resistance, adjustment of one’s own speed of reaction, and at last selective reception of positive and useful affects.

It seems that such a strategy of slowness has its limitation, in that it presupposes a range of intensity such that the external affect that is mild and bearable in nature. What is one to do when the affect is violent and sudden and does not permit any practice of slow caution? By naming the technique “Russian fatalism,” Nietzsche explores the experiment by a Russian soldier on slowing himself down thoroughly to avoid incoming excessive affects. Such a strategy does not bear any sense of reactive nihilism that turns against the

meaning of life; rather, it is executed for the protection and preservation of life:

I call it *Russian Fatalism*, that fatalism without rebellion with which a Russian soldier for whom the campaign has become too much at last lies down in the snow. No longer to take anything at all, to receive anything, to take anything *into* oneself—no longer to react at all... The great rationality of this fatalism, which is not always the courage to die but can be life-preservative under conditions highly dangerous to life, is reduction of the metabolism, making it slow down a kind of will to hibernation [...] Because one would use oneself up too quickly if one reacted at all, one no longer reacts: this is the logic. And nothing burns one up quicker than the affects of *ressentiment* [...] That ‘Russian fatalism’ of which I spoke came forward in my case in the form of clinging tenaciously for years on end to almost intolerable situations, places, residences, company, once chance had placed me in them—it was better than changing them, than *feeling* them as capable of being changed—than rebelling against them (EH “Wise” §6).

To completely shut oneself off from the world and make oneself thoroughly insulated against all external affects by slowing down the speed of affective reaction to zero is thus Nietzsche’s most intense vital strategy. The mechanism of Russian fatalism still follows the three-step generic procedure for managing affects explained earlier, but its didactic message—almost as a command—is to be inoperative at all and save one’s remaining vitality. By no means does Russian fatalism, however, refer to such reactive psychologies as *ressentiment*, bad conscience, or the ascetic ideal; rather, it is indicative of the independent and psychic strength of the will that insists on grasping and grounding one’s fatality within oneself and refusing to be sifted out by life. Though designed and intended for helping one endure the most “intolerable situations, places, residences, company,” the mechanism of Russian fatalism

still follows the strategy of slowness and begins with an evaluation of the intensity of the incoming affect, and then moves on to making a choice in the way of reaction and at last affirming and trusting one's own choice. The inoperability of Russian fatalism does not entail any resignation of agency or initiation of vengeful reaction; on the contrary, it is the result of the subject's own choice, out of the existential freedom to hold onto one's own fatality.

The strategy of Russian fatalism suggests a capacity for being incapable of reacting to the external affects in order to preserve and prepare the body for future affects to come. In Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, Giorgio Agamben discovers an interesting term, *adynamia*—translated roughly as impotentiality—that does not mean the privation of potentiality but a choice of suspending the actualization of its counterpart, which may facilitate our understanding of the inoperability of Russian fatalism. As Agamben explicates,

Adynamia, “impotentiality,” does not mean here the absence of any potentiality, but the potentiality-not-to (pass to the act), *dynamis me energein*. That is to say, this thesis defines the specific ambivalence of every human potentiality, which, in its original structure, always maintains a relation with its own privation and is always—and with reference to the same thing—the potentiality to be and not to be, to do and not to do. [...] we can then say that man is the living being that exists eminently in the dimension of potentiality, of the power-to and the power-not-to [*dimensione della potenza, del potere e del poter-non*]. Every human potentiality is co-originally impotentiality; every power-to-be or -do is, for man, constitutively in relation with its own privation (Agamben 39-40).

The Nietzschean strategy of Russian fatalism, thus, rests precisely upon the deliberate choice of impotentiality that, by slowing down the speed of reactive affectivity to zero, takes up the responsibility for not letting oneself blindly be subject to detrimental external affects. One chooses to launch such a vital strategy, not as a reckless and hasty bet, but rather as a sequence of

thoughtful and brave judgments upon kinetic and dynamic bodies, causes and effects, motion and rest. Such a choice is grounded by an utmost self-affirmation and a love of the affective fatality of both pain and joy, sickness and health, passion and action.

In sum

“[...] I have asked myself often enough whether, on a grand scale, philosophy has been no more than an interpretation of the body and a *misunderstanding of the body*,” Nietzsche writes in the second preface to *The Gay Science*. “All those bold lunacies of metaphysics, especially answers to the question about the *value* of existence, may always be considered first of all as symptoms of certain *bodies*” (GS “Preface” §2). What connects Spinoza and Nietzsche, perhaps, is not only their theoretical and strategic investigations of the mechanism of the body as the ordinally primary condition for affective interactions and the formation of rationality, but also, and more importantly, their coincidental efforts to include the inquiries of the body as an essential subject of philosophy. I have tried to move beyond a simplistic comparison and contrast of two versions of affect theory; instead, I have treated the two philosophical accounts of affect as complementary to each other: whereas Spinoza provides an epistemological sketch of the course of the affective transition from inadequate to adequate ideas; Nietzsche's autobiographical work offers some practical strategies of slowness for actually living subjects to live by. My account presents a holistic understanding of affect that does not involve any discriminatory value judgment. It is connective in nature, Spinoza and Nietzsche, theory and practice.

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Art reviews

Masterpiece in Focus: Friedrich Nietzsche and the Artists of the New Weimar

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National Gallery of Canada, April 18, 2019 to August 25, 2019

It is not often that a philosopher is the subject of a major art exhibition. Yet as I walked towards the entrance to the National Gallery of Canada in Ottawa I could see the sculpted profile of Nietzsche looking out, from a banner promoting *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Artists of the New Weimar*. Curated by Sebastian Schütze, a Professor of Art History at the University of Vienna, this exhibition looks at the material histories of the Nietzsche Archive and its influence on the arts, which we encounter through the artworks, photographs, publications and documents on display. Not exactly a show of artworks, but also not strictly a display of historical documentation, Schütze presents us with a moment in time that is caught between the realities of the impact of Nietzsche's ideas and the complex fabrications of his legacy, with the Nietzsche Archive in Weimar playing a key role.

Established in 1894 by his sister Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche, when the philosopher was alive but suffering from a detrimental loss of mental faculties (after collapsing in 1889), the Archive was strategically moved from Naumburg to Weimar in 1897. This, Schütze writes in his exceptional essay in the catalogue accompanying this exhibition [all quotes in this review

are from this source], was a means of maneuvering "Nietzsche's philosophical legacy and inscribing him in the myth of the classical Weimar of Goethe, Schiller and Herder" (12). And this strategy clearly worked. While Schütze does everything he can to minimize Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche's eventual attempts to position her brother's philosophy more in line with the Nazis – there is only a brief and seemingly reluctant mention of this, literally in the final few sentences of the essay – it is this move to Weimar that makes such an attempt possible. It is the politics of such a move of the archive that at once makes disturbing and intriguing an overall consideration of the objects displayed in this exhibition, one that is necessarily haunted by the misunderstandings of Nietzschean ideas. This clouded history, which is not ignored by the works and documents on display, nonetheless does not diminish what is an important moment in the modern interest in Nietzsche.

Contained within a single gallery, the exhibition consists of a pleasantly-modest number of objects. Paintings, drawings, prints and photographs hang on the walls. Among these we find several important portraits of Nietzsche, Hans Olde's 1899 etching of the philosopher's head, Gustav Adolf Schultze's famous 1882 photograph and two drawings by the well-known Symbolist artist Edvard Munch, the 1905 *Portrait of Friedrich Nietzsche in a Melancholic Pose* (mimicking the title of the Schultze photograph) and the more subtle 1906 *Portrait of Friedrich Nietzsche*. It was a particular treat to see the works by Munch, who also created expressive portraits of Count Harry Kessler (the yellow in this work was captivating) and Henry Van de Velde, both instrumental figures in the development of the Nietzsche Archive. Kessler was a major cultural figure who was on the board of the important cultural journal *Pan* – an issue of which can be seen in a display case within the show. Van de Velde was a Belgian architect, designer and art reformer who oversaw the major renovations to the Nietzsche Archive starting in 1902, where he created a "Nietzsche temple" that "offered an unmistakably modernist setting for the growing Nietzsche-cult and positioned the philosopher as key representative of the New Weimar" (21). One particular adornment of his design,

the so-called stylized 'Napoleonic-Nietzsche N', is featured prominently in the space of this exhibition, over the main door leading out of the gallery.

In the table-style wooden display cases we see a number of important documents and publications. The most significant of these are "the luxury editions of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, *Ecce Homo* and *Dionysian Dithyrambes* designed by Van de Velde" (21). These were richly ornate and expensive volumes, each heavily designed to make them an experience worthy of Nietzsche's words. In his essay Schütze goes so far as to tell us the size of the books, the type of paper used, specific printer, every kind of detail imaginable – and I thank him for this. My personal favourite was *Ecce Homo*. It is shown, on the one hand, closed with a simple but ornate off-centred title on the cover, the text in an Art Nouveau style font; and on the other hand, opened to the impressive double-page end-papers, specially made with the title broken up across the pages, held within an Art Nouveau-style line pattern. Also included in these cases are a number of key documents from the Nietzsche Archive, material either owned by the philosopher himself or related to him. The most impressive among these is Nietzsche's personal copy of the first German translation of Ralph Waldo Emerson's 1858 *Essays (Versuche)*, which contains notes and comments that Nietzsche wrote during the many times he read the book. In the second essay that appears in the catalogue for this exhibition, Jennifer Ratner-Rosengarten writes: "As Nietzsche made his way from wayward teenager to philology professor to freelance thinker, Emerson's image of the philosopher, and his approach to philosophy as a way of life, proved essential to his [Nietzsche's] language of self-definition" (41). Seeing the traces of this experience was engaging and, for me, affected the work in the rest of the show.

The final works of the show, and in many ways the most significant, are the sculptures that punctuate the space. Two standing male nudes: August Rodin's 1901 *The Age of Bronze* and Aristide Maillol's 1925 *Young Cyclist*, both of which are connected to Count Harry Kessler's artistic and cultural activities. But it is the three sculptures by the German symbolist artist Max Klinger, arranged powerfully as a triad at the end of the gallery space, which are the

focus point of the show. Standing in front of this wall, we are treated to a symmetrically-composed display with two smaller works on each side, the 1901 *Death Mask of Friedrich Nietzsche* and 1902 *Bust of Friedrich Nietzsche*, which frame the large 1904 *Bust of Friedrich Nietzsche*. This final sculpture, the largest in a series of Klinger's busts cast by the Gladenbeck foundry in Berlin, is one of three copies in the world and, as the exhibition title makes clear, is a *masterpiece* from the collection of the National Gallery of Canada. The work is an almost life-size bronze head of the philosopher that emerges out of a column of bronze, which stand freely on the ground. As the centrepiece for the exhibition, its presence is highlighted with a dark orange-red column painted on the otherwise white wall behind all three busts, drawing special attention to this one artwork.

Not only, I believe, because it is in the collection of the institution where it is displayed, but also because the work epitomizes the overall qualities of the project itself. It appears as if Schütze wanted to share this key moment in the history of Nietzsche, when his thought and his cultural persona were being formed. Both catalogue essays work towards defining the qualities of this transformation, noting key people involved in the making of this history. For this reason, the catalogue is a valuable resource that gives the show a depth that, except for extremely-knowledgeable Nietzschean scholars, most viewers would not have access to otherwise. Even without this complex and at-times peripheral framework, *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Artists of the New Weimar* is of extreme value for the rather direct way it shares an overlapping of practices, positioning Nietzsche's life, posterity and writing in relation to vital cultural ideas and practices around the time. Nietzsche was a large thinker and this exhibition does his thought justice.

Interviews

An Interview with Hans Winkler

Yunus Tuncel

1) As we all know, there are mixed receptions of Nietzsche's works; some are drawn, and some are repulsed. As an artist, what attracted to you to Nietzsche's works? What were the first things you heard about Nietzsche, as you grew up in post-war Germany?

It seems that Nietzsche was a brilliant thinker and a person characterized by perceptions. He wrote and acted very unconventionally. He often moved between the trivial and the beautiful—the foolish and the good behavior, fiction and reality, lies and truth, kitsch and avant-garde” (Buddensieg). He embraces tombstones in Genoa, or in Turin, a horse. I discovered him as a conceptual artist before conceptual art was born. In my opinion, his thoughts, comments and questions about society are still timely and up to date. For example, his article on nationality: “thanks to the morbid estrangement, which has put the nationality madness among the people of Europe and still exists, owing also to the short-sighted and hasty-handed politicians, who with the help of this craze, are at present in power...”



Above View near Nietzsche's apartment from April 21 – June 12, 1884, where he lived with Köselitz. San Canciano, Calle Nuova 5256, Venice. *Photo by Hans Winkler.*

2) Nietzsche has much to say on arts and aesthetic. Many Nietzsche scholars such as Babich, Shapiro, Pothen, and Nehamas in the English-speaking world, have explored his aesthetic ideas and many artists have appropriated them. What does Nietzsche's aesthetic theory mean to you? What do you derive from it as a practicing aesthetician?

As an artist and a citizen of the earth, I try to impart both ideas and feelings that are not based on general values and a bourgeois agreement, and I agree with Nietzsche's claim, "one must have the courage in art to love what really appeals to us, even when it's in bad taste." He has made the history new, and paved the way, which among other things, influenced surrealism, Giorgio de Chirico picks up Nietzsche's idea of a "radical emptiness" in his pictures with the aim "to cleanse the art of everything that was their content so far. Put aside every object, every idea, every thought, and symbol." ("The pathway is an artist, who adds, a slanderer.")

3) Recently you have been interested in Nietzsche in Venice and you read Buddensieg's book on this subject. First, what attracts you to Venice? Second, what interests you in Nietzsche's relationship to Venice? What was special about Venice for Nietzsche?

I have been visiting and working in Venice for twenty years (on a regular basis for 2-3 years). I developed and realized exhibitions/interventions from my experiences on site. For example, "un incidente in gondola" (2002): an orchestrated accident borrows the symbol of Venice - the gondola with gondolier. After special preparations the gondola did sink in a canal. The project addresses a City flooded with tourism and continually struggling with the preservation of sinking monuments. It is showing the fragile line between reality and fantasy, between truth and manipulation. Or "Ezra Pound's Cage" (2007): A Reconstruction of the cage, where the 60-year-old poet Ezra Pound had been arrested by the American army in 1945. The cage has the same size as the cages of Guantanamo.



Top and above Views near Nietzsche's apartment from April 10 - June 6, 1885, Ponte Rialto, Venice. *Photos by Hans Winkler.*

Of Venice, Nietzsche said, it is “the only place on earth I love.” Between 1880-1887, he was in Venice five times, for a total of more than six months. There, he gives himself up to “the power of seeing” and also chooses his whereabouts through his outlook. More than anything, he enjoyed the view of the island of the Dead and San Michele, during his first stay. He bows to the art of the 16th century. And the art of the past is suitable. In the painting of the lagoon city, Nietzsche “recognized that spirit that spoke to me as a brother and friend.” He omits all names and places and becomes his seldom-used self in the place of the artist:

I am Bellini

I am Tizian

I am Tintoretto

I am Veronese

During his time in Venice, he increasingly defends himself against the flood of impressions, against the overwhelming mass of works of art and—against pictorial tourism—and rather enjoyed the everyday things (good food, drink, hiking, and coffeehouse stays) or the folk songs of the Gondolieri.

4) You are also interested in Nietzsche’s ideas on Baroque art. How do you read Nietzsche’s position on Baroque? At times, he seems to see it not as high art, or it is art that is fading, as he says in *Human, All Too Human*, Vol. 2, Assorted Opinions and Maxims, Aphorism 144. “The baroque style originates whenever great art starts to fade...”

Due to his regular stays in Italy, he rediscovers the Baroque style and it seems that he is more concerned with the spirit of the time, in which art was concerned, above all, with illusion and reality, as well as with subversive forms of commerce. Incidentally, in the art and literature between 1600-1700, artists had developed new forms of representation with a preference for illusions and Ephemerea, which should have had a big influence on modern art.

It seems that at that time artists and authors thrashed out the imaginative potential of fictitious worlds completely. “Reason was the discovery of



Top Near Nietzsche’s apartment at Calle del Risotto, Venice. He stayed here for three days before moving to his Ponte Rialto apartment.

Above View from Nietzsche’s apartment with Köselitz. *Photos by Hans Winkler.*

the new microscopic and telescopic worlds which call into question border between the actual and fictitious increasingly.” (C.N. Nemes).

Since the 17th century, mankind developed more rapidly than ever. As the first-person Magellan circumnavigated the earth and inspired among other things a “scientific revolution” and a growing interest in the investigation of the world by which the absolute supremacy of the religious worldview got lost - got less attention. Trade was now intercontinental for the first time in history. European ships tied together lasting relationships between Europe and the markets of Eastern Asia ... and the spice trade was according to Howard Haggard, in reality, drug trafficking. The trade with opium-controlled Venice, because the lagoon city was the main center of the European trade and opium as a universal remedy (sh. Theriak) was high-estimated All over Europe.

Nietzsche wrote in “About the baroque style:”

“only the poorly-informed and arrogant will immediately have a disparaging feeling about this word. The baroque style always arises as every great artwork blooms as a natural event, when the demands in the art of classical expression have become too great.”

5) On the mice library and how Nietzsche’s ideas relate to animals. Can you say a few things on this subject?

“Hermitage- Mountain library” or “Einsiedlerbibliothek”, Brennerpass, Italy/Austria, 1997 - 2000

In 1997, on a hike along the Brenner border, p.t.t.red (Stefan Micheel and myself) found an empty mountain hut at 2100 m, which was converted later into a hermit library. For the new library 50 writers and philosophers worldwide has been addressed and asked for book recommendations. (Including Carl Amery, R. Scheldrak, Rudolph Bahro, Peter Handke, Hannes Boehringer, Martin Walser, T.C., Boyle, W.G. Sebald, Durs Grünbein, Fritjof

Capra). Accessible for anyone, one could stay in the hut for an undetermined time. But in 2000 the weather repeatedly prevented the planned, annual removal of the books to Brenner and caused the premature end after four years. In the spring of 2001, transport to the valley that specifically revealed Zarathustra was included in the food chain of mice. In order to reflect this, in autumn 2013 I installed “Zarathustra” again in a model of the hut, reintroducing the book back into the natural cycle and reversing the role of mice in pharmaceutical laboratories. Here, I thought of Nietzsche’s “The animals and the moral:”

“The beginnings of righteousness, such as prudence, moderation, bravery, in short, everything we describe with the name of Socratic virtues, is animalistic: a consequence of those impulses which teach to seek food and escape enemies. Man is certainly not the crown of creation, every being is beside him on an equal level of perfection. Morality, religion, and metaphysics have put man in chains so that he has forgotten how to behave like an animal.”

Book Reviews

Nietzsche on the Decadence and Flourishing of Culture

Andrew Huddleston

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(Oxford: Oxford University Press. xi + 191 pp, 2019. ISBN 9780198823674)

The main focus of Andrew Huddleston's book concerns the notion of culture in Nietzsche's philosophy, and the regrettable oversight it has received from recent scholars, who have overwhelmingly favored discussions of Nietzsche's valorization of the "great individual." In doing so, the author pays a great service to a more balanced general comprehension and assessment of Nietzsche, showing a certain degree of courage to approach a concept (that of culture), usually closely associated with Marxist philosophical reflection. We tend to forget that, on the contrary, Nietzsche's philosophical debut—may we say manifesto?—was entirely focused on cultural renovation at large, to the extent that even his conception of the "great individual" of the time—his Schopenhauer-inspired "metaphysics of the genius," notably the artistic genius—shows distinctively supra-individualistic features, with the tragic artist essentially heralding a new era where mankind retrieves an immediate connection with the essence of reality. In this regard, not only is culture a key element of Nietzsche's philosophy, but the decadence and flourishing of culture—the book's subject by its title—was arguably one of

Nietzsche's deepest philosophical preoccupations throughout his entire productive life. Therefore, Huddleston's claim that Nietzsche cannot be judged as a staunch individualist—or at least not just that—is well-supported, just as his suggestion that a paradigm change in Nietzsche studies on this subject would be more than welcome.

The book is to some extent divided in two halves, only the first of which is concerned with the subject of culture at large—and only the fifth chapter, regrettably, directly deals with the subject of the title. This is slowly approached after examining the whole context in which the notion of culture occurs in Nietzsche: its main conceptions, existential and collectivist; the role of *Bildung*; the place and function of the "great individual" in it. The first chapter, focusing mostly on BT, deals with what is arguably Nietzsche's most well-known conception of culture, that is the existential one, meaning it as a social function capable "to provide people with a form of social sustenance" (p. 11). Here the author inevitably deals with some of the most general Nietzschean categories, such as Socrates' legacy for Western civilization, or the Apolline and the Dionysiac, though his rendering of both doesn't always work well. For instance, he seems to think of the Apolline as something that, unlike the Dionysiac, is not concerned with the irrational and creative destruction at large, despite not only Apollonian prophecy and the myths concerning the god bear witness of this, but also the deity's very name, which literally translates as "The one who destroys from afar." We owe to Nietzsche the first serious attempt to know ancient and archaic Greek culture outside (and against) the classicistic conceptual frame, but it is a basic tenet of Nietzsche's view that the Apolline is just as rooted in Greek archaic agonal culture as the Dionysiac is. Therefore, to state that only the Dionysiac knows "suffering, dismemberment, and destruction as aesthetic phenomena" (p. 18) seems at odds with archaic Greek culture, where form, with its calculated harmony—the veil of beauty that hides the horrible truth of the meaninglessness of existence and reality as a whole—originates from chaos just as the formless terror of the Dionysiac. Indeed, the Greek state—the Apollonian institution *par excellence*—is clearly shown, in Nietzsche's eponymous

juvenile treaty, as representing and embodying terror and cruelty, features that, as a consequence, must be necessarily ascribed to the Apolline too. As for Socratism, it would have been important to underline not only the illusory reality of the attempt laboriously enacted by Plato's master, but also its essentially *violent* nature: "finding truth at all costs" meant, for Socrates, "establishing truth at all costs," i.e. to hubristically impose a set of values by virtue of his exceptional dialectics. (Even the *Apology* hints at such hybris in some passages.) This is precisely what Nietzsche will later reproach to the "sacerdotal spirit", responsible for the death (by vampirism) of the great pagan aristocratic societies of the past: not that it did not apply a strong will of power, but that it did so in a convoluted, contorted, and eventually self-destructive way. Socrates is indeed the first in a very long line to replace the Dionysiac and "aristocracy of spirit" with decadent values and world views half out of self-deception, and half out of willing trickery. This short-circuit between the two manifests the sickness that essentially affects the "sacerdotal spirit." Another question that is left somehow suspended is the importance given by Nietzsche to suffering, which the author sees just as compelling to the philosopher as the meaninglessness of reality. This might not be true of Nietzsche's entire reflection, given that, for instance, in BT suffering, precisely because of its essentially individual nature, is said to belong more on the side of illusion: the individual, as such, certainly suffers, but the individual is also not fully real. Therefore suffering could not be so essential a category as the meaninglessness of reality, which is unquestionably the ultimate "truth" unveiled by music, tragedy, and philosophy.

Chapter two is remarkable in dealing with the problem of *Bildung*, as it is set by Nietzsche in UM. Here the author is very effective in demonstrating the role played by the cultural collective dimension to the self-creation process of "great individuals." (Chapter six also examines this same role in the shaping of ordinary individuals, which actually amounts to crushing them into sacrificial slavery, i.e. their incomplete-ness and pure instrumentality as human beings [cf. BGE 258], for their own sake, as well as for the sake of great cultures themselves, so that the latter may shine and rule.) Here he

convincingly advocates that culture, in Nietzsche's eyes, indeed possesses a value *per se*, a stance reprised and developed in chapter three. Such value must come as completely deprived of utilitarianism—it is indeed a *confutation* of utilitarianism as a value (in the Nietzschean sense of the term). Such utility, as it happens, mostly comes in the form of gratification or pleasure, the *divertissement* which the "last man" finds himself completely ensnared in.

Chapter five is the climax of the focus of the book, the place where the reader is gently but steadily led from the beginning, and it lives up to the promises laid down in the introduction, at least as far as decadence is concerned. The author's thesis is that "decadence is a more specific kind of affliction characterized by a particular self-destructive pattern in the individual, bespeaking a proper order of the self" (p. 81). The following pages, concerning individual and cultural decadence, feature some of the most convincing analysis of the book. As for the former, the author argues that it basically consists in the outcome of an asymmetry in the individual issued from the tyranny he imposes on himself. As the author sees it, the matter here is not ruling, but "an *inappropriate*" sort of it (p. 85; author's italics). At the cultural level, decadence takes on the appearance of a lack of unity and an essential inability to strive for whole-ness. Here the author seems less certain about the meaning of this lack of unity, eventually resorting to define it as the analogue of the same asymmetry found in individuals. Here, too, a lack of unity means that one part or element has outgrown the others, to the extent that if a culture refuses to integrate one or more of them into a coherent whole, this leads to its, or theirs, tyrannical "extirpation or castration" (p. 93). A possible limit to the author's interpretation, here, may lay in its heavily relying on GM III and its discussion of the meaning of ascetic ideals, which could make it less adaptable to other Nietzschean texts. Indeed, even if the author's overall definition of decadence is generally acceptable, decadence comes as a multi-faceted reality both historically and theoretically: it is definitely the realm of ascetic ideals, for which the tyranny explanation fits perfectly, but also the taming and breeding of man (as it appears in TI and A), the music of Wagner, or Nietzsche himself as a philosopher—all realities for which this explanation fits

less. (Indeed, another question is here at stake: if philosophy is something issued from, or related to, the quintessentially decadent sacerdotal power, or something verging far more on the side of sickness than health, as Nietzsche often points out, then how can his philosophy sensibly claim to contribute to bringing about the most thorough liberation of mankind thus far?) In light of this, the author's solution to the problem of cultural decadence is not fully satisfactory, covering only partly, as it does, the wider semantic spectrum of its meaning.

The promises listed in the introduction, however, are only half-fulfilled, because the author, despite being generally convincing in his analysis of the decadence of culture(s), tells precious little about what makes a culture flourish. He incidentally mentions the Roman Empire in chapter three, without paying much attention to the fact that, in the eyes of the late Nietzsche of GM and A, the conflict between "Rome and Judaea" takes cosmic, near-apocalyptic proportions (and maybe, somehow, by putting the two opposite contenders side by side, is even capable to render an image of that wholeness, whose denial the author had so convincingly described as the very essence of decadence only a few pages earlier? As one suggestion). The author talks at length in chapter six of the sacrificial role played by millions of forgotten ordinary individuals in the making of great civilizations (by far the most recurring given example of which is, curiously, Italian Renaissance instead of ancient Greece), but we are eventually left thinking that, by knowing what decadence is, we can simply infer *via negationis* what greatness and flourishing consist of. This might just not be the case, given that, after all, what made the Italian Renaissance flourish might be quite different from what made ancient Greece so exceptional. Moreover, even great cultures may not be all great at the same level, and, given that Nietzsche actually writes down more than one list of ideal and anti-ideal *Kulturformen*, the question about what is necessarily implied by greatness becomes intertwined with the question about what makes some culture or individual greater (or more flourishing) than another.

These are, however, only remarks. The more significant criticisms of this book are essentially of two sorts. The first concerns its structure: The book, after a strong start, somehow loses its way after chapter five. A good third of it (notably chapters seven and eight) is devoted to a long analysis of Nietzsche's moral philosophy that bears not much affinity to the professed main subject of the enquiry. The second is methodological: if the conception of culture within the context of Nietzsche's productive life is quite vividly sketched, the historical-philosophical background in which Nietzsche lived and operated is almost entirely missing. For instance, we are left with no clue or information about whether the thriving Basel intellectual milieu—which comprised men who shared Nietzsche's sensibility, taking the ancient Greek example as the ground for general reflections on culture at large—exerted some influence on the young philologist-turned-philosopher, and his debut precisely focused, as the author rightly points out, on culture, not the "great individual." This is a fault that puzzles the reader also at a more general level, given that the author's main thesis—the recognition of the centrality of culture in, and for, Nietzsche's philosophy—is by no means a novel one. As a matter of fact, before Heidegger (whose work, published in 1961, was conceived between 1936 and 1946), Nietzsche was for decades considered less a philosopher than an exceptionally brilliant critic of culture who expressed himself in a literary form, as in the once pervasive interpretation by Dilthey. As for the subject of decadence in relation to culture, Thomas Mann wrote pages of unrivalled depth, in which each line betrays a profound meditation on Nietzsche, but the author does not engage with them (ironically, even the book's opening quote from Mann does not mention these reflections, but only praises Nietzsche as a philosophical hero). Such historical-theoretical background is unfortunately met in the book with deafening silence: this, together with the choice to largely omit (with only five exceptions) non-English speaking scholarship in the bibliography—a legitimate choice for sure, but left completely unsubstantiated of any methodological or theoretical argument in its favor—come as the book's major substantial shortcomings.

Nietzsche's Free Spirit Works: A Dialectical Reading Matthew Meyer

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(Cambridge: Cambridge UP. xi + 277 pp, 2019. ISBN 978-1-108-47417-7)

We still don't know how to read Nietzsche's books. This bizarre fact is true of them to a degree unmatched by the works of any other major historical figure in modern philosophy, perhaps in all of the history of philosophy. Of course, we know how to read the words Nietzsche wrote, and get something – often, very many things – out of them. We know, as it were, how to read *in* Nietzsche's books. But the books themselves, as literary units, remain elusive. So much so, in fact, that earlier Anglophone commentators tended to throw up their hands. Arthur Danto suggested that Nietzsche's books "give the appearance of having been assembled rather than composed" (Danto 1965, 19). In a similar vein, Richard Schacht says that they "consist chiefly in assemblages of rather loosely connected notes" (Schacht 1983, ix).

While most contemporary scholars have been trained to be highly attentive to the context of individual aphorisms, and have found numerous and important connections between them, fundamental interpretive problems nevertheless persist. Even if some continuing trains of thought can be isolated in some of his books (most notably perhaps in his earlier essays, and in

the *Genealogy*), still the overall structure of almost all of them is difficult to ascertain. Even more distressingly, Nietzsche's work as a whole presents what can seem like very abrupt and insufficiently motivated changes of course, especially around the years 1876 and 1882. The time in between those dates is often referred to as Nietzsche's "middle" period, and the books he published then – the two volumes of *Human, All-too-Human*, *Daybreak*, and *The Gay Science* – present both problems in their most vexing form: they are, or at any rate seem to be, the least internally coherent of Nietzsche's works, and many of their claims stand in quite blatant contradiction to claims Nietzsche makes in books prior to 1876 and after 1882. Most strikingly, in works of his earlier and later periods, Nietzsche has a far more critical understanding of the limits of the value of science and truth-seeking generally, and a far more positive evaluation of the cultural importance of art, while in the middle (sometimes, "positivistic") works the roles are reversed – science is seen as the cultural savior, while artists are mostly critiqued for their dishonesty.

These books, and these problems, are the focus of Matthew Meyer's ambitious and exciting new book, *Nietzsche's Free Spirit Works: A Dialectical Reading*. It is not only the most illuminating study we now have of Nietzsche's middle period, but an important call to a very different way of approaching Nietzsche's whole *oeuvre*.

Meyer's interpretive thesis is bold enough to appear at first highly unlikely. He believes that the free spirit works of the middle period are "best understood as a consciously constructed dialectical *Bildungsroman*," through which Nietzsche himself undergoes a kind of self-educative project as a free spirit (3). The free spirit begins as an Enlightenment figure, ascetically committed to the value of science and truth and highly critical of the cultural role of art, and by a series of stages discovers that the project of truth seeking undermines itself (or undergoes a *Selbstaufhebung*¹), thus necessitating a return to the kind of art that Nietzsche praised in early works like BT and (in Meyer's view) went on to compose in later works like Z. This "dialectical

¹See GM III:27 for Nietzsche's use of this important philosophical term.

Bildungsroman” is “consciously constructed” because, though Nietzsche did not know all of the details of the three free spirit works before he began, he *did* plan out (at least by the time of the publication of HH in 1878) its main “plot points,” as it were – the ascetically motivated commitment to the will to truth begun in HH, a critique of moral prejudices set out in D, and a self-overcoming of a moralized conception of the will to truth in the final work (which in the end becomes the famous “death of God” passage in GS 125), and the subsequent need to return to tragic art.² Meyer’s long introduction (pp. 3–81) explains and lays out his argument for the position, and subsequent chapters present in detail his reading of each of Nietzsche’s middle period books.

The introduction is an interpretive *tour de force*, and in many ways the strongest part of the book. The appeal of his approach is clear – if Meyer is right, then the reading of a book like HH becomes considerably less confusing. Part of the struggle any reader of Nietzsche’s corpus must have had with that work is that the positions it espouses break sharply from ones Nietzsche took up earlier *and* later in his career; and yet one cannot simply dismiss it, because it takes but a moment to see that it is written with the same verve and incisiveness that mark all of Nietzsche’s other works.³ What was needed, as now seems obvious in retrospect, was a way to capture Nietzsche’s ambivalent presence in the book. Meyer provides that – HH is the beginning of an educative project, but one where *Nietzsche himself* is the one being educated. He is present as the Nietzsche who consciously takes on an absolute commitment to truth-seeking in its modern form (i.e., by means of modern natural science, not transcendent metaphysics); but he is also present as the author of

²One of the more interesting and controversial theses of Meyer’s book is that the call is actually just as much to *comic* art as tragic, and that Nietzsche in fact responds to that call, too, in his works of 1888. I will not focus on that aspect of his thesis in this review, but interested readers should consult chapter 8, and Meyer 2018.

³Though, of course, some have tried. Laurence Lampert has suggested that Nietzsche in effect disowned HH in 1886 (see Lampert 2017). Meyer responds to Lampert (to my mind, persuasively) on pp. 24–26.

the free spirit project who knows already that such a commitment will prove to be self-undermining.

Meyer marshals an impressive array of circumstantial evidence, with the goal of showing that his approach is the best potential candidate for understanding the works. He appeals to three kinds of evidence – (1) *ex post* evidence from Nietzsche’s later works suggesting that he saw the contents of the free spirit works as unified and building to a *Selbstaufhebung* of the will to truth;⁴ (2) *ex ante* evidence, showing that the stage of thought Nietzsche reached by the end of the free spirit works had already been sketched out in some detail in Nietzsche’s earlier works;⁵ and finally, (3) contemporaneous evidence, especially from Nietzsche’s letters and unpublished drafts, plans, and sketches from the middle period, showing that Nietzsche wrote them rapidly, often conceiving of them as direct sequels or continuations of each other, and throughout with the plan that they would be written in some sense *for himself* rather than for others. The overall effect of the evidence is strong – Meyer’s approach allows him not just to tell a satisfying narrative of Nietzsche’s development from 1875–1882, but to do so in a way that makes philosophical (and not merely biographical) sense of the transition from the early to the middle period, and doesn’t simply dismiss Nietzsche’s later descriptions of that development, as scholars before him have tended to do. It is not a knock-down argument, and the evidence is all technically equivocal; Meyer himself admits that there is no smoking gun passage which proves that Nietzsche was, before the publication of HH, planning the project Meyer describes. But he nonetheless achieves his goal – his is clearly the most con-

⁴The most important passages are the sections in EH discussing the free spirit works, the prefaces added to the second editions of those works in 1886–7, and the discussion of the self-overcoming of Christian morality in GM III:27. Also important are two letters to Nietzsche’s publisher Fritzsche in 1886 (KSB 7:730 and 740).

⁵Here, the key passages are BT 18, the early unpublished essays TL and PTA (all three of which sketch versions of the idea of the self-undermining of the will to truth), and SE on the need for self-education.

vincing account available in the literature of how Nietzsche's middle period fits into his overall philosophical development.

The rest of Meyer's book (pp. 85–262) presents his reading of the free spirit works guided by the dialectical approach. Meyer gives a (necessarily) selective reading of HH, AOM, WS, D and GS. Meyer's through-line, from which he never strays very far, is the will to truth. He reads HH as taking up the experiment of understanding a free spirit as someone who is committed to the absolute value of the will to truth without an accompanying transcendent metaphysics or optimism about the meaning of life. Many of the consequences of this idea are explored for the first time, including a trenchant critique of the value of "convictions," which are here conceived as fetters on the free spirit's bold search for truth. The overall attitude toward life suggested by the free spirit's approach is, however, deeply ambivalent – the ultimate goal of all its knowledge-seeking is unclear, and Nietzsche even suggests a kind of suspension of judgment about the value of life (HH 34); the free spirit flits from belief to belief, as the truth leads, so that it feels like "a wanderer on earth" (HH 638). AOM and WS continue to deal with this latter problem, and move (especially in WS) in the direction of a more Epicurean response to the predicament (i.e., away from metaphysical questions about "first and last things" and toward consideration of the "closest things" of everyday life – diet, weather, social intercourse, etc.).⁶ *Daybreak* sets out on the apparently quite different project of critiquing moral prejudices. But Meyer argues persuasively that this appearance is misleading – it is precisely these moral prejudices that can lead us to despair, when they are combined with the sobering deliverances of the will to truth the earlier books had outlined. A critique of them makes possible a new kind of boldness, what Nietzsche comes to call a "passion for knowledge" (D 429 and 482; cf. also GS 3, 107, and 123), which finds joy in the simple act of seeking knowledge and throws out

⁶These themes are the focus of another recent, and highly Epicurean, treatment of Nietzsche's middle works (Ansell-Pearson 2018, reviewed in this volume). Meyer's reading suggests that Ansell-Pearson's view is not as attentive as it should be to the further development of these themes in D and GS.

any caution about the consequences of this seeking for life more generally. It is this more intemperate passion, which could border on a kind of madness, that makes possible the infamous killing of God (described, naturally, by a "madman" [*tolle Mensch*]) in GS 125. Meyer takes the most important feature of God's death to be its undermining of the unconditional value of the will to truth; thus he speaks of Nietzsche as having "enacted" the *Selbstaufhebung* of the will to truth in book III of GS. Book IV of GS begins to suggest that, despite the misgivings about the cultural importance of art that the free spirit had had to develop when it was ascetically devoted to the will to truth (in HH), the response to the self-undermining of the will to truth will have to be artistic – we must "give style" to our character (GS 290), and the book ends with an "*incipit tragoedia*" (GS 342) that points to Nietzsche's own tragic response to the death of God, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.

The virtue of Meyer's reading is that it stays very close to Nietzsche's texts and gives fruitful suggestions for how to read them as one continuing line of thought. Anyone who sits down to read these texts one after the other knows that they can be simply bewildering – so many short sections, on so many topics, in seemingly so many voices, often threatening to contradict each other. But Meyer's focus on the development of the will to truth and the changes in the importance of art allow the reader a baseline on which to focus attention, and to at least seek to somehow relate the rest of the material to it. And it often allows one to see the importance of individual aphorisms that might otherwise have gotten lost in the shuffle. Perhaps the best example of this is an aphorism titled "The Prisoners" (WS 84), which Meyer persuasively argues presents the "first portrayal of the death of God" (141), but which is often neglected by interpreters of GS 125. These chapters represent an important step forward in understanding how to read the free spirit works – they seem more approachable and potentially more interesting because of the work Meyer has done, and that is an important achievement.

However, the step forward is not as significant as it could have been. Meyer's focus on this particular line of philosophical thought is so diligent that much else goes by the wayside. Meyer makes much in his introduction

of the literary concept of a *Bildungsroman* in his introduction, and of the fact that Nietzsche thought the endpoint of the *Bildung* was a certain kind of artistic response. And yet, the fact that this is a story or novel of some kind (a “*Roman*”) doesn’t actually seem to carry much weight for Meyer, except that the writer seems to change his mind over time, and sometimes to look forward and back at his chain of thought. Aesthetic and stylistic considerations about the books seem in general to take a backseat. Surely one of the most striking features of all Nietzsche’s books from HH on is a playful yet curiously recurrent use of key metaphors, especially surrounding light/dark pairs (including shadows), biological/medical terms (sickness, health, etc.) and erotism (“passion” for knowledge, *amor fati*, etc.). Meyer doesn’t avoid these altogether, of course, but they are rarely his focus, and sometimes at key moments he passes by them quickly on the way to returning to his favored themes. Thus, for example, the image of the shadow obviously must be important to an understanding of WS, but Meyer’s approach apparently won’t help us to see how, since he is content to point out that its meaning is unclear and move on (133).⁷

And Meyer’s approach, which is so helpful in providing a kind of overview of the free spirit works, often falls flat in big moments. AOM, for instance, concludes with a bizarre and dramatic “descent into Hades,” in which Nietzsche finds “four pairs who did not refuse themselves to me” – Epicurus and Montaigne, Goethe and Spinoza, Plato and Rousseau, Pascal and Schopenhauer. Why these eight? Why paired like that? Meyer is right, of course, that “the meaning of this final aphorism is far from clear” (133), but the drama of the Odysseus comparison and the placement of the aphorism at the end of AOM clearly invites the reader to speculate. Meyer scrupulously turns down the opportunity, though. Arguably, he does so again in an even more important place, the all-important GS 125. This aphorism has generated so much commentary that Meyer could perhaps be forgiven for wanting to avoid con-

⁷For a more sustained attempt to grapple with some of Nietzsche’s central metaphors, especially those surrounding light and shadow, see Hough 1997.

troversies that are separate from his main concerns. But the death of God still plays an important role in his account, and yet he only devotes a single page to its analysis, treating it almost as if it is simply a plot point to be noted before moving on, rather than the mystifying, metaphor-rich, begging-to-be-speculated-about literary experiment that it is. He says that the madman’s claim that God is dead and we have killed him is “not something that refers to events in European culture happening independently of the free spirit project,” which if true might justify the short treatment (210). But that is still hardly very satisfying. It may be that free spirits have killed God with their uncompromising will to truth, as Meyer suggests, but that is surely only the beginning and not the end of a real account of what it means to have killed God, an account that would surely have a great deal to say about the course of events in late modern European culture. Meyer’s quick remark can leave the unfortunate (and surely unintentional) impression that perhaps the most intensely interesting aphorism of Nietzsche’s middle period works is really mostly a reference to greatest hits from the earlier works.

However, these complaints are expressions less of deep disagreement with Meyer’s overall approach than of hopeful expectation of its future fruitfulness. Meyer’s dialectical approach to the free spirit works is an elegant solution to a very real and pressing problem of Nietzsche interpretation, and should open up many new avenues for thinking about the development of Nietzsche’s philosophical thought more generally (and along with it, issues like the death of God in particular). It would of course be unfair to expect of Meyer’s own application of the approach that it follow up on all of those potential avenues. It is enough, more than enough, that his interpretation makes it possible to read Nietzsche more carefully and more comprehensively. Anyone who wants to do that will need to pay close attention to Meyer’s book.

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Nietzsche's Search for Philosophy: On the Middle Writings

Keith Ansell-Pearson

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In *Nietzsche's Search for Philosophy – On the Middle Writings*, Keith Ansell-Pearson directs his interpretive gaze to the middle writings of Nietzsche's oeuvre, namely *Human, All Too Human* (HAH), *Dawn* and *The Gay Science* (GS). While at least in German Nietzsche scholarship, it is rather debatable whether or not the middle writings should have been considered "neglected" – with perhaps *Dawn* being a reasonable exception – it is important to read them as more than merely a detour from the "real Nietzsche" found in the *Birth of Tragedy* and then the late works. While Ansell-Pearson does not presume a homogeneous philosophical approach in the middle works, he characterizes the period as a whole and each work in itself as containing important aspects of Nietzsche's "search for philosophy", especially in consideration of Nietzsche's attempts to "unify thought and life" (4) in what is labelled a "philosophical life" (4).

In the introduction, the author explains the relevance of the middle works and pushes back against attempts to isolate Nietzsche's main philosophy in the early or late works – or even in posthumous fragments. The chapters

are structured as pairs, each consisting of one essay introducing the reader to the respective text and Nietzsche's model of philosophizing, followed by an additional "subsidiary chapter on a prominent theme, or set of themes that appear in each text" (6). The primary chapters begin with a brief summary of the main claims followed by precise and well-structured introductions to the respective work. Every chapter though is worthwhile exploring, as the readings provided by Ansell-Pearson present unique perspectives on Nietzsche's philosophical approaches and the reasoning and influences behind them. However, in contrast to what the author suggests, the book does not offer a cohesive interpretation of the middle works. This is because the "chapters" originate from sometimes multiple presentations or papers, resulting in some repetitions, abrupt changes of scope in lines of arguments and conclusions that do not always succeed in retrospectively unifying the arguments of the chapter.

The first chapter provides a precise introduction to *Human, All Too Human*. Ansell-Pearson's main claim concerns a development from the first to the second part of HAH. He states that while Nietzsche "negotiates the competing claims of the positivist goal of science and eudemonistic philosophy by aligning himself with the former, in MOM and WS he seeks to marry the project of naturalistic demystification with an ethical project of seeking 'spiritual-physical health and maturity' (MOM 184)" (18). The first part of this enterprise is achieved through a comprehensive and lucid discussion of "Nietzsche's dilemma" (31) referring to the potential incompatibility of knowledge and humanity's well-being. However, the discussion of the second part is rushed and after short remarks on Nietzsche's reconsideration of previously criticized thinkers of Ancient Greece, Ansell-Pearson turns towards the teachings of Epicurus, providing the reader with a valuable and detailed summary of the Greek thinker's philosophical framework. As for the application of this Epicurean framework on Nietzsche though, I must admit strong reservations on whether the "project of sobriety" (18) should really be considered Nietzsche's response to the modern condition he diagnoses. While this therapeutic-philosophical approach might be an option discussed by Ni-

etzsche in regard to the advancing devaluation of orienting frameworks of belief through science, the resulting humanity of cooler temperament presented in *HAH* 34 appears more of a scientifically disillusioned afterthought, foreshadowing the impossibility of a positivistic set of values, rather than an early conception of the free spirit. Applying this portrayal of wise humanity to the “free spirit” is thus problematic at best. To extract a comprehensive model of the free spirit in the middle works, it would have at least been important to also explore the later passages contrasting the bound spirit and the “free spirit” (*HAH* 225), thus passages in which the free spirit is referred to by concept. Even though Nietzsche uses the term “Freigeist”, which is often used in a polemic function, it is precisely this pairing of bound spirits and free spirits that Nietzsche refers to in the late Preface (3) when talking about becoming a free spirit himself. Still, Ansell-Pearson presents an original reading and makes this genuine position seem like an idea Nietzsche strongly considered, even if his claim that this therapeutic approach constitutes Nietzsche’s primary path in his search for philosophy is ultimately unconvincing. Ansell-Pearson provides valuable insights into an often neglected aspect of the middle works. The recurring passages on Nietzsche and Epicurus are illuminating concerning the Greek philosopher’s profound influence on Nietzsche, as well as the ways in which Nietzsche’s reading of Epicurus gives the tradition of thought a genuinely modern application.

Ansell-Pearson continues his reading of the middle works in the second chapter discussing ‘Nietzsche on Enlightenment and Revolution’, illuminating Nietzsche’s scope in his critique of morality. He carefully follows Nietzsche’s disentanglement of the revolutionary French Enlightenment movement and the core ideals of Enlightenment, and carves out the distinction between an aspired perpetual social transformation through knowledge and the fanatic state of revolution claiming Enlightenment as its historical basis. Especially interesting is the author’s discussion of the “German hostility to the Enlightenment”, showing how the antiquarian nature of German thought results in the production of a critical historical science which lead to a more profound critique of social institutions, allowing for the analysis of

how “[e]verything that comes into existence [...] plants its own foundations of history” (52). Ansell-Pearson understands the moral critique in *Dawn* as part of an exploration of “mature morality” by Nietzsche, referring to an ethics of self-sufficiency he claims Nietzsche adopted from the teachings of Epictetus. Thus, Nietzsche’s project of sobriety is considered to be continued in *Dawn*, staging it in direct opposition to a heated contemporary fanaticism.

After an insightful introduction, Chapter 3 on ‘*Dawn* and the Passion of Knowledge’ does not hold up to the high compositional standard of other chapters. The scope of the main line of argument shifts several times and while the paper delivers insightful interpretations of both well-known passages and hidden gems within *Dawn*, no consistent theme derives from these interpretations. In part, this might result from the main topic, the “passion of knowledge” being confounded with “passion for knowledge”. This problematically aligns the individual philosopher’s emotional disposition towards knowledge, allowing for passionate affirmation of life in absence of metaphysical fulfilment with what is later labelled the “will to truth”, the unquestioned belief in the objective value of truth over any sort of affirmative narrative, two lines of thought that should be treated separately. While Ansell-Pearson’s interpretations of the aphorisms of *Dawn* are a valuable read, the third chapter cannot hold up to the high standard of argument as delivered in the other essays, especially not in light of the two other exemplary commentaries on *Dawn*, chapter 2 (which draws more on *Dawn* than on *HAH*) and chapter 4, which frame many of the quoted passages from this chapter in a more relevant perspective.

The fourth essay combines prior themes in a precise analysis of Nietzsche’s considerations of ethics in the middle writings culminating in a model of care of self, influenced by Stoic and Epicurean traditions but modified by Nietzsche to be applicable to the modern condition of humanity. Ansell-Pearson not only astutely follows Nietzsche’s critique of any morality affirming itself as exclusive, but also describes his considerations concerning other modes of morality or ethical codes as possible alternatives. He criticizes the modern equation of morality and compassion and turns towards

ancient Greek ideals of ethics, namely models of a healthy egoism and a positive connotation of care of self. The line of argument is concise and especially the provided Foucauldian perspective adds further depth to this reading of *Dawn*. The paper is a valuable read not only for readers acquainted with Foucault or the Greek teachings, but for anyone aspiring a better understanding of Nietzsche's ethical thinking in *Dawn* and the middle works in general.

The fifth chapter poses some riddles to a reader interested in the middle works of Nietzsche. Ansell-Pearson continues his analysis of Nietzsche's search for philosophy in *The Gay Science*, which has rightfully received much attention lately. He focuses on two things, probing the meaning of Nietzsche's cultivation of philosophical cheerfulness and contesting Pippin's claim that Nietzsche leaves the grounds of philosophy in doing so. He understands cheerfulness as an experience of joy by the convalescent thinker concerning the problematic nature of life and philosophy. This addresses what he considers a fundamental tension of the text, regarding the lightness in style and tone, and the seriousness and gravity of the ideas discussed in this manner. The general summary of the task of a gay science as practicing life as a means to knowledge and cultivating knowledge as the most powerful passion (119) is fruitfully supported by the idea that while the prior works of the middle period showed the destructive power of science and knowledge, the *Gay Science* is also an attempt to find out "whether science can now furnish and fashion goals of existence after it has demonstrated it can take away goals and annihilate them" (119). For a discussion concerning both the destructive potential of modern science and the search for new grounds for orientation, passages on the Death of God provide important material to interpret. However, Ansell-Pearson chooses to approach this interpretation mainly through the preface and the fifth book of the *Gay Science*, both late additions of the second edition from 1886. This choice should have been explained in the text, especially since the passages surrounding GS 125 offer fruitful material that could have been used – especially GS 143 contrasting polytheism and monotheism as well as passages on *amor fati* from the fourth book. It is unclear, why the focus has been laid on passages from the "late Nietzsche" and not the one in search of

philosophy that is generally referred to. While this choice is peculiar, it is not so much an argument against Ansell-Pearson's reading, but rather describes a missed opportunity for providing a more comprehensive understanding of the middle works in themselves. His conclusions provide a twofold understanding of cheerfulness. On the one hand, he describes cheerfulness as a philosophical disposition of the convalescent loving life not in spite of, but because of its problematic character (130). On the other hand he describes an instinctive fearlessness of the philosopher towards life and existence and towards potential dangers of knowledge he aspires to uncover. He can thus argue against Pippin with a Deleuzian interpretation that Nietzsche counteracts the development towards only "reactive forms of life and the accusatory forms of thought" (134), with a cheerful appreciative philosophy that enjoys the new problematic nature of life and reality.

In the final chapter, Ansell-Pearson returns to his approximation of Nietzsche's middle works to being deeply shaped in relation to the philosophy of Epicurus. He explores the idea of the "heroic-idyllic", with the Epicurean garden as its symbol. Again, the author provides the reader with many interesting insights into the Greek philosopher's frame of thought. The chapter leads through various aphorisms, trying to establish the Epicurean thinking as a major theme in *The Gay Science*, contrasting the late idea of Dionysian joy with the Epicurean "heroic-idyllic" in the middle works. One aspect that strikes me again as peculiar in the final chapters is the complete absence of references to *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, even though at least in the time the *Gay Science* was written, the fictional philosopher was already present in Nietzsche's thinking – and as Brusotti illustrated, Zarathustra even appeared in early drafts of GS, namely in GS 125 proclaiming the Death of God.¹ There might be several good reasons to exclude *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* from this analysis, as it is a valid approach to interpret the middle writings without

¹See Brusotti, Marco: *Die Leidenschaft der Erkenntnis – Philosophie und ästhetische Lebensgestaltung bei Nietzsche von Morgenröthe bis Also sprach Zarathustra*. Berlin, 1997, p. 404-423 for a comprehensive study of the early stages of the aphorism.

this looming shadow. However, especially concerning the idea of the heroic-idyllic, *Zarathustra* could have provided with an interesting transitional stage between the two positions discussed in this chapter. Also, as the project of sobriety plays such an important role in Ansell-Pearson's reading, it would have been especially interesting to see how the idea of a "philosophy of modesty" and the style of philosophizing portrayed in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* could fit together.

Another aspect that appears to be a missed opportunity concerning Ansell-Pearson's book as a whole, is the lack of a clear hermeneutical or philological position towards the late prefaces that were added to these works in 1886. As no discussion of their status is made, their use seems arbitrary. In my opinion it would both have been legitimate to either include the passages and talk about a body of works that Nietzsche retrospectively stylized in a certain way in 1886. As Ansell-Pearson's book concerns a chronological limitation to the middle works, the use of these passages need justification. However, in some arguments, the prefaces or the fifth book of the *Gay Science* are used to interpret ideas concerning the middle works without further reflection on the different status of the passages. In other chapters, the prefaces are excluded, even though they could have provided a more comprehensive perspective or at least a contrasting view allowing for a deeper understanding of the genuine search for philosophy in the middle writings. As much as it appears reasonable to not take Nietzsche at his word concerning the later evaluations of his middle texts, a brief discussion as to how and why the author chose to regard or disregard these passages – thus a clear hermeneutical or philological position on these passages – would have provided for a more comprehensive understanding of Nietzsche's "middle works".

A reading of Nietzsche as a philosopher trying to calm down the human mind, aspiring to a therapeutically prepared humanity of mild temperament, fighting against fanaticism for a new enlightenment by developing an ethical model of care of self to provide for a cheerful attitude towards the problematic aspects of life, would be expected to provoke scepticism. However, even though there are aspects of the reading that are questionable, this study

constitutes both a philosophically valuable and enjoyable read. While I have some reservations concerning Ansell-Pearson's hermeneutical approach to the middle writings, this should not distract from the fact that the book delivers insightful and original interpretations of a most interesting time in Nietzsche's body of work. This book is recommended to every scholar interested in working with the middle works, as well as to scholars interested in a systematic study of Nietzsche's references to and employment of the Stoic and Epicurean traditions.

Moral Psychology with Nietzsche

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Brian Leiter needs little introduction: renowned legal scholar, creator and long-standing editor of the controversial ranking of US philosophy departments the *Philosophical Gourmet Report*, author of the recent *Why Tolerate Religion?*, but especially herald of an uncompromisingly naturalistic interpretation of Nietzsche's philosophy. His recently published book *Moral Psychology with Nietzsche* is comprised of seven chapters that all come from previous work, but have often been thoroughly revised to take into account critical responses and new interpretations in the secondary literature that have emerged in recent years. The book systematically and succinctly showcases all the major themes of Leiter's research on Nietzsche, with special emphasis on value anti-realism, the relation between affects and moral judgments, the freedom of the will, and the nature/nurture debate around our character and personality. All these, and many other topics, are related by virtue of their relevance to moral psychology, and actually constitute, in Leiter's opinion, Nietzsche's most significant philosophical contribution to this field of enquiry.

Leiter defines moral psychology, at the very beginning, as concerning "the psychological explanation of what is involved in both making moral

judgements and acting morally" (p. 1). Philosophy should contribute to it by providing "clarity about the concepts in play", in particular about "the nature of morality and of moral judgments, what would be involved in agency and distinctively *moral* agency (which is always in the modern tradition understood to be *free agency*), and the workings of a mind in which such agency is possible." (Ibid.) Accordingly, Leiter examines those and many other related concepts throughout the book.

The book, with its chapters derived from previous papers of Leiter's, offers mainly fine-grained debates about the exegetically correct and most coherent interpretations of Nietzsche's understanding of those concepts. This comes despite Leiter often at pains in claiming that his "interest in Nietzsche is not motivated by antiquarian concerns" (p. 83); and, especially, despite his hopes that "the volume will be of interest to philosophers interested in the philosophical issues, even if not especially interested in Nietzsche." (p. 14) However, the extreme level of detail with which Leiter contributes to rather insular debates within the Nietzsche scholarship will probably discourage after a few pages those philosophers who are merely interested in the topic of moral psychology. This is not to say, of course, that many of the concepts and arguments tackled there are not potentially relevant to moral psychology in general, but only that if philosophers are ready to delve into those chapters in order to understand and appreciate the issues at stake, then they must also be willing to deeply familiarize themselves with Nietzsche scholarship as well.

This is also not to say that Leiter's exposition of the debates offered are not interesting and accurately represented, providing one is acquainted enough with the necessary background. As a matter of fact, Leiter's interpretation of Nietzsche's positions is one of the most internally coherent and thought out one can find in the literature, to such an extent that offering a thorough exposition of its full ramifications here is an arduous endeavour. Rather than doing that, going through each chapter and offering comments on them respectively, I will explore two major questions that in my opinion can help one get a grasp of Leiter's general stance, connect some of the central themes

developed separately in the chapters, and – or so I hope – reveal a potential weak flank in Leiter’s systematic interpretation.

The first question is the following: is human flourishing objectively preferable to decadence? This question tackles Leiter’s interest in the scope of Nietzsche’s critique, namely what he dubs MPS: ‘morality in the pejorative sense’. With this, he means all moralities Nietzsche condemns, for reasons other than simply being moralities, in particular for holding “values not conducive to the flourishing of human excellence”. (p. 49) To answer this we can start from the second chapter, ‘Nietzsche’s Metaethics – Against the Privilege Readings’, where Leiter deepens his attack against realist interpretations, in particular those that take Nietzsche’s position to be assigning objective value to power. Leiter’s truck is with the idea that Nietzsche has room for a conception of existing values which do not depend on any perspective, a value that is also ‘a natural property’. The problem, it seems, hinges on how we should understand Nietzsche’s revaluation of values. “In offering a revaluation of MPS” Leiter asks, “is Nietzsche doing anything more than giving his idiosyncratic opinion from his idiosyncratic evaluative perspective? [...] In short, is there any sense in which Nietzsche’s evaluative perspective can claim some epistemic *privilege* – being “correct,” being better justified – over its target?” (p. 49). On Leiter’s account, Nietzsche believes that “all normative systems which perform something like the role we associate with ‘morality’ share certain structural characteristics.” In particular, they include both descriptive and normative claims: on the one hand, certain metaphysical and empirical claims about agency, and on the other, norms that favour “the interests of some people, often (though not necessarily) at the expense of others” (p. 12). This sounds all very plausible. However, Leiter continues, “it is *not* the falsity of the descriptive account of agency presupposed by MPS, per se, that is the heart of the problem, but rather its distinctive normative commitments.” (Ibid.) In other words, it is not the specific descriptive component of MPS which makes it worse than other moralities, and since the normative one cannot be evaluated as objectively true or false, Nietzsche’s condemna-

tion of MPS cannot be objectively correct “or, at least, better justified.” (p. 50)

Leiter has a specific reason to defend this view: his strong commitment to anti-realism, namely, that there is no objective ground to claim an evaluative stance as superior or more true than any other (because an evaluative stance ultimately expresses, in Leiter’s account, an affective relation with the world). Moreover, since Nietzsche is taken by Leiter to be endorsing this himself as an explicit advocate of anti-realism, he (Nietzsche) could not possibly be so inconsistent as to defend at the same time any evaluative stance as objectively preferable. Therefore, if that is the case, Nietzsche’s opinion about his own evaluative standards is that they do not enjoy any privilege over those he criticizes.

To support this reading, Leiter quotes EH IV:7, where Nietzsche writes that “it is *not* the error as an error” that horrifies him, but rather that “the only morality that has been thought so far, the morality of un-selfing, demonstrates a will to the end, it *negates* life at the most basic level.” He then concludes the section with: “*Definition of morality*: morality, the idiosyncrasy of decadents with the ulterior motive on taking revenge *on life* – and successfully. I attach value to *this* definition.”

This last sentence seems to undermine any attempt to defend a realist interpretation of Nietzsche’s metaethics, and Leiter’s chapter does a good job at arguing this case, focusing especially on critiquing standard interpretations of power as some kind of objective evaluative standard. However, he does not give much space to explanations of both why a descriptive component is inherent to any morality, and why MPS values are not conducive to the flourishing of human excellence. If morality has a descriptive component, for instance a certain account of human agency, then it makes claims about how the world is objectively. For instance, it may hold that there is a relation of intentional causality between a doer and the actions performed by the body it commands; that this doer coincides with a spirit or soul; and that the substance of this soul is ontologically different from the natural world in which the actions commanded by the soul are performed. Nietzsche goes to

great lengths to show us why those descriptive claims, and especially their presuppositions, are false. The idea of free will, to which Leiter dedicates many pages, is a notable example. Moreover, these false stories about the world we tell ourselves through our moral account of it seem to play a role in our decadent trajectory. Thus, the question seems to be, is the plausibility of the descriptive account moralities provide somehow relevant in evaluating their conveyed normative commitments? Why does one need to justify to oneself and others one's moral values, i.e. one's affective reactions to what happens around, with the aid of descriptive claims about how the world *really* is? Probably because our beliefs – what we tell to each other about the world we inhabit and shape together – play a role in our capacity to sustain and transmit such commitments, and Leiter acknowledges as much when he writes that Nietzsche “expresses the optimistic view that revising our beliefs might actually lead to a revision of our feelings.” (p. 77) Both our understanding of the world and our affective relations to it are mutually constituted, and what underpins this mutual constitution is necessarily a common feature of our singular perspectives, a common constraint on our interpretation of the world that allows the possibility itself of our telling to each other stories about it we can agree or disagree with. Consciousness, after all, is for Nietzsche nothing but the result of our need to communicate. This view is thoroughly exposed in GS 354, the only passage from the Nietzsche corpus – together with GM III:12 – that Leiter examines in great detail (pp. 84-92).¹

But then, might Nietzsche not be making a descriptive claim – a psychological one, to be precise – when he criticizes morality, namely that our nor-

¹To this, Leiter replies that rather than accepting the claim that “moralities are symptoms of affects, but not only affects”, Nietzsche’s ‘more ambitious’ answer would be that “‘belief fixation’ – that is, the doxastic state in which an agent takes a belief seriously enough that he will act on it – is itself dependent on affective investment in that belief (think, e.g., of his explanation of how a desire to punish motivates belief in free will).” (p. 78) But if that is all there is, then it is no longer clear where Nietzsche’s optimism about changing our feelings by revising our beliefs would come from, for ultimately it would all come down to feelings our beliefs have no effects upon.

mative commitments, our attachment to a certain morality, would change should we possess the mental capacity to look at our stories and see their self-deceptive character? Would an individual’s affective relation with the world change if they were to realize the nihilistic trajectory of our moral and cultural outlook they engender in consequence? Would we still choose decadence were we to see it in all its clarity? After all, to claim that people are psychologically constituted in such a way as to evaluate positively the consequences of certain actions is not to make a claim about the metaphysical objectivity of the value of those consequences. Therefore, it is not clear why MPS cannot be a privileged perspective in a sense compatible with Leiter’s anti-realism. Privileged not because of a special access to a metaphysical truth, but because of reasons internal to the other perspectives. A perspective can in fact be privileged in virtue of its capacity to take into account a wider multiplicity of factors and derive conclusions from them that would be preferable also for narrower or simply different perspectives, were they able to gain access to those factors. That perspective would be privileged not in general, but only in relation to the aims and goals of those other perspectives to which it is compared. No metaphysical claim about an absolute value is involved here. But then, if there is a morality that does not entail decadence, wouldn’t it be objectively preferable, given certain common psychological features of people’s perspectives? Of course, this requires a conception of decadence which transcends those idiosyncratic psychological features constituting our evaluative stances (what Leiter calls psycho-physical “type-facts”), for otherwise some characters would evaluate or adapt positively to what others would consider strong cases of decadence. But there seems to be in Nietzsche a conception of decadence encompassing different evaluative stances in virtue of its hinging on basic shared human features. This more ‘objective’ conception of decadence is often expressed by ideas about ‘life turning against itself’ and a lack of will and the possibility to desire. In other words, the undermining of the possibility of experiencing one’s life as meaningful – what goes by the name of nihilism. When he famously claims, at the end of the *Genealogy of Morality*, that “man would rather will

nothingness than not will,” he seems to be referring to human beings in general, not a specific psychological type. (GM III:28)

Note that this relates to the alleged practical justification of our preference for truth – in the sense of the correct identification of causal relations – that grounds the objectivity of epistemic norms. This is the topic of chapter four, one of the most interesting in the book, as Leiter brings together an in-depth analysis of the two aforementioned passages from Nietzsche’s books (GS 354 and GM III:12) and fundamental questions about the value of truth. In particular, it tries to answer the puzzle about Nietzsche’s purported anti-realism about value and his insight that (scientific) beliefs based on evidence depends on values as well: thereby, the discussion of the communicative nature of consciousness and the interconnectedness of our perspectives.

Leiter’s answer is, in short, that “our conscious knowledge is subject to evolutionary pressures which are only accidentally truth-tracking but are essentially reproductive-fitness-tracking: thus we lack a capacity for knowledge, having only an ability to “know” what is useful for the “herd” (p. 87). This builds up toward the strenuous defense of naturalism presented at the end of the chapter, and takes us to the second, more provocative question: is there something that, ultimately, is not moral, in the sense of being part of a perspective that avoids an in-built and guiding form of a particular morality? If Leiter’s interpretation is correct, then our conscious knowledge of the world is directly informed at an unconscious level by processes selected through evolutionary pressures in function of what is or was useful for the community. This means that what we experience perceptually is already shaped by those processes, we do not “report” or reconstruct at a conscious level the information gathered through the interaction between our sense organs and the environment “simply as it is”.

The question, however, is what counts as useful and why. If morality, precisely in virtue of all its false representations of the world, has been useful for a very long time as it to some extent has, then our conscious knowledge of the world might be shaped by morality more than we are able to recognize and ready to admit, including the individuation of true causal relations and

inductive forms of reasoning.² Attempts to justify epistemic values objectively on purely pragmatic grounds run the risk of overlooking their hidden moral nature.

The main argument presented by Leiter that I am interested in here is the following: “The interest in predicting the future course of experience is, it would seem, a widely shared interest, one that facilitates crossing the street, cooking a meal, indeed, living a life. On this kind of view, we should be naturalists because *naturalism works*, not because it is “true” or “justified” in some sense either independent of or dependent upon naturalistic criteria.” (p. 101) So Leiter has no issue with the fact that cognition is value-laden and ultimately enabled by the partiality of those values, but tries to confine them to a question of personal utility that applies to all human beings in virtue of the fact that we perform similar actions in a similar environment. One of Nietzsche’s most unsettling strategies, however, is to warn us against precisely such pragmatic justifications of the value of truth: for they are often self-deceptions about why we act one way or another. We do not converge towards truth because it is always pragmatically more convenient for us individually, but because our mind is structured upon normative commitments that enable the existence of the herd in the first place. On this reading, the prediction of human beings’ behaviour in function of their social control – that is, to make them responsive to normative constraints as socially imposed – always has priority over the alleged practical advantage of the prediction of the world for personal aims. The *Gay Science* passage I have in mind is called

²That is the second sense in which Lanier Anderson, in a recent article, claims Nietzschean perspectives are partial: “Nietzsche insists that perspectives are partial, in the general sense of being incomplete, *because* they are partial in the more specific sense of being personal and bound up with the interests and values of a particular individual or group.” [...] “Perspectivism is supposed to be a novel and illuminating idea precisely because it shows how deeply value-laden our cognitive life is, even when we are striving to be most objective” (2018, R. Lanier Anderson ‘The Psychology of Perspectivism: a Question for Nietzsche Studies Now’, *The Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 48.2, Penn State University Press, p. 222-225)

'*In what way we, too, are still pious*' and, interestingly enough, comes just ten paragraphs before the one Leiter analyses:

"This unconditional will to truth – what is it? Is it the will not to let oneself be deceived? Is it the will *not to deceive*? For the will to truth could be interpreted in this second way, too – if 'I do not want to deceive *myself*' is included as a special case under the generalization 'I do not want to deceive.' But why not deceive? But why not allow oneself to be deceived? Note that the reasons for the former lie in a completely different area from those for the latter: one does not want to let oneself be deceived because one assumes it is harmful, dangerous, disastrous to be deceived; in this sense science would be a long-range prudence, caution, utility, and to this one could justifiably object: How so? [...] Precisely this conviction could never have originated if truth *and* untruth had constantly made it clear that they were both useful, as they are. So, the faith in science, which after all undeniably exists, cannot owe its origin to such a calculus of utility; rather it must have originated *in spite of* the fact that the disutility and dangerousness of 'the will to truth' or 'truth at any price' is proved to it constantly. [...] Consequently, 'will to truth' does *not* mean 'I do not want to let myself be deceived' but – there is no alternative – 'I will not deceive, not even myself'; *and with that we stand on moral ground.*" (GS 344)

This passage, in light of the preceding discussion, shows that the implicit commitment to truth enshrined in our culture (and partly responsible for its decadent trajectory) is moral in character, in that it enables the distribution of punishments and rewards through the identification of causal relations and the subsequent attribution of responsibility to the various members of a shared, evaluatively determined perspective.³ If the value of objective, sci-

³In this regard see, especially, GM II 2: "Such is the long history of the origin of responsibility. As we have already grasped, the task of breeding an animal which is entitled to make promises presupposes as its condition a more immediate task, that of first *making* to a certain extent necessary, uniform, an equal among equals, regular and consequently calculable. [...] it was by means of the morality of custom and the social strait-jacket that man was really *made* calculable."

entific truth follows from this, then the attachment to a strict naturalistic worldview might be less neutral than what it claims, and we cannot offer an evaluation of it simply by appealing to its alleged practical advantage. Rather, Nietzsche seems often to suggest that such evaluative stances should be examined in light of the purpose they serve for life, where also falsity, forgetfulness, partiality, and self-deception possess a fundamental utility.

One of the most powerful and perversely disturbing traits of Nietzsche's philosophy is this capacity to get under our skin, so to speak, and reveal glimpses of an open-ended process of reality construction and interpretation that we can never fully grasp. Finding and sustaining a somewhat coherent interpretation is an incredible achievement of the human mind that always comes at the cost of a partial distortion, a forgetting what should not be seen, an acceptable narrative one can deceive oneself with. If there is a trade-off between achieving coherence and casting suspicion on one's convictions, then Leiter decisively leans toward the former, and the quality of his results repays close study. But to what extent does he manage to question the subtle ways in which his interpretation itself might be more moral than he is ready to admit? In what way are his intransigent naturalism and himself too, still pious?

The Work of Forgetting: Or, How Can We Make the Future Possible? Stephane Symons

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(London: Rowman and Littlefield International. 222 pp, 2018. ISBN: 9781785523236)

As is the case with many clichés, there is often a great truth to not judging a book by its cover. However, it is arguably far more reasonable to expect to be able to, to some degree, judge a book by its blurb. The publisher description and back cover of *The Work of Forgetting* by Stephane Symons claims a dialogue on the issue of memory and forgetting between aspects of the thought of six figures: Nietzsche, Freud, Heidegger, Benjamin, Arendt, and Deleuze. One would expect from this a more or less equal treatment of these figures throughout the study.

Instead, what you get in the text is one obvious protagonist, Walter Benjamin, with the other five figures as a secondary cast who either support the hero in their approach to these philosophical themes, or stand in as foils for or antagonists to Benjamin's position. As such, Benjamin is framed as a particularly useful figure for framing 'creative' forgetting as an 'interruptive' force. This misleading setup makes a review more difficult, since the content of the book doesn't match up to what was expected from the pub-

lisher's description. I admit a very limited knowledge of Walter Benjamin, so I am not best placed to assess the potential successes or failures of this significant aspect of the reading of Symons' work. However, and fortunately, this is not the case with several figures that make up the 'secondary cast'. As such I will focus on the role of Freud, Heidegger and Nietzsche in Symons' text for my analysis here.

The section specifically on Freud, though totalling just 7 pages (pp. 93 - 100), is excellent, when considered in isolation. It manages to be thorough, insightful and concise. It sophisticatedly treats a number of texts of Freud's texts where he discusses forgetting, under the auspices of Freud's conservationist model of mind. One small caveat of criticism: Symons doesn't make clear the moves, recantations and developments of Freud's model of mind per se. But while this is significant in relation to the background claims attending Freud's conception of forgetting, Symons' analysis exposes and aptly discusses the similarities of Freud's claims across his works from the time of his topographical model of mind, to later ones such as 'the Mystical Writing Pad'. This demonstrates Freud's continued commitment to psychological conservatism about memory and the capacity for unconscious recollection throughout his oeuvre. Symons is insightful in bringing out the curious way that this metaphor of the 'mystical writing pad' is employed by Freud to represent the manner in which the mind both receives, omits or keeps from consciousness, and yet preserves the context of all experiences, all operating independently of the others, in the context of forgetting as a mode of repression.

The most significant problem with this work, however, is one of deep structural significance. The central discussion of the book doesn't seem to form a coherent argument. This is not to say that the intended aim isn't clear: Symons hopes to upset a foundational paradigm in 'memory studies', by advocating a far more prominent role to a conception of forgetting in the business of "formulat[ing] response[s] to historical events" (p. 4). The potential for forgetting as a means of relating to history, be that by self-relation or by socio-historical or communitarian relation, is an important subject. It is

on this front that Symons wishes to view a certain relation to the past as constituting certain conditions for a present self-relation. But the way in which Symons attempts to fulfil this intended aim is deeply incoherent. The main reasons for this is that the respective conceptions of memory and forgetting by all of the six interlocutors (be they secondary or primary) seem to be tracking such vastly distinct phenomena, that no unifying thread can be gleaned to form a central account or debate that frames them in the way Symons aspires to do. On their own, the respective discussions of these figures are often interesting and sometimes illuminating. But the attempts to link all of these figures in a cohesive fashion, particularly by means of emphasis on Benjamin's contribution to discussions of forgetting, is not convincing.

For example, Symons relies on a presumption of conceptual overlap between different conceptions of forgetting. However, not only does each respective figure track different phenomena with their respective conceptions of forgetting, but there appears to be no singular articulable function that such phenomena respectively share.

This is evident on both supposed sides of the debate, between both conservationists about memory and those who conceive of forgetting as having efficacy for productive ends. Symons treats Heidegger's notion of *Seinsvergessenheit* (the 'forgetting of Being') and the prospects of its recollection in some fashion as a heuristic for re-engaging with the question of Being. Symons argues (p. 25) that Heidegger opens up a similar argument to that of Freud in respect of the relationship between forgetting and memory. Likewise, Symons writes that both Heidegger and Freud "inserted the concept of an immemorial past into philosophical systems" (p. 90). Symons emphasizes Heidegger's call for a "recalling thinking" or "thoughtful recollection", presumably in the context of becoming attuned to the disposition of the ancient Greeks whose thinking was deeply wedded to the truth of Being. But Heidegger is not seeking a return to this way of thinking, but rather elsewhere claims that this recollection "can no longer remain in its Western isolation", viewing it as a "precondition" for a new dialogue with the "East Asian world" (Heidegger,

VA 43/158¹), as a means of openness to what he calls "the beginning of the infinite relationship, in which the earth is contained." (EHD 177/201)² Obscure Heideggerese aside, it is evident that it is not a recognition of, and return to, an immemorial memory, conserved despite Being's being forgotten, that Heidegger is seeking. The 'remembrance' of Greek thinking is a precondition for a new kind of thinking, to overcome Western metaphysical thinking, Heidegger claims.

It is also difficult to figure out how Symons arrives at his claim that Heidegger is waging a philosophical battle against transience (p. 101). After all, in *Being and Time*, resoluteness comes as a result of acknowledging Dasein's being-towards-death, the pivotal recognition of one's own transience. It might be more plausible to argue that it is not transience per se that is Heidegger's concern. Rather, it is the subjectivist disposition towards transience that he criticizes in, to use a prescient example, Nietzsche's "supreme thought of the will to power" as "stamping Becoming with the character of Being". This unpublished phrase from Nietzsche's notebooks was one which Heidegger never tired of bringing up in his monolithic 1930s lectures on Nietzsche. But this is a far cry from Symons' claims about Heidegger.

The similarities which Symons sees between Heidegger and Freud on memory are not substantiated. Freud is identified as another figure who prioritizes this kind of emphasis on memory. Freud thinks that *all things forgotten are repressed*. A specific kind of recollection is possible by means of unearthing all repressions, in line with Freud's deep (and arguably highly problematic) conservationist account of mind. The stark disparity between Heidegger and Freud should be enough to show that calling these two figures into a common enterprise under the auspices of their respective conceptions of memory and forgetting should be considered highly questionable. Remembrance of things forgotten qua lifting repressions (Freud) is so

¹'The Thing' (pp. 157 – 179), in *Vorträge und Aufsätze*, 7th ed. Pfullingen: Neske, 1994 (Written: 1936 – 54) (in *Poetry, Language, Thought*)

²'Elucidations of Holderlin's Poetry', trans. Keith Hoeller, New York: Humanity Books, 2000

far from working through to either a new sense of resoluteness (early Heidegger) or engaging in thinking to somehow overcome the en-framing of Western metaphysical technicity (later Heidegger), that little similarity can be robustly drawn or defended.

Symons' attempts at discussing the expressed aims of this volume are frequently couched in frustratingly obfuscating language. Symons writes, "Creative forgetting [...] replaces the firm conviction that the present ought to immunize itself against the past with the precarious hope that, vice versa, the past can be immunized against the present" (p. 16). But seemingly no explanation is provided for such cryptic sentences. On the very next page, this creative forgetting, we are told, is able to "expose the *internal* limits of mythic violence [...] the mythic drive to perpetuate violence is acted upon by an expression of the quality of impermanence that marks the realm of history in toto. Forgetting is made productive when such a deeply rooted impermanence is uncovered within the heart of a type of power that seeks to be all-encompassing" (p. 17). This is an unbelievably poorly written succession of sentences. Terminology is utilised, but given no clarification, development or further exposition. The text quickly fails to give any of these and moves on to a 'Note on Primo Levi', one of several such 'notes' throughout the book. These 'notes' throughout the text might sometimes be interesting (e.g. the one on Adorno, pp. 76 – 80), but it is often unclear how they contribute to the central argument, if at all. As such, they appear only to be unnecessary digressions, as the content of these 'notes' aren't direct or focused enough to warrant their intrusion into the argument of the text. I'm not convinced that clarification of such points would lend themselves to supporting a robust, contradiction-free position of any kind. But since such clarification isn't provided, the reader is not in a position to know for certain. As a result, this constitutes a serious stylistic failure of the work.

This proclivity to employing jargon is pervasive in Symons' characterization of Nietzsche, too. The mature works of Nietzsche at one level seek to uncover deeply efficacious yet unpleasant facts about our history. This sometimes lends itself to occasionally unhelpful comparisons between the *Geneal-*

ogy of Morality and Freud's *Civilization and its Discontents*. In the *Genealogy*, Nietzsche offers a showcase of past relations of power and value as a means of showing how modern Europeans arrived at the psycho-social constitution they have inherited. This seems a deep exercise in retrieving a particular sort of memory. It is also in this same work, however, that Nietzsche posits the capacity for actively forgetting as a natural endowment of a healthy human psychology. The Second Essay of Nietzsche's *Genealogy* (hereafter *GM*) acts in part (though admittedly a large part) to document the cases where this endowment for forgetting has been vetoed by 'bad conscience', namely the forced imposition of certain social and moral commitments within the individual's psychology. Symons doesn't mention these important references to forgetting once in his discussions of Nietzsche. He limits his emphasis instead to a very early text of Nietzsche's, *On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life* (hereafter *HL*). While there might be some very interesting similarities between *HL* to *GM* on this issue, it seems strange to focus on a text from an earlier, more speculative period of Nietzsche's works, a time when he was still refining his own distinctive philosophical ideas, when the mature works constitute rich and fertile texts available to be plumbed for discussing Symons' central claims. As such Nietzsche comes across as a monolithic figure with a static conception of forgetting, to the detriment of the obvious developmental movements his thought takes with respect to this conception.

However, the text Symons does focus on, *HL*, is framed as a "recovery of a vitalist process of infinite renewal or an *ontologized* becoming". All of this is at the very least a highly questionable if not downright erroneous reading of Nietzsche. Again, this is where Symons' portrayal of Nietzsche falls foul of the lack of nuance in addressing Nietzsche's development. Symons characterizes him as, for example, the philosopher who posits "the Overman's affirmation of an *ontologized* becoming and renewal" (p. 59). But in *HL*, Nietzsche characterizes the man who sees becoming everywhere as one "condemned" to do so, as one situated in a self-undermining, self-defeating position (*HL* 1). Further, Nietzsche writes that the 'doctrine' of "sovereign

becoming” would expectantly make a people perish “of petty egoism, ossification and greed” (*HL* 9): hardly singing praise. In much later works, when Nietzsche speaks of Becoming in a positive tone, there is no reason given from any of Nietzsche’s published works for reading an ontological dimension into becoming, not least the books in which the figure of the Overman appears.

Symons also makes erroneous claims about the status of renewal in the aforementioned quote. One of Nietzsche’s central claims about affirming the eternal recurrence, a crucial if obfuscating thought within the Nietzschean enterprise, involves being able to eternally affirm a life’s cycle, wholly devoid of novelty. As such it is difficult to see how this accounts for offering genuine renewal. This problem is deepened by the discussion of metaphor of the ‘child’ in Nietzsche, as described by Symons as “a metaphor for the possibility of genuine change” (p. 145). Rather, the child represents the ‘innocence and forgetfulness’ because ‘Becoming’ (the necessary transience of all things) for Nietzsche is devoid of all guilt. This is why Nietzsche frames the child as the ‘third metamorphosis of spirit’ in his self-proclaimed magnum opus, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, as the one who comes after the great battle against the absolutism of the pervasive morality, and the metaphysics which buttresses it. Only with Being orienting one’s fundamental metaphysical conception can one posit any kind of moral world-order, and because Nietzsche rejects Being in favour of Becoming, that moral world-order drops out. The ‘child’ is ‘innocent’ because there is nothing to be ‘guilty’ about, in relation to the world-order. The child’s expressiveness and creativity comes through an untrammelled expression of all its instincts, no matter their standing on past Christian-moral readings of them. This is one reason why it is confusing when Symons claims that Nietzsche “takes recourse to a metaphysical and even moral framework” to understand the metaphor of the child (p. 162). As such this ideal of Nietzsche’s project is presented in a confused fashion by Symons.

The issues Symons’ book raises are important ones. However the presentation of these issues, the figures preoccupied with them, and the central

argument to which they are supposed to be tied, are all treated in a severely deficient manner in this study.

Übermensch: Plädoyer für einen Nietzscheanischen Transhumanismus

Stefan Lorenz Sorgner

Yunus Tuncel
The New School

(Basil: Schwabe Verlagsgruppe AG: 108 pages, ISBN 987-3-7965-3915-2)

With this book, *Overhuman: A Plea for a Nietzschean Transhumanism*, Stefan Lorenz Sorgner opens up another chapter in the debate on Nietzsche's relationship to transhumanism. The debate began in the issues of *Journal of Evolution & Technology* from 2009 to 2010 and moved on to *The Agonist* in its Fall 2011 issue, and then these two debates had come together along with new articles by Nietzsche scholars in an anthology, *Nietzsche and Transhumanism* (edited by the reviewer). In this book, Sorgner covers new territories, addresses new issues, and furthers his case for establishing a connection between transhumanism and Nietzsche's thought. The book consists of twelve chapters. What follows below is a review of every chapter (all chapter heading translations are mine and page numbers are references to the German edition of the book under review here):

In the first chapter, "Immortality vs. the Spirit of Anti-Utopia," Sorgner questions the dominant positions on immortality, religious or otherwise, and invites his readers to consider the many meanings 'immortality' can have. Despite all the different meanings, Sorgner asks, whose life can extend fur-

ther than the universe, the entire creation itself? In all likelihood, humans are 'condemned' to mortality. To think otherwise is utopic and Sorgner shows how the many transhumanist thinkers represent problematic forms of utopia (15). He also underlies the contrast between transhumanists who view human mortality from different angles, who do not set immortality as a goal to attain, and people who have deep beliefs in death-related issues such as immortality of the soul; in other words, some transhumanists have different non-utopic positions on the subject of immortality, which could be alternative to the ordinary beliefs and transhumanistic utopias. Many do not even think about such issues when they can enjoy the pleasures of life. Humans are not stuck only between two options, between the anxiety of survival and boredom, contra Schopenhauer. Sorgner further examines common notions of health, disease, and aging and emphasizes how differently humans experience all of these aspects of life and how futile it is to project our own experiences on others, while it is an existential fact that we are all singularly different. As Sorgner warns against dangerous rhetoric regarding immortality—history is full of such rhetoric especially in the hands of clergy and political leaders—he calls for a non-utopic version of transhumanism, which steers away from dogmas and embraces the well-being of all persons (20).

"Aging as Disease," the second chapter of the book, discusses the issue of aging, as it engages with the transhumanist position that considers aging to be a disease, as represented by Aubrey de Grey. De Grey analyses aging in seven processes some of which explain common old age diseases such as cancer, Alzheimer and Parkinson's, finds the challenge to be in the "disease" of aging and believes that human life span can be extended, if this challenge is to be dealt with. As Sorgner indicates, average life expectancy is already doubled in Europe in the last 150 years. He links further this recent technology of life extension to the human evolution. A species adapts to changes or dies out. To constantly develop new technologies to fit with species evolution is the decisive assumption that all transhumanists share, according to Sorgner.

The following chapter, "Human Potential," presents scientific studies and experiments in human-animal hybrids. Through these experiments, scien-

tists are aiming to transfer life-prolonging and body-regenerating capabilities of animals on to humans. There are animals, as Sorgner lists, that live longer than humans. In this context Sorgner mentions new technologies such as CRISPR and Big Data Gene Analysis through which human life span can be extended. The former helps repair the defective gene and the latter with the identification of life-prolonging genes.

“Making Health Span Longer as Important or Therapy?” follows the previous chapter. Here, Sorgner examines the ethical dilemmas in life span arguments, as he engages with bio-conservative positions such as that of Habermas and considers the ban on instrumentalization, which dictates, based on Kantian ethics, that human-beings should not be used as means to an end. Sorgner exposes the inconsistencies and double standards in Habermas’ position which he likens to that of the Catholic Church, in which a fertilized egg can be considered to be a person, while an adult chimpanzee can be treated like a thing. Next he explores the issue of life span in relation to quality of life and the ethics of suicide in cases of illness. He attempts to laybare the problems that underlie particular paternalistic assumptions in arguments against suicide when it is a matter of suffering and the end of that suffering. Here he brings up the distinction between life span and health span and states that the latter would be associated with the improvement of quality of life. He then moves on to a discussion of illness, as he considers “functional-objective” vs. “subjective” positions. The former limits all beings to their immediate use and function, while the latter takes into account human individuality and diversity in needs, desires, and so on. In this context, Sorgner also examines the rigid separation Habermas establishes between therapy and enhancement, while insisting that there is only a thin line that separates the two. He then comes back to the fundamental question regarding the moral revaluation of aging. The chapter ends with a survey of recent technologies on aging such as Telomer, Big Data for Gene Analysis, RFID chips, and other digital technologies.

The next chapter is entitled “Challenge-Overpopulation” and addresses the problem of over-population in the face of limited resources. How does

individual well-being fit with the common good? Should the individual happiness be sacrificed for the larger good? Sorgner warns his readers against the dangers of such positions, often discussed and presented in different forms in Western philosophy since the ancient Greeks. He also brings Utilitarianism into discussion and argues that humans should not be prevented from living long lives simply because of the problem of overpopulation. After mentioning a biotechnology, which aims to keep human population under the limit of 10 billion with the help of a virus,¹ Sorgner moves on to the discussion of freedom, another hotly debated topic in modern and post-modern thought. For him, the crux of the matter lies in the “Errungenschaft der Freiheit” (42), that is to say, how we realize and actualize our freedoms. He then offers ways to deal with the problem of overpopulation such as expanding living spaces in water and new forms of production of goods to meet the rising demands. Education is also another way to take on the challenge. In addition, Sorgner mentions some other technologies, emerging technologies, including inhabiting other planets like Mars, which now may look like a fantasy but may come true in the near or far future, as technology innovators make the way. This chapter ends on a positive note on emerging technologies and how bright the future looks.

In the following chapter, “Between Renaissance Genius and the Radical Plurality of Human Perfection,” Sorgner starts by regretting the under- or mis-representation of transhumanism in some circles. He then moves on to presenting some parallels between transhumanism and Nietzsche’s *Übermensch* by way of the ideal of perfection. After all, both seek qualities of perfection, despite the fact that the small joys of life belong to the lesser type, the last human, in Nietzsche’s *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, as Sorgner observes (49). He identifies these qualities, to name some of them, as physical and mental health, super-intelligence, strong memory, and empathy capability, all of which he claims could necessary for everyone’s good life. However, Sorgner

¹In this context Sorgner refers to Dan Brown’s book, *Inferno*, and its protagonist, Dr. Zobrist, who takes on the challenge of overpopulation.

recognizes that these qualities do not have universal validity. Although they may be necessary for the good life, this is not say that they are all needed equally by everyone. Here we must not forget that Nietzsche's 'Übermensch' is not only about seeking perfection, but also how one can overcome one's weaknesses by using one's internal resources (not only through technological means). Sorgner continues his discussion on the interesting topic of the good life and how it can account for our diverse needs, desires, and affects. He recognizes the challenges for those who do not fit or do not want to follow the dominant life styles of their culture. Next Sorgner discusses the radical plurality of the good in relation to what can be called "negative freedom." Humans should be stopped from harming others for the sake of their own good. Here comes the importance of limits and the realization of freedoms. I must also add in passing that there are many good passages in this chapter on the uniqueness of each individual and how incommunicable we are to each other (54-55). The last pages of this chapter address another controversial topic: parents' responsibility towards their children and the kinds of permissible interventions they can do for them. Of course, here too the limits and the realization of freedoms come to the foreground. What are those parental interventions that are acceptable, and more concretely, that would be accepted by those children when they become adults?

Radical plurality, freedom, and politics are the subject-matters of the next chapter, "Burning Man, Techno Hippies and Rainbow Politics." Here Sorgner shows how the plurality of human existence is not recognized in repressive, paternalistic societies, but can be accepted and promoted in societies and states where freedoms are cherished. In this context Sorgner brings up the significance of entertaining the idea of negative and positive freedoms, exposes related themes such as solidarity and equality, and touches upon the socio-cultural and economic conditions of freedom. After discussing the Silicon Valley, its associations with the Burning Man Festival and its context in capitalism, he reiterates his position on how we can re-create our world-order through radical inclusion, radical plurality and a new understanding of freedom in the age of digital technology.

How do we live in the age of Internet-Panopticon? This is the main topic of the following chapter, "The Panopticon-Internet and the Dissolution of Privacy." After exposing what the Panopticon is by way of Greek mythology, Bentham and Foucault, Sorgner presents the dilemmas of the digital age and the internet. In the Panopticon, we can all be guardians and prisoners at the same time. All information about anyone, whether it is spatial, 'psychic' or 'physical', can be accessed by others. Since we cannot and do not want to un-do the internet, what can be done to minimize the loss of privacy? This is the question Sorgner poses and one solution he offers is to structure the cultural environment; more specifically he proposes anonymity and chaos on the net. For the former he mentions a software called 'Tor.' In the rest of the chapter he discusses what privacy is, why we are so concerned with it, and its significance in the digital age. As Sorgner claims, the guards are as vulnerable as the prisoners in the world of the Panopticon-Internet. The realization of the political norm of freedom and the contextualization of negative freedom navigate the good life of citizens who are not arbitrarily persecuted. Sorgner, however, does not go all the way with the Foucauldian critique of libertarian societies where citizens become subjects to normalization in different ways under disciplinary regimes and institutions, also often under the name of freedom.

The following chapter, "Deceleration through Acceleration," describes the modern life, its ups and downs, monotony and stressfulness, while showing the projectile of technological progress, the benefits it has brought from refrigerators to cell phones and the extension of life span, all roughly in the last two centuries. Many of the points Sorgner makes here are common sensical; however, thinkers must be wary of the negative effects of technology and today's technological being-in-the-world, without necessarily demonizing it or "complaining about technological progress" (80). An in-between position is possible, even if it is not held by many. Within the context of this progress, Sorgner does mention one problem, namely, the rise of unemployment due to automated systems. There are, however, many problems in the technological world; for one thing, all the benefits and longevity he speaks of

are not shared by all human-beings, but rather by a small percentage of the world population. This and other problems cannot be underestimated.

In “The Tea Ceremony and Pharmacologically Enhanced Mindfulness” Sorgner revisits the subject of acceleration vs. deceleration by way of a tea ceremony he experienced in Taiwan. Speaking of mystical experiences and intoxication, he brings up mindfulness and how it changes our world perception and intensifies our own self-understanding (87) and how embedded we are in our natural environment in terms of nutrition, climate, and place, a point that was also observed by Nietzsche (88). Sorgner then continues his discussion on spirit (*Geist*) and reason (*Vernunft*); neither spirit nor reason is an isolated phenomenon, but rather must be understood in their historic, material, and evolutionary contexts. With all of this discussion, I think he is trying to search for religious experiences, which are typically decelerated, in the accelerated world of technology. To that end, towards the end of the chapter he makes three suggestions (paraphrased here): 1) enhancement of radical mindfulness with the means of relevant drugs; 2) acceleration through raising human achievement capabilities with the means of many enhancement technologies; and 3) increase of automation and use of artificial intelligence in complex arenas of human activity. Through the means of acceleration, Sorgner can envision a decelerated future (89).

The following chapter, “Nihilism as Accomplishment,” revisits Nietzsche’s ideas on the subject of nihilism. Sorgner disagrees with Nietzsche’s call for overcoming nihilism since such overcomings could lead to new paternalistic regimes or structures. To explain his position, a position he had presented before in his *Metaphysics without Truth*, he splits nihilism into two: aletheic and ethical; the former has to do with truth and the latter with morality. Sorgner connects aletheic nihilism to truth claims or judgments and every judgment is an interpretation. This is not to say that it is false simply because it is an interpretation or does not mean that the judgment in question is a self-contradictory one. Aletheic nihilism stems from the possibility of such truth claims and this relates to languages and linguistic structures. In this sense, Sorgner finds nihilism somewhat built in the nature of languages.

Out of these and other reasons as stated, Sorgner affirms this type of nihilism. As for the ethical nihilism, Sorgner brings up the larger context of values and norms and highlights the value of freedom. If we do not keep the broader context in mind, there is always the danger of not considering the freedoms of others and ending up in other paternalistic systems. It is for this reason that he brings up “negative freedom” as a norm, which could balance out those problematic developments that can bury freedoms.

In the last chapter of the book, “Nietzsche’s *Übermensch*: Sloterdijk, Habermas and Transhumanism,” Sorgner revisits the debate between these two leading intellectual figures of today’s Germany. Although Sloterdijk is a bioconservative like Habermas, the latter reacted to the former’s talk “Rules for the Human Zoo” which he had given in 1999. According to Sorgner, this was a rhetorical move on the part of Habermas: first, he mistook Sloterdijk for a transhumanist when he has no connection to transhumanism. Second, Habermas used this talk as another chance to attack eugenics and all genetic engineering, a sensitive topic in post-war Germany. In this way, Habermas aimed to discredit transhumanism, as he juxtaposed its promotion of genetic enhancement with breeding fantasies. But, for Sorgner, Habermas does not have the last word. We either develop further, as Nietzsche’s philosophy of *Übermensch* calls for, or we die out. To develop further and transform ourselves, we need new technologies.

Übermensch is a thought-provoking continuation of the debate on Nietzsche and transhumanism. It makes many bold claims, engages with Nietzsche’s ideas and those of contemporary thinkers in the light of emerging technologies with a concern for the current state of affairs of our planet. It is clear that many thinkers believe that humanity is faced with a crisis. Many intellectual ring alarm bells, adding to the chorus of apocalyptic prophecies. Sorgner, on the other hand, moves along the dangerous path of thinking with an optimism, with a faith in new technologies which, he believes, can conjoin education, enhancement and therapy, all of which are embodied in Nietzsche’s conception of the *Übermensch*. I recommend the book highly for anyone who is interested in carrying on the debate.

Bios of Contributors

Keith Ansell-Pearson has held a Personal Chair in Philosophy at the University of Warwick since 1998. His most recent book on Nietzsche is *Nietzsche's Search for Philosophy: On the Middle Writings* (Bloomsbury Press, 2018). His study of Nietzsche's text *Dawn*, co-authored with Rebecca Bamford, will be published in 2020 by Wiley Blackwell.

Michael Begun is a PhD candidate in philosophy at Fordham University. His area of specialization is the history of 19th and 20th century continental philosophy, with areas of competence in philosophical ethics and logic alongside an emphasis on German language philosophy. During the course of his graduate studies, Michael has been awarded a Loyola Fellowship at Fordham University and a DAAD Research Fellowship for work with the *Institut für Philosophie* at the *Freie Universität Berlin*. In addition to his teaching with Fordham University's philosophy department, Michael also instructs core curricular philosophy courses at CUNY York College and at Mercy College. He is co-editor with Geoffrey Dierckxens, Rudmer Bijlsma and Thomas Kiefer of the volume *The Animal Inside: Essays at the Intersection of Philosophical Anthropology and Animal Studies*, which has appeared in hardback (2016) and paperback/eBook (2018) editions with Rowman & Littlefield International. Michael has presented at national and international academic conferences in both the United States and Europe, including most recently at the American Philosophical Association Central (2018, 2019) and Eastern (upcoming, 2020) Divisions as well as at the *Internationaler Nietzsche-Kongress* in Naumburg (2018). In December 2018, Michael gave an invited talk in German

on Nietzsche's influences in the work of Judith Butler to students in the *Ethik der Textkulturen* Master program at the *Friedrich-Alexander-Universität Erlangen-Nürnberg*. His dissertation reinterprets Nietzsche's account of will to power historically as the cornerstone of a metapsychological theory modeled after Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's conception of morphology as an early natural scientific theory of lifeforms.

Carlo Chiurco is associate professor of ethics at the university of Verona, Italy. His interest in Nietzsche lies mainly in his late works, and the notions of decadence and aristocracy.

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Richard Elliott is SSHP Research Scholar and Associate Tutor at Birkbeck College, University of London. His work on Nietzsche, Heidegger, ethics, and the interface between philosophy of mind and psychoanalysis has been published in journals such as *Inquiry*, *Philosophy*: the Journal of the Royal Institute of Philosophy, the *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, and in numerous edited volumes.

Julian Jason Haladyn is a Canadian writer and independent curator. He is the author of *Boredom and Art: Passions of the Will To Boredom* (Zero 2014) and *Marcel Duchamp: –tant donn's* (Afterall 2010) as well as numerous journal articles and book chapters on art and critical theory. With Miriam Jordan-Haladyn he co-authored *The Films and Videos of Jamelie Hassan* (Blue Medium Press 2010), a publication that accompanied their curated video program of Hassan's moving image works that toured Canada. In 2014 he curated two exhibitions for the McIntosh Gallery, Ron Benner: *Three Questions* and Janice Gurney: *All The Spaces*. Haladyn is also the founding Co-Editor of Blue Medium Press, a small press publishing books that promote Canadian art and cultural scholarship.

Bradley Kaye received his Ph.D. in Philosophy, Interpretation, and Culture from Binghamton University in 2010. Currently teaches at several colleges in upstate New York including a senior lecturer in both philosophy and sociology at Niagara University. Well published on issues pertaining to 'agency,' 'will to power,' rationality/irrationality and the ambiguity of those lines, specialize in continental (especially Marx, Nietzsche, Freud and the echoes of their work as it informs twentieth century thought), and philosophies influenced by Mahayana and Theravada logic and metaphysics. Working on several book length projects at the moment pertaining to these subjects. Zen and Marx, Foucault and Rethinking the Enlightenment, and Nietzsche's Pelagianism: Original Sin or Will to Power?

Caedyn Lennox is a second year Master's student within the Humanities department at Simon Fraser University, British Columbia, Canada. He is currently working on a thesis entitled 'A Tale of two Wagners' in which he is comparing Adorno's and Nietzsche's critiques of Wagner. His interests lie mostly in continental philosophy especially in the areas of aesthetics, music, and mythology.

Alex Obrigewitsch is currently an MA student in Continental Philosophy at the University of Warwick. He has a BA Honours in Philosophy from the University of Regina, Canada. His current research involves negativity, possibility and impossibility, alterity, and neutrality as they intersect the writings and thought of Maurice Blanchot, Martin Heidegger, G.W.F. Hegel, and F.W.J. Schelling. He is also pursuing how these features relate to and extend into the ethics of Emanuel Levinas and Friedrich Nietzsche.

William A. B. Parkhurst is a PhD candidate at the University of South Florida. His dissertation focuses on Nietzsche's critique of the principle of identity. His research uses a historical and archival approach to evidence. His work has been published in *Nietzsche-Studien*, *Schopenhauer-Jahrbuch*, and several book chapters. He has conducted research internationally in collaboration with the New York Public Library, the University of Edinburgh Archives, the *Herzogin Anna Amalia Bibliothek*, the *Goethe- und-Schiller Archiv*, the *Schopenhauer-Archiv*, and the *Staatsarchiv Basel-Stadt*. His archival

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Jordan Rodgers is Visiting Assistant Professor in the McGowan Center for Ethics and Social Responsibility at King's College, PA. His research focuses on the history of philosophy in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, especially philosophy of religion, with a special focus on Nietzsche. He is currently writing (with Ryan Kemp of Wheaton College) a book-length philosophical interpretation of the novels of Marilynne Robinson (*Marilynne Robinson's Worldly Gospel*, Bloomsbury, forthcoming).

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Yunus Tuncel is a co-founder of the Nietzsche Circle and is the Editor-in-Chief of its electronic journal, *The Agonist*, which is published twice a year. He received his Ph.D. in philosophy from the New School for Social Research and teaches philosophy. He is the author of *Towards a Genealogy of Spectacle* (Eye Corner Press, 2011), *Agon in Nietzsche* (Marquette University Press, 2013) and *Emotion in Sports* (Routledge, 2019), and the editor of *Nietzsche and Transhumanism* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017). His areas of research include art, competition, culture, myth, music, power, spectacle, sports, performance, and theater. He is interested in the fusion of art (all forms of art) and philosophy in various cultural formations and undertakes a peripatetic project called Philomobile. He has been working with posthumanists for the last ten years in New York and globally. He presents papers at conferences and publishes articles and books locally in the US and internationally.

Hans Winkler is a freelance artist and curator, lives in Berlin and New York. Since 1999 he is a visiting artist at the San Francisco Art Institute. He co-curated "Looking for Mushrooms", Beat Poets and Counter Culture in the Bay Area at the Museum Ludwig in Cologne (exhibition and book), "legal/illegal",

art and politics, and counter cultures from Dada/Surrealism until now (exhibition and book) as well as in "Surrealismn, Opium, Baroque, and Venice," (2019). He has realized actions and interventions in the public space since 1984. His projects are seen as interventions into the reality of daily life and the perceptions of popular symbols. From 1988 to 2000, he worked in collaboration under the label "p.t.t.red ." (paint the town red) on the city space installations like: "how much red does the statue of liberty bear", New York, 1996. Since 2000 his Interventions and actions include "The Escape of the Iceman", Bolzano, Italy, "Buy a revolution", San Francisco, and "un Incidente in gondola", Venice, 2002. He has also curated exhibitions, including "Legal/ Illegal" at NGBK in Berlin, 2004, and "Looking for Mushroom" at the Museum Ludwig in Cologne, 2008. His *Walking Newspaper* project has been published in Istanbul, Johannesburg, New York, Havana and San Francisco.¹

Martha K. Woodruff is an associate professor of Philosophy at Middlebury College. She earned her Ph.D. in Philosophy from Yale University with support from the Mellon Humanities Fellowship. She also studied for two years at Universität-Freiburg with a grant from D.A.A.D. (German Academic Exchange Service) and received her B.A. from Haverford College. Her main areas of research and teaching include Ancient Greek philosophy and its influences on 19th and 20th Century German thought. A more recent interest focuses on women and gender in Greek philosophy and tragedy. Her publications have examined Plato, Aristotle, Nietzsche, and Heidegger, considered both individually and comparatively. She has completed one book manuscript and started another; both examine retrievals of the Greeks by contemporary thinkers. In addition, she served a three-year term as co-director of the Ancient Philosophy Society² and served as the co-advisor to the German-language Philosophy Reading Group during the Middlebury

¹www.hswinkler.de

²www.ancientphilosophysociety.org

German Language School, summers 2012-2019.³ At Middlebury College, she teaches a range of ten courses and served as Department Chair for five years.

Dong Yang is a doctoral candidate of comparative literature at the University of Georgia, currently writing his dissertation on the connection between vitalism and affect in continental philosophy and world cinema. He obtained his B.A. in philosophy and comparative literature at Purdue University and M.A. in comparative literature at the University of Georgia. His primary research interests include: twentieth-century French philosophy (Gilles Deleuze, Jacques Derrida, Roland Barthes); nineteenth-century German philosophy (Schopenhauer and Nietzsche); affect theory; and the French New Wave cinema. His book, titled *Action and Relation: The Spinozian and Humean Foundations of Deleuze and Guattari's Theory of Affect*, is forthcoming from Soochow University Press.

³<http://www.middlebury.edu/lsgerman>

The Agonist
Call for Papers
Nietzsche and Sport | Spring 2020

Guest Editor: Dr. Martine Prange

Although Nietzsche does not specifically discuss sports in his works, much of his writing and ideas revolve around sport-related themes such as competition, play, body and *askesis*, and ecstasy (or, the Dionysian). Competition, or agon, is a running theme in Nietzsche's works; play or playfulness has intrigued the young Nietzsche since he became familiar with the pre-Socratics, especially Heraclitus; the question of the body and all the related phenomena remain crucial to his works; and the Dionysian is a central concept from his first to one of his last published works. Furthermore, Nietzsche's critique of Western experience of spectacle sheds light on sport spectacles and their problems in our age. Finally, we can view sports as fields of power and power relations and examine to what extent sport can be construed as an arena for the overhuman. How did Nietzsche view the sporting culture of the 19th century? How would he view our sporting culture today? This issue of *The Agonist* is dedicated to examining these and other sport related themes in Nietzsche and post-Nietzschean literature, including authors, thinkers, sport philosophers and movements influenced by his ideas.

Please see *The Agonist* Submission Guidelines at <http://agonist.nietzsche-circle.com/wp/submission-policy/>. Please submit your abstract to nceditors@nietzschecircle.com. Abstract deadline: April 1, 2020; Essay deadline: June 1, 2020

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- A short summary (200-300 words) sent together with your work, indicating the topic of your submission.
- A 250-word bio, the length of your manuscript/submission, and a short list of prior publications.

Please use biographical listings of current contributors as models. Essays should be between 3,000 and 5,000 words.

Contributors are expected to check all typographical issues, such as italicizing the titles of works of art, in the Word file. If there are issues regarding the appropriateness of the text, those matters will be discussed with the contributor. If there are proofing issues, the contributor will be notified to make the corrections. Submitted texts will not be altered by us. *The Agonist* does not return submitted manuscripts, accept unsolicited manuscripts, or consider manuscripts that are under review elsewhere or that have been previously published.

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Any work received that does not follow the appropriate guidelines will not be read. If you have any questions with regard to our guidelines or submission policy, please contact us

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2. All submissions must be submitted as a double-spaced Word-document, using a point twelve TNR (12) font with 1" margins on all sides. For footnotes, please use point ten (10) font.
3. The paragraphs must be separated from each other; indent 5 spaces in the beginning of each paragraph.
4. Quotations that exceed three lines must be indented and separated from the body of the text into its own paragraph. The lengthy citations are also single-spaced, as are the footnotes.

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5. Please note that page numbers go into the upper right hand corner with your last name.
 6. Italics are to be used for author's *emphases*, book and journal titles, and foreign terms.
 7. Quotations from Nietzsche's works should be followed in the main text by parenthetical references to the work in abbreviation followed by section or note numbers: e.g., (BT §7), (GS §124), (GM III §7), (TI "Ancients" §3). For a complete list of standard abbreviations, see below. The translation being cited should be indicated in a footnote to the first quotation from the work. If the author is rendering Nietzsche's German into English, each quotation should be footnoted with a reference to a standard critical German edition of Nietzsche's works, preferably the KSA. All other scholarly references should be given in the footnotes.
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STANDARD ABBREVIATIONS:

As noted above, references to Nietzsche's writings are to be included in the body of the essay using the standard English title abbreviations indicated below. With reference to translations, Roman numerals denote a standard subdivision within a single work in which the sections are not numbered consecutively (e.g., *On the Genealogy of Morals*), Arabic numerals denote the section number rather than the page number, and "P" denotes Nietzsche's Prefaces.

Unless the author is translating, the published translation used should be indicated with a footnote to the initial citation reference.

References to the editions by Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari take the following forms:

Kritische Gesamtausgabe (KGW) (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1967—) is cited by division number (Roman), followed by volume number (Arabic), followed by the fragment number.

Kritische Studienausgabe (KSA) (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1980) is cited by volume number (Arabic) followed by the fragment number.

Briefwechsel: Kritische Gesamtausgabe (KGB) (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1975—) is cited by division number (Roman), followed by volume number (Arabic), followed by page number.

Sämtliche Briefe: Kritische Studienausgabe (KSB) (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1986) is cited by volume number (Arabic) followed by page number.

References to *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* list the part number and chapter title, e.g., (Z: 4 "On Science").

References to *Twilight of the Idols* and *Ecce Homo* list abbreviated chapter title and section number, e.g., (TI “Ancients” §3) or (EH “Books” BGE §2).

References to works in which sections are too long to be cited helpfully by section number should cite section number then page number, e.g., (SE §3, p. 142), with the translation/edition footnoted.

A = *The Antichrist*

AOM = *Assorted Opinions and Maxims*

BGE = *Beyond Good and Evil*

BT = *The Birth of Tragedy*

CW = *The Case of Wagner*

D = *Daybreak / Dawn*

DS = *David Strauss, the Writer and the Confessor*

EH = *Ecce Homo* [“Wise,” “Clever,” “Books,” “Destiny”]

FEI = “On the Future of our Educational Institutions”

GM = *On the Genealogy of Morals*

GOA = *Nietzsches Werke* (Grossoktavausgabe)

GS = *The Gay Science / Joyful Wisdom*

HS = “Homer’s Contest”

HCP = “Homer and Classical Philology”

HH = *Human, All Too Human*

HL = *On the Use and Disadvantage of History for Life*

KGB = *Briefwechsel: Kritische Gesamtausgabe*

KGW = *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*

KSA = *Kritische Studienausgabe*

KSB = *Sämtliche Briefe: Kritische Studienausgabe*

LR = “Lectures on Rhetoric”

MA = *Nietzsches Gesammelte Werke* (Musarionausgabe)

NCW = *Nietzsche contra Wagner*

PPP = *Pre-Platonic Philosophers*

PTA = *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*

RWB = *Richard Wagner in Bayreuth*

SE = *Schopenhauer as Educator*

TI = *Twilight of the Idols* [“Maxims,” “Socrates,” “Reason,” “World,” “Morality,” “Errors,” “Improvers,” “Germans,” “Skirmishes,” “Ancients,” “Hammer”]

TL = “On Truth and Lies in an Extra-moral Sense”

UM = *Untimely Meditations / Thoughts Out of Season*

WDB = *Werke in drei Bänden* (Ed. Karl Schlechta)

WP = *The Will to Power*

WPh = “We Philologists”

WS = *The Wanderer and his Shadow*

WLN = *Writings from the Late Notebooks*

Z = *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*

