UNTIMELY REFLECTIONS ON NIETZSCHE'S NOTIONS OF NATURE, SOCIETY, AND THE SELF

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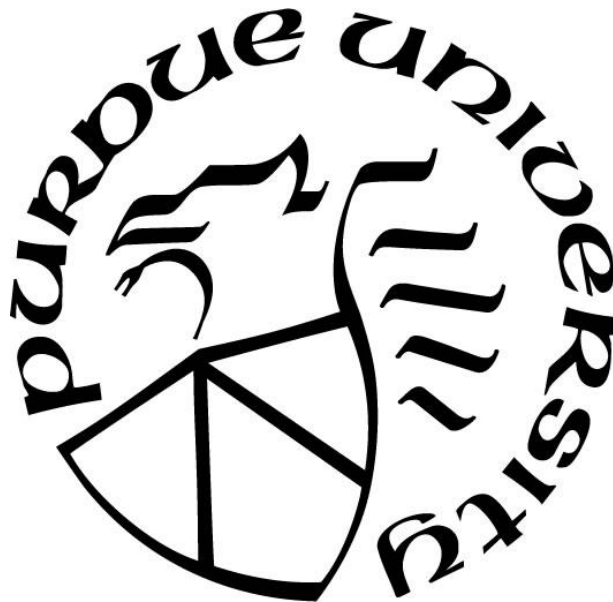**James A. Mollison**

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Dedicated to my mother and the memory of my father

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ABSTRACT

While Nietzsche is known as a virulent opponent of conventional morality, the critical dimension of his philosophy cannot be divorced from his novel understandings of nature, society, and the self. This dissertation clarifies Nietzsche's treatments of these notions by comparing his views to those of other figures in the western philosophical tradition. I defend a comparative approach to Nietzsche's philosophy and provide an overview of my project in chapter one. In chapter two, I argue that although Nietzsche shares Stoicism's emphasis on self-discipline and on the affirmation of fate, he rejects the Stoics' teleological understanding of nature and their view of moral values as descriptively objective. This leads Nietzsche to value passion and suffering for helping us realize the world's indifference to our all-too human concerns and for prompting value creation. In chapter three, I argue that Nietzsche agrees with Leibniz about the existence and character of unconscious perceptions and appetites – and about the way much of our metaphysics derives from our understanding of the self. Nevertheless, Nietzsche audits metaphysical notions such as God and substance on the basis of his rejection of Leibniz's view of the self as a monad. This leads him to pursue a naturalistic understanding of consciousness, and of ideas, as emerging to satisfy unconscious drives. In chapter four, I examine Deleuze's interpretation of Nietzsche's notions of the will to power and the Overman. In addition to defending the viability of these interpretations, I show how they inform Deleuze's later notions of desiring-production and nomadology. These studies demonstrate Nietzsche's untimely relevance to ancient, early modern, and contemporary philosophical approaches.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

This dissertation consists of three essays whose common thread is the nineteenth-century German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. While Nietzsche is best known for his criticism of conventional morality, the critical dimension of his thought cannot be divorced from his views about nature, society, and the self – as his novel understanding of these notions is often used to justify his vitriolic censure of established normative principles. The dissertation's title – *Untimely Reflections on Nietzsche's Notions of Nature, Society, and the Self* – likely gives the impression that each of the essays that follow treats one of the three notions in question. There is a sense in which this impression is correct, but there is also a sense in which it is misleading, as these essays treat Nietzsche's notions of nature, society, and the self *indirectly* by analyzing his relationship to other thinkers from different periods of the western philosophical tradition. This is what is meant by describing the reflections that follow as *untimely*: not that they stand in some technical relation to Nietzsche's *Untimely Meditations* (UM),[1] but that each essay places Nietzsche in dialogue with a philosophical position outside *his* historical moment. More specifically, chapter two treats Nietzsche's understanding of nature by examining his relationship to ancient Stoicism; chapter three treats Nietzsche's understanding of the self by examining his relationship to seventeenth-century German philosopher G. W. Leibniz; and chapter four asks whether Nietzsche's understanding of the self can be extended into an analysis of social formations by examining his appropriation by twentieth-century French philosopher Gilles Deleuze.

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[1] Citations to Nietzsche use abbreviations listed in the references following this chapter. Roman numerals refer to major divisions within works. Arabic numerals refer to section numbers.

In this introduction, I briefly defend adopting such a comparative approach to Nietzsche's philosophy. I suggest that comparative philosophy can offer unique insights that redeem the challenges it presents and further suggest why such an approach coheres with Nietzsche's philosophy. After laying out this general case for a comparative approach to Nietzsche, I defend my choice of the specific interlocutors I use. The primary support for the claim that these comparisons bear fruit is, of course, the chapters that follow. Here, I defend my choices by summarizing the results of these chapters and gesturing toward the future avenues of research they facilitate. The introduction concludes with a portrait of the Nietzsche who emerges from the dissertation as a whole.

1.1   A Comparative Approach to Nietzsche's Philosophy

Comparative approaches to philosophy bring philosophers from divergent backgrounds to bear on a particular theme or problem. The phrase 'comparative philosophy' is often used to refer to approaches that appeal to philosophers from broadly distinct regional and cultural backgrounds – e.g., from Chinese and European traditions – but I see no reason why it cannot describe approaches that relate philosophers from different periods within the western tradition. The essays forming this dissertation are comparative in this sense.

Narrowing the field of comparison so that it is internal to western philosophy avoids some dangers associated with wider ranging comparisons, such as, say, the dangers of orientalism. But other, more general dangers must still be kept in mind when pursuing narrower comparisons. The most obvious of these is oversimplification. Oversimplification can take the form of overemphasizing points of commonality between philosophical positions – which, at its worst, risks assimilating one position into another – but it can take also the form of overstating divergences between positions – which, at its worst, risks mistaking local disagreement for radical

incommensurability. In light of such hazards, one might wonder whether comparative philosophy is worth the trouble it invites.

To mitigate such concerns, we might begin by noting that they are not exclusive to comparative philosophy. Oversimplification is a hazard for all philosophical reflection, no matter how narrowly one restricts the scope of positions under consideration. Moreover, there is reason to think that all philosophical reflection is, in some sense, comparative. Insofar as philosophy proceeds by engaging alternative positions, potential objections, additional desiderata, and so on, the idea of a *purely* non-comparative philosophical method borders on incoherence. Even if we reframe the worry in question in terms of degree – so that the question becomes 'should we compare philosophical positions with a greater degree of divergence at the cost of increasing the potential for oversimplification?' – there are unique benefits to considering philosophical positions with a high degree of divergence that might justify such comparisons. In particular, relating philosophical positions with a wider degree of variance seems distinctively capable of uncovering deeply entrenched assumptions that might otherwise go overlooked when pursuing narrower comparisons. Furthermore, relating philosophical positions with a wider degree of variance might prove uniquely helpful for increasing our awareness of the density of logical space and of the width of possible philosophical positions. Of course, comparative philosophy, like all philosophy, can be done poorly. But when it is done well, it proves mutually illuminating, enriching our appreciation of the philosophical positions under consideration by casting them in new light.

These two potential rewards of comparative philosophy – that of unearthing deeply entrenched assumptions and that of increasing our awareness of philosophical possibilities – are prized by Nietzsche. He castigates philosophers who are unable, or unwilling, to examine their most deeply held convictions, going so far as to describe this tendency as symptomatic of a lack

of courage and intellectual integrity (BGE 5; A 12, 55; EH P.3). Nietzsche also urges his readers to increase the number of perspectives they bring to bear on a given matter as a means of increasing their knowledge of it (GM III.12) – and he criticizes philosophers who take a particular perspective as the only possible vantage for their "ridiculous immodesty" (GS 374). Nietzsche's understanding of intellectual integrity and his view of knowledge as perspective-bound are complex topics which I will not treat here. Nevertheless, merely noting his criticism of unexamined convictions and his emphasis on the importance of shifting our perspectives is enough to suggest that he would be amenable to comparative philosophical investigation, provided that it succeeds in exposing the deeply entrenched assumptions of philosophical positions and in augmenting our awareness of the myriad perspectives available to us.

Additional evidence of Nietzsche's openness to comparative philosophical approaches can be found in the way he continually engages other philosophical positions. Indeed, Nietzsche's philosophy is so bound up with his appraisals of other philosophers that I'm not sure how much choice we have as to whether to adopt a comparative approach to his thinking. His work contains a vast number of explicit references to ancient philosophers, from pre-Platonic thinkers, through Socrates and Plato, and to the Hellenistic schools of the Stoics and Epicureans. He also explicitly engages with early moderns such as Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibniz, as well as with late moderns such as Kant, Schopenhauer, and various neo-Kantians. To make matters more complicated, he often does not explicitly identify the philosophical views to which he responds, such that we must uncover his target to fully appreciate the point he is raising. This broad observation speaks in favor of adopting a comparative approach to examining Nietzsche's thought. Obviously, Deleuze is not one of Nietzsche's interlocutors. Nevertheless, insofar as Nietzsche is concerned with the legacy of his thinking – or with his status as 'a destiny' (EH IV.1) – examining contemporary

appropriations of his thought might help us appraise the accuracy of his predictions about his reception. More importantly, examining such appropriations can help us appreciate the density of possible interpretations of *Nietzsche* and allow us to gauge his continued relevance to the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.

There is one further point I'd like to make in defense of adopting an overtly comparative approach to Nietzsche's thought. In *Twilight of the Idols,* Nietzsche writes: "I distrust all systematizers and avoid them. The will to a system is a lack of integrity" (TI I.26). I do not take this statement to mean that Nietzsche is unconcerned with matters of philosophical consistency. His censure of philosophical views on grounds of self-contradiction urges against such a reading (e.g., BGE 21). Rather, I take Nietzsche's point in this quotation to be that the *will to systematicity* should be resisted if it comes at the expense of being faithful to the way things actually are. The obverse of this view is Nietzsche's praise of those capable of withstanding the truths of the world, no matter how horrible they may be (GS 110; BGE 39; EH P.3, IV.5). This general point, I submit, should also inform how we go about studying Nietzsche's works. We should not import a systematicity into Nietzsche's philosophy at the expense of overlooking the tensions and contradictions it may contain. This isn't to suggest that we should interpret Nietzsche uncharitably, but that we should resist deciding in advance what we'd *like* him to say and proceeding to revise or explain away passages that fail to fit our preestablished hermeneutic framework.

One way of studying Nietzsche that might satisfy this interpretive restriction is to analyze Nietzsche's criticisms of *other* philosophical positions and then to use these criticisms to constrain and appraise his own positive philosophical positions. In favor of this approach, note that Nietzsche's positive philosophical positions – e.g., the will to power, the eternal recurrence, or the Overman – are notoriously ambiguous, whereas he is often at his most philosophically perspicuous

when taking others to task. In light of this, it seems sensible to start with his reproach of other philosophers and to move backward toward his own positions by considering what avenues are closed off by his censure of others. This method is especially helpful in cases where Nietzsche criticizes philosophical positions which resemble his own, as this might lead to a more fine-grained understanding of his own positive positions or, at any rate, it might lead to an increased awareness of the available space that these positions might occupy. I employ this method in chapters two and three. My hope is that Nietzsche's notions of self-reliance and of *amor fati,* as well as his notions of the self-conscious subject and of the unconscious, are clarified by considering his critical remarks about Stoicism and Leibniz.

Another way of proceeding that might avoid adopting a will to systematicity when interpreting Nietzsche is to appraise other philosophers' appropriations of Nietzsche's thinking. Granted, it is difficult to conclusively determine whether the liberties taken by readers of Nietzsche are justified in light of the indeterminacy of his positive positions. But asking after the reliability of such appropriations can increase our appreciation of the degree to which different portions of his philosophy are malleable or rigid. We may be able to work backward from our sense of whether a given appropriation of Nietzsche is justified to uncover a deeper sense of what we take his position to be. I employ this method in chapter four. My hope is that Nietzsche's notions of the will to power and of the Overman are clarified by considering Deleuze's interpretation of these concepts and by considering his extension of them when collaborating with Félix Guattari.

Having said a few words in defense of comparative philosophical approaches in general, and having said a few words about why such an approach is at least not inconsistent with Nietzsche's thinking, I will now make a case for turning to the Stoics, Leibniz, and Deleuze in particular when examining Nietzsche's philosophy.

1.2   Nietzsche and the Stoics

Nietzsche's philosophy contains several noteworthy similarities with that of the ancient Stoics. These include an attempt to make ethics consonant with our best understanding of nature, a disregard for what is conventionally considered valuable, and a strident emphasis on self-discipline and self-reliance. Other similarities include their mutual concern with the philosophical significance of suffering, their shared insistence on the importance of embracing one's fate, and a pursuit of a non-libertarian conception of freedom. In light of these resemblances, perhaps it is unsurprising that some scholars understand Nietzsche's project as a post-Christian attempt to revive Stoic ethics. Yet Nietzsche criticizes the Stoics for overstating the significance of their ethical ideal of self-sufficiency and for undervaluing pain and the passions when pursuing an unconditional acceptance of fate. If we are to avoid viewing Nietzsche as talking out of both sides of his mouth regarding Stoicism, these ostensibly contradictory views cry out for further examination.

In the second chapter of this dissertation, I analyze Nietzsche's relationship to Stoicism. I argue that his criticism of Stoicism for overstating the significance of their ethical ideal of self-sufficiency turns on his rejection of the Stoics' teleological understanding of nature. Nietzsche's denial of the teleological view of nature leads him to be skeptical of the objectivity of moral values, including the moral value that the Stoics attribute to rational self-sufficiency. Instead of understanding rational self-sufficiency as objectively valuable, Nietzsche ventures that its value depends on psychological characteristics of those who espouse it, as well as the socio-historical condition in which they find themselves. As for Nietzsche's criticism of the Stoics for undervaluing passion and suffering, and for unconditionally accepting their fate, I argue that this derives from Nietzsche's view that suffering can have contributory value insofar as overcoming it might increase the strength of individuals and the significance of their accomplishments.

Examining Nietzsche's criticism in this way affords a more refined understanding of his notions of self-sufficiency and *amor fati*. Self-sufficiency, for Nietzsche, does not entail adherence to nature's providential order (for there is no such order), but a skeptical willingness to question conventional moral values and a willingness to create new values for oneself. Similarly, *amor fati* does not consist in imbuing nature with a *telos*, but in overcoming hardship so that one might love one's life more fully.

This study of Nietzsche's relationship to Stoicism suggests how their divergent conceptions of nature, and their divergent understandings of morality, might lead to a more fine-grained view of their other affinities. For example, Nietzsche's denial of the Stoic's teleological conception of nature should restrict the similarities between the Stoic's hypothesis of cyclical conflagration and Nietzsche's notion of eternal recurrence. This disagreement regarding teleology should also restrict comparisons between their respective conceptions of freedom as acting in accord with nature. Additionally, Nietzsche's disagreement with the Stoics regarding the potential value of suffering points toward differences in their understandings of human psychology, such as Nietzsche's rejection of the kind of psychological monism advocated by Stoics like Zeno and Chrysippus in favor of a model of psychology on which an individual contains a multiplicity of divergent drives. There are surely further topics to be pursued in this intersection – such as a comparison of the Stoic Sage with Nietzsche's Overman – but the foregoing areas of inquiry suffice to illustrate that our understanding of Stoicism and of Nietzsche might benefit from further examining their relationship.

1.3   Nietzsche and Leibniz

Nietzsche and Leibniz likely seem worlds apart. Leibniz is championed as a rationalist theist, whereas Nietzsche urges against viewing human nature as defined by rationality and declares the

death of God. Yet Nietzsche and Leibniz have much in common, including their shared emphasis on the philosophical significance of perspectives, their mutual insistence on the importance of unconscious mental processes, and their shared emphasis on forces as constituent features of reality. They also both criticize mechanistic understandings of nature and are concerned with the philosophical significance of suffering. Notwithstanding these affinities, Nietzsche criticizes Leibniz vehemently, especially for his understanding of the soul as a monad and for his alleged idealism. As with the Stoics, if we are to avoid attributing an inconsistent view of Leibniz to Nietzsche, we should examine his praise and censure of Leibniz further.

In the third chapter of this dissertation, I analyze Nietzsche's Janus-faced view of Leibniz with an eye toward uncovering its coherence. I argue that Nietzsche agrees with Leibniz regarding the existence and character of unconscious forces, but rejects Leibniz's view that such forces are capacities of a self that, strictly speaking, is a simple unity. Both of these aspects of Nietzsche's relation to Leibniz can be motivated by his attempt to provide a naturalist account of consciousness as developing to satisfy humans' physiological needs. Naturalism leads Nietzsche to view consciousness as a phenomenon requiring explanation – and Leibniz's philosophy of mind is helpful in this regard. Nevertheless, naturalism also leads Nietzsche to deny Leibniz's monadic view of the self. His point is not merely that the existence of unconscious forces makes it *prima facie* implausible that the self is a simple unity. Rather, he thinks Leibniz's insight into the existence and nature of unconscious forces should make us skeptical about the veracity of consciousness' ideas – including our idea of ourselves as simple unities. Attending to Nietzsche's naturalist account of consciousness as an emergent property of unconscious drives thus helps us uncover the consistency of his view of Leibniz. It also affords a more sophisticated understanding

of Nietzsche's understanding of consciousness, of unconscious drives, and of how conscious and unconscious mental activities operate in the formation of ideas.

This study of Nietzsche's relationship to Leibniz enables further investigations of their apparent similarities. For example, Nietzsche and Leibniz's divergent understandings of ideas, and of the unconscious, will allow us to better appreciate differences in their respective understandings of the notion of perspective. This, in turn, suggests that Leibniz and Nietzsche's attempts to analyze the philosophical significance of suffering will diverge insofar as they have different understandings of how individuals adopt the standpoints that allow them to make sense of their lives. Attending to Leibniz's and Nietzsche's different understandings of selfhood also unearths significant disagreement concerning whether we should understand the world as composed of substances – and this might allow us to better appraise parallels between their respective flirtations with pan-animism and between their respective criticisms of mechanistic understandings of nature. Beyond this, examining Nietzsche's fraught view of Leibniz might also clarify Nietzsche's engagement with the neo-Leibnizians of his time, such as Maximilian Drossbach, Otto Leibmann, and Gustav Teichmüller.

1.4   Nietzsche and Deleuze

Deleuze's works are commonly divided into three kinds: historical works that treat figures in the philosophical tradition, original works written in his own name, and collaborative works co-authored with Félix Guattari. A testament to Nietzsche's enduring influence on Deleuze is that he figures prominently in each of these parts of Deleuze's corpus. After his first monograph on Hume (1953), Deleuze's second historical study is *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1962). Nietzsche also plays a significant role in Deleuze's magnum opus, *Difference and Repetition* (1968), which draws from Deleuze's earlier study of Nietzsche, and from his highly original reading of the eternal recurrence

in particular. While Nietzsche's name appears less frequently in the works Deleuze co-authors with Guattari, his influence can nevertheless be detected throughout the two volumes of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia, Anti-Oedipus* (1972) and *A Thousand Plateaus* (1980). What's more, significant conceptual innovations occurring between these works can arguably be traced to essays Deleuze authors on Nietzsche during the intervening period. But in addition to being enduring, Nietzsche's influence on Deleuze is transformative. Deleuze attributes his ability to break with the history of philosophy and write in his own name, in part, to his early study of Nietzsche. For this reason, attending to Deleuze's engagement with Nietzsche might not only allow us to better understand a highly original reading of an exceedingly difficult thinker in the history of philosophy; it might also offer insight into Deleuze's philosophical development.

In the final chapter of this dissertation, I make a case for the unique status of Nietzsche in Deleuze's corpus by showing how the interpretation of Nietzsche he advances in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* informs his later work with Guattari. More specifically, I analyze Deleuze's reading of the will to power as a typology of forces, as well as his interpretation of the Overman as a pinnacle of affirmation and activity. After making a case for the viability of these interpretations, I suggest how these aspects of Deleuze's understanding of Nietzsche informs his later, more creative work with Guattari. I suggest that Deleuze and Guattari's notion of desiring-production can be read as a post-Freudian extension the will to power and that their notion of the nomad war machine can be read as a collective expression of the Overman. As a result of these efforts, we achieve a deeper appreciation of the indeterminacy of central portions of Nietzsche's thinking and a deeper appreciation of Deleuze's approach to these issues, such that it becomes clearer how he remains Nietzschean throughout his philosophical career.

This chapter also facilitates further investigations into the ways Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche informs his mature philosophy. Deleuze's interpretation of the will to power might be read as a forerunner of the transcendental empiricism developed in *Difference and Repetition* and his reading of Nietzsche as emphasizing the creative dimension of thought might be read as a precursor for his later view of philosophy as concerned with the creation of concepts. Moreover, the results of this fourth chapter might help us grasp the novelty of Deleuze's interpretation of the eternal recurrence as an ontological principle that selects active forces, so that we might not only ask after the viability of Deleuze's interpretation of this difficult portion of Nietzsche's philosophy, but also better appreciate the role it plays in Deleuze's theory of temporality. There are, no doubt, additional intersections between Nietzsche and Deleuze – such as the former's notion of *amor fati* and the latter's attempt to reframe ethics as a question of being worthy of what happens to us. But the avenues opened regarding Deleuze's transcendental empiricism, his view of philosophy as concept creation, and his use of eternal recurrence to ground a general theory of time suffice to illustrate the benefits that might follow from further analyzing his reading of Nietzsche.

1.5   Conclusion

The Nietzsche who emerges from these essays is a thinker whose criticisms of well-established views within the history of philosophy can be taken seriously without our having to attribute an overly technical, positive position to him. Nietzsche's criticism of the view that moral values are descriptively objective can be justified by his rejection of teleological understandings of nature and by his proposal of an alternative, psycho-social explanation of moral values' appeal. His praise of self-sufficiency and his pursuit of *amor fati* can be made consistent with this criticism – and without attributing a particular, positive metaethical position to him. Similarly, Nietzsche's skepticism toward metaphysical notions such as God and substance, as well as his skepticism

toward ideas more generally, can be justified by his view of consciousness as emerging from unconscious mental activities and by his naturalistic account of ideas as emerging to satisfy humans' physiological needs. These aspects of his philosophy can be appreciated without attributing a particular, positive metaphysical position to him and without deciding in advance whether he views consciousness as causally efficacious or as merely epiphenomenal. Nietzsche's criticisms of other philosophers are pointed and probing, such that they do not back his own advocacies into one corner or another. It is partly because of this that his positive philosophical views can be read in creative ways, such that concepts like the will to power and the Overman can be expanded beyond their more intuitive applications to become categories with wide-ranging, social import. In sum, while the portrait of Nietzsche that emerges from this dissertation may be less systematic than some would like, this does not blunt the critical edge of his philosophy. On the contrary, it may be the case that the ambiguity surrounding Nietzsche's positive philosophical positions is part of what ensures his untimely relevance to ancient, early modern, and contemporary philosophical approaches.

<div align="center">1.6   References</div>

Nietzsche's Works

A   *The Anti-Christ.* Translated by Judith Norman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

BGE   *Beyond Good and Evil*. Translated by Judith Norman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

EH   *Ecce Homo*. Translated by Judith Norman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

GM   *On the Genealogy of Morality*. Translated by Maudemarie Clark and Alan J. Swensen. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998.

GS *The Gay Science.* Translated by Josefine Naukhoff and Adrian Del Caro. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

TI *Twilight of the Idols.* Translated by Judith Norman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

UM *Untimely Meditations.* Translated by R.J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

CHAPTER 2.   NIETZSCHE CONTRA STOICISM: NATURALISM AND VALUE; SUFFERING AND AMOR FATI

This chapter was previously published, in slightly modified form, in Inquiry vol. 62 no. 1 (2019): 93-115.

Nietzsche's view of the Stoics has long been portrayed as positive, despite his limited disagreement with them.2 Yet, a notebook entry from 1881 suggests the relationship is more fraught than it appears:

> I believe one misjudges Stoicism. The essence of this disposition – for that's what it is, before the philosophy conquers it for itself – is its attitude against pain and disagreeable perceptions: a certain weightiness, pressure, and inertness are heightened to the extreme in order to feel but little pain: stiffness and coldness are its anesthetic devices. The primary intention of Stoic education: to annihilate easy excitability, to restrict more and more the number of objects that can affect at all, belief in the contemptibility and low worth of most things that arouse the passions, hatred and hostility against excitement, as if the passions themselves were a sickness or something ignoble: scrutiny for all ugly and distressing revelations of suffering – in sum: petrification as a remedy against suffering, and henceforth all the high names of divine virtue are offered before a statue. What of it – embracing a statue in winter when one has become dull against the cold? What of it, if a statue embraces a statue! If the Stoic attains the character that he wants to have – in the majority of cases he brings it with him and therefore chooses this philosophy! – Thus he has the pressure of a bandage, which produces insensitivity. This mode of thought is highly repugnant to me: it underestimates the worth of pain (it is as useful and beneficial as pleasure), the worth of excitation and passion. It is ultimately forced to say: all that comes to me is right; I want nothing different. – He no longer overcomes distress, because he has killed off the sensibility needed for distresses. He expresses this religiously as complete conformity with all the actions of a divinity (e.g., as with Epictetus). (KSA 9:15[55])3

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2 For insightful treatments of Nietzsche's relation to Stoicism, see: Armstrong (2013); Rutherford (2011); Ure (2009); Nabais (2006); Elveton (2004); Groff (2004); Brobjer (2003); Nussbaum (1994).

3 My translation. Citations to Nietzsche use abbreviations listed in the references after this chapter. Roman numerals refer to major divisions within works. Arabic numerals refer to section numbers.

After describing the Stoics' essential psychological characteristics, Nietzsche advances two obscure but critical remarks. First, he questions whether the Stoics' attainment of their ethical ideal is significant on the grounds that the decision to adopt Stoic therapy is determined in advance by one's character. Second, he rebukes the Stoics for underestimating the worth of pain and passion, and for the fatalistic acceptance of life that their therapy produces. Confusingly, however, Nietzsche elsewhere *celebrates* characteristics for which Stoicism is well known; for instance, self-sufficiency and its associated characteristics, such as hardness, independence, and self-mastery. Moreover, the Stoic's fatalistic declaration, "I want nothing different!," seems to express precisely the love of fate, or *amor fati*, that Nietzsche himself embraces.

In what follows, I analyze these critical remarks with the aim of showing, scholarly consensus notwithstanding, that they evince deep disagreement between Nietzsche and the Stoics, and that they cohere with those aspects of Nietzsche's philosophy that have suggested to these scholars a kinship with Stoicism. I argue that the first critique turns on Nietzsche's rejection of Stoicism's teleological understanding of nature, which carries metaethical implications for his endorsement of self-sufficiency. The second critique, I contend, turns on Nietzsche's rejection of the Stoic view that pain and suffering necessarily lack positive value, which leads him to reconsider how fate might be loved. Fleshing out these two lines of criticism substantially qualifies Nietzsche's relationship to Stoicism – and in a way that absolves him of apparent inconsistency by distinguishing his notions of self-sufficiency and *amor fati* from their Stoic counterparts.

2.1   Stoicism's Ethical Ideal

2.1.1   Target and Scope

Nietzsche read Epictetus' *Handbook* and Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations* closely around the time he wrote the notebook entry under discussion (Brobjer 2003). The context needed to appreciate

Nietzsche's criticism of Stoicism's ethical ideal can therefore be provided by considering uncontroversial aspects of Stoic virtue that are accepted by Epictetus and Marcus. Notwithstanding disagreement about *how* to achieve this ideal state,[4] there is relative consensus within Stoicism about virtue's primary characteristics (Brennan 2003, 275-94).

The Stoics view nature as rationally ordered and teleological.[5] Their world is pervaded by a ubiquitous casual order, called fate, which governs everything in accord with reason (Gould 1974, esp. 17-18; Long & Sedley 1987, 331, 340-43). Since Stoicism also holds that only bodies can act or be acted on, a kind of materialism follows, whereby gods and souls are corporeal (Long & Sedley 1987, 273-74). The cosmos is understood as an organic unity in which each part has a proper function that contributes to the whole (Long 1985, 14-16). Fulfilling such proper functions constitutes flourishing, generally speaking (Long & Sedley 1987, 364-68). Specifically human flourishing, or virtue, consists in perfecting humanity's uniquely rational nature (Epictetus 6; Marcus VII.55). This requires assenting only to impressions in accordance with nature's rational order, desiring only what is appropriate to this order, and acting only on rational desires. If achieved, such rational self-discipline allows joyful acceptance of fate (Epictetus 8; Marcus VIII.26).

Stoicism is most starkly distinguished from competing ethical accounts by its insistence that virtue is the *only* good and that it is *entirely* self-sufficient (Epictetus 1; Marcus III.6-7; see also Long & Sedley 1987, 357-58; Lesses 1989, 96-102; Nussbaum 1989, 131-36; Brennan 2003, 263-64). Humans' rational capacities lead us to shape desires and actions in accord with nature,

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[4] For an overview of Stoicism's historical development that notes such disagreements, see Gill (2003) and Sedley (2003).

[5] Epictetus' *Handbook* 31 and Marcus' *Meditations* VI.42. Citations to Epictetus and Marcus refer to sections of the *Handbook* and *Meditations,* respectively. I restrict my citations to Epictetus' *Handbook* because, as Brobjer (2003, 430) notes, we do not have evidence that Nietzsche read Epictetus' *Discourses.* On Stoicism's teleology, also see Long and Sedley's (1987, 200) commentary, which refers to primary and secondary sources on Stoicism, also provided by their text.

but should these actions be impeded by something beyond our control, our rationality remains unaffected. Nothing can *make* us assent to misleading impressions, form irrational desires, or act irrationally (Epictetus 5, 9; Marcus IV.39, VIII.47-8). As Stoic virtue cannot be affected by external contingencies – including loss of loved ones, physical harm, or death – the only evil is irrational judgment, which underlies wrong desires and actions. As Stoic virtue has no necessary conditions outside rational judgment – including friends and family, physical wellbeing, or long life – it is the *only* good. Everything outside our complete control, everything other than the exercise of reason, is an 'indifferent' without value. Granted, some indifferents are *preferable* to their opposites; we are naturally drawn to them and they help us undertake right actions. But strictly speaking, these preferred indifferents are valueless. They are neither instrumentally necessary for, nor constitutive parts of, virtue.[6]

Before discussing how Nietzsche's first objection follows from his other philosophical commitments, let me mention two points of agreement that constrain his reproach. First, both Nietzsche and the Stoics approach ethics in a way that can be broadly described as "naturalistic."[7] We can see this in Stoicism's insistence that to live well is to live according to nature, as well as in their belief that ethics must be consonant with physics and cosmology (Long & Sedley 1987, 160-62; Hadot 1998, 79). Nietzsche also observes naturalistic constraints on ethics, emphasizing that human beings must be understood as continuous with nature rather than as distinct from it (e.g., GS 109, 346; BGE 230).[8] A second point of agreement concerns the value of self-sufficiency. The virtuous Stoic achieves self-sufficiency by recognizing that the external world is indifferent

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[6] Though there is some controversy over whether preferred indifferents have instrumental value, there is agreement that *if* they do, they are not *necessary* for virtue. See Long & Sedley (1987, 357-58); Lesses (1989, 114-15); Nussbaum (1989, 134-35); Brennan (2003, 263-64).

[7] On this aspect of Stoic ethics, see Brennan (2003, esp. 258). On similarities between this theme in Stoicism and in Nietzsche, see Groff (2004, 142, 152); Nabais (2006, 85-86); Armstrong (2013, 7).

[8] Brian Leiter (2002, 1-21) interprets Nietzsche's naturalism as striving to be consistent with the methods and results of empirical science. Bernard Williams (1994) provides a looser interpretation of Nietzsche's naturalism.

to virtue, that it cannot affect our capacity for rational judgment. Nietzsche's acclaim for self-sufficiency can be inferred from his recurrent praise of hardness, independence, and self-mastery. He uses these terms to describe Stoicism positively (PTAG 2; D 131, 251, 546; WP 943; KSA 7:19[122]), and to contrast it with Christianity (D 131, 139, 546; GS 122; GM III.18; WP 60, 195, 268, 342, 427). This does not, however, commit Nietzsche to the full picture of Stoic virtue. One can value self-sufficiency without holding that it has no necessary conditions, or that it is defined by living in accord with nature, as the Stoics say. Nonetheless, these points of agreement demonstrate that Nietzsche's objection is more fine-grained than merely denying that ethics should be approached naturalistically or that self-sufficiency has any value.

2.1.2 Deriving the Criticism from Nietzsche's Broader Philosophy

Unlike the Stoics, who view nature as rational and teleological, Nietzsche views nature as chaotic and purposeless. This disagreement, while often noted in passing,[9] is crucial for understanding Nietzsche's relationship to Stoicism. It necessarily limits the concordance between their ethical naturalisms, warrants Nietzsche's criticism of Stoic virtue, and underscores differences in the way each values self-sufficiency.

Nietzsche warns against understanding the world as an organic, teleological unity. The following passage sharply distinguishes his view of nature from Stoicism's:

> Let us beware of thinking that the world is a living being. […] we know roughly what the organic is; are we then supposed to reinterpret what is inexpressibly derivative, late, rare, accidental, which we perceive only on the crust of the earth, as something essential, common, and eternal, as those people do who call the universe an organism? […] The total character of the world, by contrast, is for all eternity chaos, not in the sense of a lack of necessity but of a lack of order, organization, form, beauty, wisdom, and whatever else our aesthetic anthropomorphisms are called. […] How could we reproach or praise the universe! […] In no way do our aesthetic and moral judgments apply to it! […] When will all these shadows of god no longer darken us? When will we have completely de-

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[9] E.g. Elveton (2004, 194-95); Groff (2004, 152, 155); Sellars (2006, 167); Ure (2009, 75); Rutherford (2011, 520).

deified nature? When may we begin to *naturalize* humanity with a pure, newly discovered, newly redeemed nature? (GS 109; see also GS 346; BGE 9; TI IX.7)

This passage advances the empirical claim that chaos is more common than regular movement or organic life, a claim Nietzsche then supplements with an explanation of why we draw erroneous conclusions about the "secret aim" of the cosmos. Anthropomorphic assumptions underlie nature's apparently teleological character. Indeed, Nietzsche suggests that *all* aesthetic and moral judgments about nature are anthropomorphisms, rather than features of the world independent of humanity. 10 The passage thus moves from an empirical observation about the prevalence of disorder in the cosmos to an alternative, more parsimonious explanation of teleological principles on the basis of human psychology.

While the Stoics justify their claims about proper functions and moral properties by way of their teleology, Nietzsche's denial of teleology gives him grounds for doubting their account of moral values' objectivity. This theme runs throughout Nietzsche's writing. An early work states: "There is nothing good, nothing beautiful, nothing sublime, nothing evil in itself, but […] there are states of soul in which we impose such words upon things external to and within us" (D 210). One of his last works similarly declares: "*there are absolutely no moral facts*" (TI VII.1; see also HH 4, 16; D 3; GS 301; Z I.15; BGE 108; WP 12, 428). Following Bernard Reginster, I call the view that Nietzsche denies "descriptive objectivism" (2006, 58). Descriptive objectivism holds that moral values are objective features of nature independent of human judgment. The plausibility of Nietzsche's denial of this view depends, in part, on whether moral values can be explained without positing them as features of reality independent of humans. Re-characterizing moral

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10 Note that Nietzsche restricts his point to *moral and aesthetic* judgments. Accordingly, we needn't worry that his indictment of these judgments' veracity undermines his description of nature as chaotic.

properties as anthropomorphisms goes some way toward such an explanation. But Nietzsche is often more specific than this, explaining particular moral values by appealing to physio-psychological facts about, and the socio-historical conditions of, their proponents.

Before considering how this method might apply to Stoic virtue, notice that Stoicism's view of indifferents reduces Nietzsche's explanatory burden. Intuitive examples that support moral values' descriptively objective status include things like illness and death, which seem objectively bad, and their opposites, like health and life, which seem objectively good. Stoics cannot appeal to such examples, however. They hold that, strictly speaking, these are without value. Accordingly, the only value that Nietzsche must explain by appeal to physio-psychological facts and socio-historical conditions is the value that Stoics attribute to rational self-sufficiency.

Nietzsche considers moral values symptoms of individuals' psychology. He writes, "Your judgment 'that is right' has a prehistory in your drives, inclinations, aversions, experiences, and what you have failed to experience." This is one reason why he is skeptical about moral values' alleged universality; "it is selfish to consider one's own judgment a universal law" (GS 335). Concerning Stoicism's commitment to the value of rational self-sufficiency, Nietzsche describes the "indifference and stone column coldness which the Stoics prescribed and applied as a cure for the feverish idiocy of the affects" (BGE 198). He considers Stoic virtue symptomatic of an "*easy excitability*" that needs dampening (KSA 9:15[55]). How this underlying disposition manifests itself, and what moral prescriptions it recommends, depends on socio-historical factors as well. In this sense, Stoic virtue is also "a recommendation for constraint in proportion to the degree of danger in which the individual person lives" (BGE 198). The Hellenistic period when Stoicism gains popularity is *highly* dangerous and uncertain. For the especially sensitive or anxious, and for those facing extraordinary insecurity, the notion that there is nothing to be prized other than

rational judgment and nothing to be feared but its absence is likely attractive. If one suffers slavery, as Epictetus did, advises a violent and impulsive emperor, as Seneca did, or faces wars on multiple fronts, as Marcus did, then the invitation to turn away from the external world toward the inner citadel of reason may provide great comfort. In such cases, Nietzsche himself might counsel Stoicism: "Stoicism may well be advisable for those with whom fate improvises and who live in violent times and depend on impulsive and dangerous people" (GS 306). But these cases are exceptional – especially in the modern era.

Nietzsche's physio-psychological explanation for Stoic predilections also allows him to challenge Stoicism's characterization of virtue as 'living according to nature.' In another passage worth quoting at length, he writes:

> So you want to *live* "according to nature?" Oh, you noble Stoics, what a fraud is in this phrase! Imagine something like nature, profligate without measure, indifferent without measure, without purpose and regard, without mercy and justice, fertile and barren and uncertain at the same time, think of indifference itself as power – how *could* you live according to this indifference? Living – isn't that wanting specifically to be something other than this nature? Isn't living assessing, preferring, being unfair, being limited, wanting to be different? And assuming your imperative "live according to nature" basically amounts to "living according to life" – well how could you *not?* Why make a principle out of what you yourselves are and must be? – But, in fact, something quite different is going on: while pretending with delight to read the canon of your law in nature, you want the opposite […] Your pride wants to dictate and annex your morals and ideals onto nature […] you demand that it be nature "according to the Stoa" and you want to make all existence exist in your image alone – as a huge eternal glorification and universalization of Stoicism! For all your love of truth, you have forced yourselves so long, so persistently, and with such hypnotic rigidity to have a *false*, namely Stoic, view of nature, that you can no longer see it any other way, – and some abysmal piece of arrogance finally gives you the madhouse hope that *because* you know how to tyrannize yourselves – Stoicism is self-tyranny –, nature lets itself be tyrannized as well. (BGE 9)

This passage presents Stoicism with a dilemma of sorts. *Either* 'living according to nature' means living according to the amoral and chaotic cosmos, in which case the Stoic maxim is trivial and

without normative content, *or* 'living according to nature' means living in accord with reason, in which case Stoicism misunderstands nature. Failing to guard against the way their physio-psychological needs shape their interpretation of the world, the Stoics unknowingly take the latter route.

Importantly, Nietzsche is not merely arguing against imbuing nature with anthropomorphic values. He writes, "Every morality […] is a piece of tyranny against both 'nature' and 'reason.' But this in itself is no objection; for that, we would have to issue yet another decree based on some other morality forbidding every sort of tyranny and unreason" (BGE 188). He even acknowledges that moral values can be beneficial: "everything there is, or was, of freedom, subtlety, boldness, dance, or masterly assurance […] has only developed by virtue of 'the tyranny of such arbitrary laws'" (ibid.; see also BGE 44). Accordingly, Nietzsche does not object to Stoicism's projection of values onto nature, but to their conflation of these values with facts about nature. The conflation is essential to Stoicism: if rational self-sufficiency is to be more than prudential, if it is to have the universality and overriding significance characteristic of moral values, then it must belong to nature itself. Nietzsche denies this. He instead suggests that the value of rational self-sufficiency reflects facts about the *Stoics'* condition, not facts about nature or even humanity in general. This error leads the Stoics to "generalize what should not be generalized, [to] speak unconditionally" (BGE 198; see also WP 420, 940), even though "everything unconditional belongs to pathology" (BGE 154). This tendency, combined with a renunciation of external goods, explains why Stoicism is appropriated by Christianity despite their differences in orthodoxy (BGE 189; A 42; WP 195, 342, 360, 427). Like Christianity, Stoicism erects a universal and unconditional ethical ideal. In demanding that all adhere to this ideal, Stoicism prohibits alternative values that might promote "the highest power and splendor of the human type" (GM P.6). Nietzsche frequently objects to

moral values on the basis of their pretensions to universality and objectivity (e.g. GS 335; BGE 198, 43, 221). But the notebook entry under consideration makes this point in a less familiar way. Rather than objecting that Stoicism's universal ethical standard has deleterious consequences for some individuals, Nietzsche contends that it is self-congratulatory to praise oneself for achieving a standard set by one's physio-psychological needs and self-aggrandizing to elevate this standard to a universal ideal. "If the Stoic attains the character that he wants to have – *in the majority of cases he brings it with him* and therefore chooses *this* philosophy!"

2.1.3 Consistency with Other Aspects of Nietzsche's Philosophy

Nietzsche denies the teleological view of nature that secures rational self-sufficiency's status as a descriptively objective moral value and provides an alternate account of how it might come to occupy pride of place for Stoics. But he also values self-sufficiency highly. He champions such character traits as hardness, independence, and self-mastery, loudly and often. When he writes, for example, that "the noble human being honors himself as one who is powerful, also as one who has power over himself […] delights in being severe and hard with himself and respects all severity and hardness," the Stoics likely come to mind (BGE 260). Describing the hardness and independence of free spirits, he declares "we free spirits […] are the last of the Stoics!" (BGE 227). Such passages might lead us to overstate the similarities between Nietzsche and Stoicism, as Martha Nussbaum does when she interprets "Nietzsche's project" as "[bringing] about a revival of Stoic values of self-command and self-formation" (1994, 140; cf. Kain 1983, 371; Elveton 2004, 193, 203). If this is Nietzsche's project, his objections to Stoicism clearly undercut it. Fortunately, closer examination reveals that Nietzsche values self-sufficiency as helpful for critiquing moral values, and for re-valuing them, without construing self-sufficiency as a 'descriptively objective' moral value, as the Stoics do.

Keenly aware of the pressure to conform to moral conventions, Nietzsche emphasizes the value of self-sufficiency for questioning morals' objectivity. Free spirits who criticize the morals of the majority must value solitude and independence (BGE 41, 44, 284). Such skeptical individuals are characterized by "a high, independent spiritedness, a will to stand alone, even an excellent faculty of reason," "severity or hardness," and "self-reliance" (BGE 201). A typical passage describes philosophy as "applying the vivisecting knife directly to the chest of *the virtues of the age*," before concluding that nobility requires "wanting to be for yourself, the ability to be different, [and] standing alone" (BGE 212). These descriptions may remind us of Stoicism, but the resemblance is only skin-deep: Nietzschean self-sufficiency cannot entail conforming to nature's providential order. Rather, it marks a skeptical disposition toward any such order and toward claims about morals' descriptive objectivity (GS 347; A 54). It might nevertheless seem that Nietzsche encourages *everyone* to adopt this self-sufficient, skeptical disposition, which would violate his opposition to universal maxims. One way of responding to this worry is by denying that Nietzsche writes for everyone, limiting his intended audience to a select few. Alternatively, one could emphasize that Nietzsche's recommendation that we cultivate a self-sufficient, skeptical disposition occurs in a specific socio-historical context, i.e. the advent of nihilism, or that he expects very few will successfully cultivate such a disposition. These approaches avoid positing self-sufficiency as a universal, descriptively objective value grounded in nature.

Nietzsche also associates self-sufficiency with his project of re-valuing values. He heralds the ability of future philosophers and free spirits somehow to confer normative authority on values *despite* the falsity of descriptive objectivism. Zarathustra asks, "can you give yourself your own evil and good and hang your will above yourself like a law?" (Z I.17; see also D 453; GS 301, 335; Z II.12; BGE 203, 211-2; TI IX.1). How exactly Nietzsche thinks normative authority can be

conferred on values without appealing to an objective description of human-independent nature is controversial.11 But regardless of the details of how such a re-valuation occurs, there seems to be no problem, in principle at least, with understanding self-sufficiency as a trait of those who confer normative authority without appealing to descriptive objectivism – and while leaving, for the time being, the *source* of that normative authority an open question.

For the Stoics, self-sufficiency consists in realizing that our proper function lies within us and that all external objects and states of affairs are indifferent to virtue. For Nietzsche, self-sufficiency is valued for the role it plays in critically examining these and other moral values – and perhaps in creating new values. In one sense, Nietzsche's self-sufficiency is more restricted than Stoicism's. Whereas Stoics deny that virtue has any necessary conditions and contend that rational judgment is unharmed by things like illness or enslavement, Nietzsche *doesn't* deny that thought is informed by physio-psychological and socio-historical conditions (e.g., GS P.3; EH II.10). His critical method precludes such a denial. We should therefore question Nussbaum's charge that Nietzsche "follows Stoicism [by] denying that the physical goods of life are necessary conditions for *eudaimonia*" (1994, 159). In another sense, Nietzsche's notion of self-sufficiency is less restricted than Stoicism's. He denies the intrinsic value not just of indifferents but also of what the Stoics call virtue and proposes that we somehow create values without relying on a teleological understanding of nature. For Nietzsche, "it is a measure of the degree of strength of will to what extent one can do without a meaning in things, to what extent one can endure to live in a meaningless world *because one organizes a small portion of it oneself*" (WP 585). His intellectual notion of self-sufficiency encourages us to be skeptical of all dogmatic moral prescriptions –

11 Some of the available interpretations include Brian Leiter's (2002) proposal that Nietzsche is a subjective realist, Bernard Reginster's (2006) proposal that he is a subjective anti-realist, Nadeem Hussain's (2007) proposal that Nietzsche is a normative fictionalist, Jessica Berry's (2011) proposal that Nietzsche remains skeptical about normative commitments, and Paul Katsafanas' (2013) interpretation of Nietzsche as a constitutivist.

including those advocated by Stoics. He warns against overly strict self-control, for example, because it might make one more irritable or closed off from learning experiences (GS 305) and counsels against becoming "stuck in our own detachment" so we may better test our independence (BGE 41). While Nietzsche restricts self-sufficiency by admitting that thought is informed by physio-psychological and socio-historical facts, he expands the scope of self-sufficiency so that moral values and practices are open to critique.

2.2 The Stoics on Suffering

2.2.1 Target and Scope

Nietzsche's second critical remark about Stoicism in the 1881 notebook passage concerns the value of pain and passion. Again, the context needed to appreciate his point can be provided by remembering some uncontroversial aspects of Stoic doctrine.

The Stoics understand passions as cognitive, evaluative judgments (Epictetus 5, 16, 20; Marcus IV.7, VIII.47-49; also see Brennan 2003, 269-74; Nussbaum 1989, esp. 137-44; Long & Sedley 1987, 420-23).[12] A monistic psychology underlies this view. Stoics such as Zeno and Chrysippus, as well as Epictetus and Marcus, understand the soul as entirely rational and consequently consider all motivations forms of belief. On their view, the soul receives impressions that purport to represent reality in proposition-like content, and to which we either assent, affirming their accuracy, or from which we withhold our assent, deeming them inadequate. When we assent to them, impulses incite movement within the soul, immediately motivating action. On this view, passions are evaluative judgments that mistake indifferents for things necessary to, or

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[12] Nussbaum (1993) notes some disagreement within Stoicism about whether passions are cognitive judgments or non-cognitive impulses. This disagreement isn't relevant at present. The Stoics Nietzsche reads in 1881, Epictetus and Marcus, both understand passion cognitively. Besides, Nietzsche's objection doesn't concern Stoicism's *understanding* of passion but its *devaluation* of it.

constitutive of, virtue (Brennan 2003, 364; Nussbaum 1989, 137-50, 163; Long & Sedley 1987, 420). Passionate judgments immediately harm the soul, contribute to irrational desires and actions, and make us susceptible to additional suffering by misleading us to value things outside our control.

Since passions harm our moral character, the Stoics demand that they be extirpated completely (Epictetus 1.5; Marcus III.4, XI.2). Extirpation primarily occurs through rational argumentation, though the Stoics also prescribe habitual reflection on the indifference of everything outside our control – including our loved ones, physical condition, and life (Epictetus 1, 3; Marcus VI.47, VIII.25). Recalling how Stoicism holds that the only evil is irrational judgment and that nothing can force us to be irrational, it follows that misfortune and harm only occur with our assent (Epictetus 1, 9, 16; Marcus IV.7, V.19). An experience involving physical pain may be unavoidable, but it is strictly speaking a dis-preferred indifferent. The soul only suffers when we mistakenly judge that physical pain *actually* harms us. If the passions are fully extirpated, suffering ceases. The dispassionate, virtuous person is therefore also the happiest (Long & Sedley 1987, 357-59).

Two points of agreement between Nietzsche and the Stoics constrain his criticism of this account of passion. First, Nietzsche admits that the Stoic therapy of extirpating the passions is effective for reducing suffering. As noted previously, he concedes that "Stoicism may well be advisable for those with whom fate improvises and who live in violent times and depend on impulsive and changeable people" (GS 306). However, he considers cases where Stoic therapy is the best course of action exceedingly rare. He criticizes "*soul-doctors*" who claim "happiness arises only with the annihilation of the passions" for overlooking "the superabundant happiness" of passionate people, before writing: "is our life really so painful and burdensome that it would be advantageous for us to trade it for a fossilized Stoic way of life? Things are *not bad enough* for us

that they have to be bad for us in the Stoic style!" (GS 326). Second, Nietzsche agrees with the Stoics that external objects and states of affairs lack intrinsic moral value. This follows from his denial of descriptive objectivism about morality. As a result, he cannot object to Stoicism's characterization of externals as morally indifferent or to their characterization of passionate judgments as erroneous.

It seems implausible – if not psychologically contradictory – to suggest that pain and suffering are *final* ends, valued independent of the contribution they make to some greater aim or good. Nietzsche is more plausibly construed as insisting that passion, pain, and suffering can be valuable insofar as they *contribute* to some other end. This might make his critique seem minor, but the Stoic position is strict. Stoicism considers pain a dis-preferred indifferent that is *never* valuable and it considers passion and suffering *essentially* harmful. Hence, Stoics recommend the diminishment of pain to the greatest possible extent and the elimination of all passion and suffering.[13],[14] Since Nietzsche thinks pain, passion, and suffering are *sometimes* valuable, he has reason to depart with Stoicism.

2.2.2 Deriving the Criticism from Nietzsche's Broader Philosophy

Nietzsche calls Stoicism "highly repugnant," in part because "it underestimates the worth of *pain* […], the worth of *excitation* and *passion*" (KSA 9:15[55]). While there are several ways one could defend the view that pain, excitation, and passion have some worth, Nietzsche suggests his own line of reasoning by writing, "[the Stoic] *no longer overcomes distress,* because he has killed off the sensibility needed for distresses." The crux of his second critique is thus that *overcoming*

[13] Further evidence that Stoics think pain and suffering lack any positive value is their endorsement of suicide in the face of unavoidable vice.
[14] As a counterexample to this characterization of Stoicism, one might cite Aristo's argument that physical sickness has instrumental value. However, Aristo intends this argument as a *reductio* of the view that *preferred* indifferents are instrumentally valuable. This dismissal of preferred indifferents' instrumental value is heterodox (see Long & Sedley 1987, 358-59; Lesses 1989, 102).

distress is preferable to the Stoic method of *forestalling* distress – that the former strategy sees the potential value of pain, excitation, and passion, whereas the latter does not.

Overcoming presupposes the pursuit of some prior aim. As Nietzsche writes, "overcoming […] has in itself no end" (WP 552). It also presupposes some resistance or obstacle to attaining this aim. Pain and suffering epitomize such resistance.[15] Crucially, resistance is *overcome* when it is – not merely destroyed or averted, but – *incorporated* to promote or stimulate the pursuit it initially impedes. Discussing the example of health, Nietzsche claims that "the standard remains […] how much of the sickly it can take and overcome – how much it can make healthy," by turning illnesses into "stimulants of *great health*" (WP 1013; see also HH I.P.3-6; GS 382; GM III.9; EH I.2; NCW E.1). Another notebook entry reads: "*Overcoming of the affects?* – No, if what is implied is their weakening and extirpation. But putting them into service [… so they] go voluntarily wherever our best interests lie" (WP 384). Overcoming the passions is thus distinct from extirpating them. In keeping with his physio-psychological method, Nietzsche further suggests that the inability to overcome the passions might motivate their devaluation. "The passions have been brought into ill repute on account of those who were not sufficiently strong to employ them" (WP 778).

By incorporating resistance to further stimulate a pursuit, overcoming strengthens those drives and individuals that achieve it.[16] "*The great health*" described previously is "a health that

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[15] I refer to 'pain and suffering,' rather than 'pain, excitation, and passion' below. As Stoicism considers passion and suffering co-extensive, this doesn't alter Nietzsche's point – but it may help us refrain from thinking of passion as mere enthusiasm. While Stoicism denies that physical pain entails genuine suffering, this distinction turns on their view of vice as the only harm. Nietzsche rejects this view, making his conception of suffering broader than Stoicism's. In a Schopenhauer-inspired vein, we can define pain as sudden, typically physical, displeasure and suffering as the inability to satisfy some desire (see Reginster 2006, 113-14). Insofar as pain incites a desire for its cessation, suffering typically accompanies it. Furthermore, insofar as resistance to an aim thwarts our desire for this aim, resistance constitutes suffering.

[16] I set aside complications surrounding how drives figure into the psychic economies that define individuals' characters. For an extended treatment of such issues, see Katsanafas (2016).

one doesn't only have, but also acquires continually and must acquire because one gives it up again and again" (GS 382), thereby revealing that "sickness can actually be an energetic *stimulus* to life" (EH I.2). More generally, Nietzsche defines an increase of power *as* overcoming resistance (A 2). He repeatedly suggests that strength is measured by the degree of resistance overcome (EH I.7; BGE 257, 259; GM I.13; TI IX.38, 49). His point isn't that stronger drives and individuals *can* overcome more resistance; strength is not a latent property waiting to be actualized. Rather, strength simply *is* overcoming. Where overcoming is absent, strength declines (BGE 259; GM II.11; A 6; TI IX.38). If one values the strengthening of some drives and individuals, as Nietzsche does, then one must also value suffering as something that contributes to strength by providing resistance to be overcome.

Overcoming also contributes to the value of achievements involving it. Nietzsche defines "what is good" as "everything that enhances people's feeling of power," just before defining an increase in power as overcoming resistance (A 2). Zarathustra also associates value with overcoming, declaring, "A tablet of the good hangs over every people. Observe, it is the tablet of their overcomings. […] Praiseworthy to them is whatever they consider difficult, […] the most difficult – that is praised as holy" (Z I.15). Readers of Nietzsche might more readily recognize the reciprocal of this position: "whatever can be common will never have much value" (BGE 43). The details of how overcoming contributes to an achievement's value depends on several factors, e.g., whether the resistance is intrinsic (i.e., essential and pertinent) or extrinsic (i.e., non-essential or non-pertinent) to the accomplishment. [17] Intrinsic resistance might contribute value to an accomplishment, whereas extrinsic resistance contributes to the value of the person who accomplishes it. But these details needn't detain us, as Nietzsche only needs to show that resistance

[17] On this and related complications with Nietzsche's view of resistance as contributing to value, see helpful discussions by Reginster (2006, 178-84) and Katsanafas (2013, 176-81).

such as pain and suffering *can* have contributory value to justify his departure from Stoicism. His notion of overcoming provides this.[18]

As an illustrative example, consider someone who values intellectual drives and accomplishments, but suffers from a severe and protracted illness. While the suffering brought about by illness might impede their intellectual endeavors, overcoming can transform such suffering into an intellectual stimulant. Nietzsche describes such a case in "*On the knowledge acquired through suffering.*"

> He who suffers intensely looks *out* at things with a terrible coldness […]. If until then he has been living in some perilous world of fantasy, this supreme sobering-up through pain is the means of extricating him from it: and perhaps the only means. […] The tremendous tension imparted to the intellect by its desire to oppose and counter pain makes him see everything he now beholds in a new light […] He thinks with contempt of the noblest and most beloved of the illusions in which he himself formerly indulged. […] With dreadful clearsightedness as to the nature of his being, he cries to himself: '[…] Raise yourself above your life as above your suffering, look down into the deep and the unfathomable depths!' […] The stimulus to justness of judgment has likewise never been greater than it is now, for now it represents a triumph over our self, over a condition which, of all conditions, would make unjustness of judgment excusable. (D 114; see also GS P.3; EH I.1).

In claiming that protracted suffering might be "the only means" of amplifying someone's critical capacities to examine their "most beloved illusions," Nietzsche does not merely suggest that pain and suffering act as an accidental occasion for an insight. Were it not for the "tremendous tension imparted to the intellect by its desire to oppose and counter pain," the insight would not be achieved. Here, suffering stimulates the intellect, amplifying its power to gaze into the depths of existence.

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[18] Nietzsche also defines happiness as the feeling that resistance is overcome, thereby departing from the view of pleasure and displeasure as opposed (A 2). Implicitly relying on his notion of overcoming, GS 12 asks, "What if pleasure and displeasure are so intertwined that whoever *wants* as much as possible of one *must* also have as much as possible of the other"? Nietzsche suggests the Stoics are aware of this possibility, writing "at least they were consistent when they also desired as little pleasure as possible in order to derive as little pain as possible from life" (Ibid.). He accordingly questions Stoicism's characterization of virtue: "by using the saying 'The virtuous man is the happiest man,' [the Stoics] had both a slogan for the masses and a fine caustic delicacy for the refined" (Ibid.).

Suffering also contributes to the intellectual achievement's value, which is more impressive since it is accomplished under "a condition which, of all conditions, would make unjustness of judgment excusable."

Overcoming also strengthens creativity and contributes value to creative achievements. Zarathustra claims that, "in order for the creator to be, suffering is needed and much transformation" (Z II.2; see also WP 957). Creativity requires suffering because it requires overcoming. As Reginster observes, "the creative individual […] deliberately seeks to confront and break boundaries, to expand the domain of human experience, to overcome limitations hitherto unchallenged, or to vanquish resistance perhaps thought unassailable" (2006, 191-92). The possibility of transforming suffering into a creative catalyst is seen in Nietzsche's reflections on geniuses' torment (HH I.157; GS 24, 301-02) and in his account of the slave revolt (GM I.10). As creativity requires overcoming resistance, valuing creativity requires bestowing contributory value upon resistance and suffering. This is why Zarathustra calls creating "the great redemption from suffering" (Z II.2).

The amount of resistance one overcomes marks their degree of Nietzschean self-sufficiency. Nietzsche considers overcoming a measure of strength (GM I.13), freedom (TI IX.38), and nobility (BGE 257, 212). Overcoming is also needed for intellectual greatness, which requires a skeptical confrontation with cherished beliefs and values (A 54; GS 297). Another sense in which suffering must be overcome to realize Nietzsche's philosophical aims is this. If the absence of a meaning for suffering causes *additional* suffering (GM III.28), and if believing in a descriptively objective moral order alleviates this additional suffering by providing meaning, then our ability to acknowledge the falsity of descriptive objectivism turns, in part, on our ability to *overcome* this additional suffering, transforming it into something that contributes to the drives, characters, and

achievements we value. Moreover, insofar as creativity requires overcoming, resistance such as suffering can contribute to self-sufficiency in the sense of spurring the creation of values that are not descriptively objective. Nietzsche's account of overcoming thus explains how pain and suffering can have contributory value for his philosophical aims.[19]

2.2.3   Consistency with Other Aspects of Nietzsche's Philosophy

After indicting the Stoics' strategy of forestalling suffering by cultivating indifference to the world, Nietzsche censures their acceptance of fate. "[The Stoic] is ultimately forced to say: all that comes to me is right; I want nothing different. […] He expresses this religiously as complete conformity with all the actions of a divinity" (KSA 9:15[55]). The similarity between this acceptance of fate and Nietzsche's notion of *amor fati* makes this grievance somewhat surprising. If we view *amor fati* as something that "[Nietzsche] directly borrows from the Stoics," as Michael Ure does, then we might worry that Nietzsche "gives us no reasonable account of how it is possible to unconditionally affirm fate without adopting some form of Stoic indifference or *apatheia*" (2009, 75, 80). Nuno Nabais also sees a close connection between Stoicism and *amor fati,* considering *amor fati* "the central pillar of the ethical programme of the philosophy of the Portico, [one] embodied in the maxim 'live in accordance with nature'" (2006, 85). If *amor fati* is as inseparable from Stoicism as Nabais suggests, then perhaps he is right to conclude that, "in his criticism of Stoicism […] Nietzsche is criticizing his very own foundations" (97). We can dispel this tension,

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[19] One might worry that overcoming, or increasing power, functions as a descriptively objective moral value. There are several ways of avoiding this inconsistency. Leiter argues that power is merely Nietzsche's idiosyncratic value (2002, 117-26). Hussain argues that power is a simulacrum of value, which Nietzsche acknowledges as fictitious (2007). Berry contends that Nietzsche's appeals to power are equipollent arguments against traditional defenses of morality (2011, 127-32). Reginster contends that power is a second-order desire that presupposes other, first-order desires, adding to them the desire for resistance (2006, chap. 3). Katsanafas similarly describes the pursuit of power as a claim about *how,* rather than *what,* we value (2013, chap. 6). None of these approaches make power a descriptively objective moral value.

however, by clarifying Nietzsche's notion of *amor fati* and its relation to suffering. Afterward, the contrast between *amor fati* and Stoicism's acceptance of fate will appear in sharper relief.

Nietzsche describes love of fate as his "formula for human greatness" (EH II.10) and as the "thought [that] shall be the reason, warrant, and sweetness for the rest of [his] life" (GS 276). But what *amor fati* requires is not altogether clear. He describes the disposition as "not [wanting] anything to be different, not forwards, not backwards, not for all eternity. Not just to tolerate necessity, still less to conceal it – all idealism is hypocrisy towards necessity –, but to love it" (EH II.10). Calling *amor fati* his "innermost nature," he writes: "What my innermost nature tells me is that everything is necessary, seen from above and in the sense of a *great* economy, is also useful in itself,—it should not just be tolerated, it should be *loved*" (NCW E.1). Evidently, this entails learning "how to see what is necessary in things as what is beautiful in them – thus [… making] things beautiful!" (GS 276). These passages permit a weak and a strong reading. On the weak reading, the necessity loved refers to one's life *as a whole*. On the strong reading, the necessity loved refers to each *part* of life, which is somehow necessary to the whole. The stronger reading makes achieving *amor fati* more difficult. While it requires, perhaps counterintuitively, that each part of a life is necessary to the whole, Nietzsche suggests this follows from his denial of teleology.[20]

Whether and how suffering might be consistent with *amor fati* depends on whether we adopt the weak or the strong reading. On the weak reading, fate can be loved if the value of life as a whole compensates for undesirable parts, including suffering. On the strong reading, *amor fati* requires loving each part of a life, including those characterized by suffering, by seeing them as necessary to the whole. Overcoming provides a means of accomplishing this. If overcoming

[20] "Once you know that there are no purposes, you also know that there is no accident; for only against a world of purposes does the word 'accident' have a meaning" (GS 109).

suffering is intrinsic to the accomplishments that make a whole life valuable, then suffering is a necessary part that contributes to the value of the whole. For example, perhaps suffering is necessary to achieve a particular insight, e.g., to realize that nature is amoral. While this doesn't make suffering necessary to the whole life's value, if we further posit that this insight *is* integral to the whole's value, then we have a case where suffering is valued as necessary to a whole life's value. Nietzsche seems to value his own suffering this way. Reflecting on *amor fati,* he writes: "As far as my long infirmity is concerned, isn't it the case that I am unspeakably more indebted to it than I am to my health? I owe a higher health to it […] *I owe my philosophy to it as well*" (NCW E.1; see also GS P.3; EH I.1). Regardless of what achievements might make a life valuable, if they require overcoming, then suffering contributes to them, such that removing suffering would diminish the value of life as a whole.[21]

Stoic virtue requires perfecting our rational capacities so we might accept divine providence. Epictetus advises, "Don't seek that all that comes about should come about as you wish, but wish that everything that comes about should come about just as it does" (8; see also 31, 49). Marcus describes the virtuous individual in similar terms: "he loves and welcomes whatever happens to him and whatever his fate may bring […] modestly following the divine" (III.16; see also IV.10). Stoic acceptance of fate entails living in conformity with nature's teleological order.

It is doubtful whether any Stoic – most of whom write in Greek – uses the phrase *amor fati* (Hadot 1998, 143-44). Still, it is worth clarifying the contrast between Stoicism's acceptance of fate with Nietzsche's love of fate, since many readers have been mislead by the superficial

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[21] It might seem that only suffering that is intrinsic, i.e., essential and pertinent, to a life-defining accomplishment will have contributory value and that other, non-relevant instances of suffering will remain regrettable. If so, the strong interpretation of *amor fati* is unmet. While this could be reason to adopt the weak reading, it is worth recalling that Nietzsche denies that "accident" is a meaningful notion absent preexisting purposes (GS 109). Elsewhere, he denies that objects or experiences have *any* intrinsic or essential features, suggesting that they are only defined in relation to other objects and experiences (e.g., WP 557-60). These points complicate our ability to clearly distinguish intrinsic suffering from extrinsic or inessential suffering.

resemblance between them. The two differ fundamentally in their understandings of necessity. By Nietzsche's lights, Stoics do not really accept, much less love, necessity because they erroneously imbue it with teleology, denying purposelessness by embracing divine providence. Stoic acceptance of fate entails fabricating a ubiquitous rational order before submitting to it. Overlooking their creativity, Stoics feel "*forced* to say: all that comes to me is right; I want nothing to be different" (KSA 9:15[55], emphasis added). Nietzschean *amor fati*, by contrast, does not require a pre-existing purpose. It requires valuing our lives despite the falsity of descriptive objectivism.22 Another dissimilarity is that Stoicism addresses distress by withdrawing from the world, judging it as indifferent. Nietzsche thinks this solution is decisive: "[the Stoic] *no longer overcomes distress,* because he has killed off the sensibility needed for distresses" (Ibid.). *Amor fati,* by contrast, doesn't require divesting value from the world or avoiding all suffering by anaesthetizing oneself completely. If suffering is compensated for (on the weak reading) or makes a necessary contribution to what makes life valuable (on the strong reading), fate can be loved. Whereas Stoicism creates a teleological order that must be submitted to at the expense of finding anything outside reason valuable, Nietzsche seeks to love fate without positing a preexisting purpose or withdrawing from the world.

2.3   Conclusion

Many scholars align Nietzsche with Stoicism, for their naturalist approaches to ethics (e.g. Groff 2004, 142, 152; Nabais 2006, 85-86; Armstrong 2013, 7) and their positive valuations of self-sufficiency (e.g. Nussbaum 1994, 140; Kain 1983, 371; Elveton 2004, 193). But the alignment is unsustainable. Stoicism's teleological understanding of nature secures the objective moral value

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22 See footnote 11 above.

of rational self-sufficiency. Fulfilling humanity's purpose, on their view, requires acting in accord with reason and realizing that rationality's unconditioned, self-sufficient goodness makes all external objects and states of affairs indifferent. Nietzsche, by contrast, rejects the teleological view of nature and questions moral values' objectivity. As his critical method shows, his notion of self-sufficiency doesn't deny that thought is shaped by physio-psychological or socio-historical facts, but is better understood as the intellectual fortitude needed to critically examine conventional beliefs and to value life despite its amoral character. His sense of self-sufficiency is more limited than Stoicism's in that it is largely confined to an intellectual domain, but within this domain it is not limited by preexisting purposes or objective moral values.

Several scholars have attempted to forge a strong link between Stoic acceptance of fate and Nietzsche's *amor fati*, too (e.g. Brobjer 2003, 371; Elveton 2004, 194; Sellars 2006, 161; Nabias 2006, 85-86; Ure 2009, 73-76). Stark differences, not only in their respective views of nature, but also in their responses to suffering limit this resemblance. Stoic fate is a ubiquitous rational order safeguarded by divinity. Under fate, we suffer only due to erroneous judgments that value things outside our control. Physical pain, for example, is an indifferent – but *thinking* that pain harms us entails *actual* suffering because irrational judgments damage virtue. As suffering betrays some vice, Stoicism seeks to eliminate it by judging the external world as valueless and accepting fate. For Nietzsche, fate lacks a preexisting purpose. Diverging from Stoicism, he allows that pain and suffering can have positive value. In providing fodder for overcoming, they can contribute to the strength of the drives and characters we esteem and to the greatness of the accomplishments we celebrate. Unlike the Stoic acceptance of fate, *amor fati* doesn't require withdrawal from the world or avoidance of suffering; overcoming encourages full, passionate engagement. Appreciating the manifest differences between *amor fati* and Stoic acceptance of fate should silence any remaining

worries about whether Nietzsche can rebuke Stoic 'fatalism' and still love fate. He can. And *that* he can is not only compatible with his objections to the Stoic conception of virtue, it follows from them.[23]

2.4   References

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EH   *Ecce Homo*. Translated by Judith Norman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

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GS   *The Gay Science.* Translated by Josefine Naukhoff and Adrian Del Caro. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

HH   *Human, All-Too Human.* Translated by R.J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

KSA   *Kritische Studienausgabe.* 15 vols. Edited by Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1999.

NCW *Nietzsche contra Wagner.* Translated by Judith Norman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

PTAG   *Philosophy in the Tragic Age of the Greeks*. Translated by Marianne Cowan. Washington D.C.: Regnery Publishing, 1962.

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CHAPTER 3. NIETZSCHE'S READING OF LEIBNIZ: NATURALISM AND THE UNCONSCIOUS ORIGINS OF IDEAS

Nietzsche's view of Leibniz is two-faced. He calls Leibniz a "great philosopher," among the likes of Heraclitus, Plato, Kant, and Schopenhauer (GM III.7),[24] and describes him as "characteristic of the *strong* German type [who exists] blithely among antitheses, full of that supple strength that guards against convictions and doctrines by employing one against the other and reserving freedom for itself" (WP 884/KSA 12:9[180]). Nietzsche claims that natural history and physiology – disciplines central to his philosophy – needed two centuries to catch up with "*Leibniz's* precocious suspicion" regarding unconscious mental operations (GS 354). With this "incomparable insight," Nietzsche considers Leibniz "vindicated […] against everyone who had philosophized before him" (GS 357). Such praise concerns Leibniz's character and influence, as well as his philosophy of mind.

Yet Nietzsche also derides Leibniz. He is among the "enemies" whom Nietzsche "despise[s] for every type of uncleanliness in concepts and values, every type of *cowardice* in the face of every honest yes and no" (A 61). Leibniz is one of "the great bumps in the path to Europe's sense of intellectual integrity" (EH III.CW.2), included with those "'unconscious' counterfeiters" who express "instinctive uncleanliness *in psychologicis*" (EH III.CW.3). Nietzsche describes Leibniz's view that the soul is a monad as a form of "megalomania" where "the individual is made transcendent [so that] he can attribute a senseless importance to himself" (WP 765/KSA 13:15[30]) and even insists that we must "declare war – a ruthless fight to the finish – on […] the belief that the soul is something indestructible, eternal, indivisible, that it is a monad" (BGE 12). Similar to

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[24] Citations to Nietzsche's writings use abbreviations listed in the references following this chapter. Roman numerals indicate major divisions within works. Arabic numerals indicate section numbers.

his statements of acclaim, these scathing remarks range from Leibniz's influence to his account of the self. Nietzsche's view of Leibniz, it seems, verges upon the contradictory.

This ambivalence echoes in scholarship on this topic. Robin Small suggests that "it is quite possible that Nietzsche never read a word of Leibniz" (2001, xi), whereas Nikolaos Loukidelis and Christopher Brinkmann contend that "it would not be an exaggeration to say that […] Leibniz has been of great importance in shaping central Nietzschean ideas" (2015, 105). Scholarly treatments of Nietzsche's view of Leibniz's philosophy of mind are also fraught. Lanier Anderson argues that the contents of Nietzsche's unconscious "can be nothing other than [Leibniz's] *petites perceptions*" (2002: 108), whereas Paul Katsafanas maintains that "there is simply no textual support for the claim that Nietzsche's unconscious states are *petites perceptions*" (2005, 28 fn.25). Other points of comparison are similarly underdetermined.[25]

Perhaps this uncertainty is unsurprising, as interpretive controversies surround much of Nietzsche's work. A case in point is his analysis of the self-conscious subject. Although Nietzsche explains consciousness' operations in terms of unconscious drives, it is unclear how we can understand the various activities he attributes to drives – e.g., 'interpreting,' 'evaluating,' and even 'thinking' – without rendering drives as homunculi that replicate the self-conscious subject Nietzsche repudiates. Maybe Nietzsche's troubled view of Leibniz, and of Leibniz's understanding of the self, reflect inconsistencies internal to Nietzsche's account of self-consciousness.

In what follows, I reconstruct Nietzsche's reading of Leibniz with an eye toward uncovering its coherence. I argue that Nietzsche agrees with Leibniz regarding the existence and character of unconscious forces, but rejects Leibniz's view that such forces are capacities of a self

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[25] These include Leibniz's and Nietzsche's notions of perspectivism (cf. Nehamas [1985, 242 fn.5]; and Slenis [1999]), their attempts to justify suffering (cf. Han-Pile [2009, 228-29]; Came [2009, 41, 45]; and Janaway [2017]), their notions of force (cf. Poellner [1995, 277-78]; Loukidelis and Brinkmann [2015, 97-99]), and their metaphysics generally (cf. Nehamas [1985, 75]; Poellner [1995, 267]; Loukidelis and Brinkmann [2015, 99-101]).

that, strictly speaking, is a simple unity. Both of these aspects of Nietzsche's relation to Leibniz can be motivated by his attempt to provide a naturalist account of consciousness as developing to satisfy humans' physiological needs.[26] Naturalism leads Nietzsche to view consciousness as a phenomenon requiring explanation – and Leibniz's philosophy of mind is helpful in this regard. Nevertheless, naturalism also leads Nietzsche to deny Leibniz's monadic view of the self. His point is not merely that the existence of unconscious forces makes it *prima facie* implausible that the self is a simple unity. Rather, he thinks Leibniz's insight into the existence and nature of unconscious forces should make us skeptical about the veracity of consciousness' ideas – including our idea of ourselves as simple unities. Not only can we uncover the consistency of Nietzsche's Janus-faced view of Leibniz by attending to his naturalist account of consciousness as an emergent property of unconscious drives. We can also address worries about whether he understands drives as homunculi that flout his critique of the self-conscious subject.

3.1   Nietzsche's Knowledge of Leibniz

I will argue that Nietzsche agrees with Leibniz regarding the perceptive and appetitive character of unconscious forces, but disagrees with him about the self's unity and simplicity. These claims presume that Nietzsche thought seriously about Leibniz. However, if, as Small suggests, "it is quite possible that Nietzsche never read a word of Leibniz" (2001, xi), then there is reason to worry that my discussion is too speculative to merit consideration. Let's address this objection at the outset.

Pace Small, Nietzsche likely read Leibniz. His published works contain at least eleven references to Leibniz (PTAG 7; HH I.517; GS 354, 357; BGE 12, 207; GM III.7; A 10, 61; EH

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[26] At minimum, Nietzsche's naturalism prohibits appeals to supernatural explanations – including and especially appeals to God – and requires that philosophical theory isn't falsified by the results of natural science. While his naturalism may require more than this, these uncontroversial constraints suffice for my discussion.

III.CW.2-3). His notebooks contain more than 20 others (KSA 9:11[201]; 11:26[248, 285, 399], 2[6], 34[73, 82, 92, 116], 35[66], 36[32], 37[10], 38[14], 41[4], 42[3]; 12:7[4], 9[3, 180], 10[150]; 13:11[73 ,156, 201], 15[30]). One notebook entry faithfully quotes and cites Leibniz's *Theodicy* (KSA 12:7[4]). This leads Thomas Brobjer to conclude that Nietzsche read Leibniz around the time of writing the *Genealogy* and the second edition of *The Gay Science* (1997, 686). These works develop Nietzsche's mature account of the relation between consciousness and drives (e.g., GS 354; GM III.12).

Nietzsche also had extensive, indirect knowledge of Leibniz. In large part due to Christian Wolff, Leibniz exerted considerable influence in nineteenth-century Germany. It is difficult to believe that Nietzsche, who studied theology at Schulpforta and Bonn, and who was expected to become a Lutheran minister, had *no* familiarity with Leibniz. Beyond gleaning general points from his intellectual milieu, Nietzsche also studied secondary sources that engage Leibniz in a sustained fashion. I restrict speculation about how these sources might have informed Nietzsche's reading to footnotes below. Independent of such speculation, though, brief review of some of Nietzsche's influences establishes his second-hand knowledge of Leibniz.

Nietzsche owned and heavily annotated the complete works of Voltaire, to whom *Human, All Too Human* was dedicated. Voltaire's best-known work, *Candide,* lampoons Leibnizian optimism through the figure of Doctor Pangloss, leaving the reader with the sense that Leibniz's claim that this is the best possible world hovers between the callous and the absurd. Nietzsche also studied Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason,* which criticizes Leibniz on the grounds that he "*intellectualized* the appearances" (1998, A271/B327) and mistook them "for things in themselves" (A264/B320). Kant's critique of Leibniz is largely endorsed by Schopenhauer in *The World as Will and Representation,* which Nietzsche also studied closely. Schopenhauer maintains that while

Kant is right to rebuke Leibniz for intellectualizing appearances (1969, I.418-21, 38, 83, 473-7), Kant fails to correct this error because he overlooks appearances' ability to yield knowledge on their own (474). Nietzsche also attentively read Lange's *History of Materialism and Criticism of its Importance,* which devotes a chapter to defending Leibnizian idealism against German materialism (1886, II.124-35). Yet another source of Nietzsche's knowledge of Leibniz is Teichmüller's *On the Real and Apparent World,* which criticizes Leibniz for failing to develop an adequately transcendental notion of perspective on the grounds that Leibniz neglects the way space, time, and species' interests shape points of view (1882, 185, 206, 242, *passim*). Works by Drossbach, Leibmann, and others could be cited here as well, but Voltaire, Kant, Schopenhauer, Lange, and Teichmüller illustrate Nietzsche's extensive, if indirect, familiarity with Leibniz's philosophy.[27]

Ultimately, the strongest indication of whether Nietzsche thought carefully about Leibniz is the cogency of his comments about him. I hope to show that these merit consideration. But even if these comments merely show that Nietzsche understood Leibniz poorly, examining them can still illuminate *Nietzsche's* thinking. Setting aside a verdict for now, evidence of Nietzsche's direct and indirect knowledge of Leibniz suffices for our discussion to proceed.

[27] Despite doubting whether Nietzsche read Leibniz, Small agrees that he read "various contemporary authors who might reasonably be described as vulgar Leibnizians" (2001, xi-xii). Instead of focusing on Nietzsche's relationship to major figures from the history of philosophy, Small aims to promote scholarship on his lesser-known contemporaries. Notwithstanding this point's merit, I argue that attending to Nietzsche's reading of Leibniz is worthwhile.

3.2   Nietzsche's Agreement with Leibniz

3.2.1   Leibniz's Unconscious Perceptions and Appetites

In contrast with the Cartesians of his day, Leibniz argues that perception doesn't require consciousness. [28] According to his doctrine of *petites perceptions*, we have infinitely many perceptions at each moment, though most of them are insufficiently distinct or intense to enter consciousness (RB 53/G V.47).[29] Leibniz illustrates his view with the example of "the roaring noise of the sea which impresses itself on us when we are standing on the shore." To hear the ocean as a whole, "we must hear the parts which make up this whole," as "otherwise there would be no perception of a hundred thousand waves, since a hundred thousand nothings cannot make something" (RB 54/G V.47). From this, Leibniz infers that we perceive each wave's sound, though these perceptions go unnoticed unless attended to. The correlate of this notion of perception is Leibniz's notion of appetite. Appetites are "the internal strivings of simple substances, strivings by means of which they pass from perception to perception in accordance with a law of their nature" (AG 181/G II.275; see also AG 215/G VI.609). Leibniz's motivation for this notion of appetites derives from his view that the basic constituents of reality must be essentially active (AG 207/G VI.598) and simple (AG 213-14/G VI.607). As appetites are the tendency of one perception to give way to another, and as every substance has infinitely many perceptions at each moment, it follows that every substance has infinitely many appetites (Rutherford 1995, 137-8). The majority of appetites, like the majority of perceptions, are unconscious (RB 173-74/G V.158-59).[30]

Leibniz offers several arguments for the existence of *petites perceptions,* but I will focus on an *a priori* argument derived from his commitment to the principle of continuity. This principle

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[28] On Leibniz's break from the Cartesian view of the mind, see Simmons (2001).

[29] Citations to Leibniz use abbreviations listed in the references. Roman numerals indicate volumes; Arabic numerals indicate page numbers.

[30] For further discussion of unconscious appetites in Leibniz, see Kulstad and Carlin (2013).

holds that "any change from small to large, or vice versa, passes through something that is, in respect of degrees and as well as parts, in between" (RB 56/G V.49). The principle of continuity precludes Leibniz from explaining conscious perceptions as emerging *ex nihilo.* Conscious perceptions must result from gradual and continuous changes, such that they arise "by degrees from [perceptions] that are too minute to be noticed" (RB 57/G V.49). Leibniz's view that "all natural change is produced by degrees" thus gives him reason to posit unconscious perceptions (AG 214/G VI.608).

We can expand upon this account, and better appreciate Nietzsche's appropriation of it, by distinguishing perceptions and sensations. For Leibniz, perception is a kind of representation. Representation, in turn, requires an isomorphism between the representation and what it represents. That is, representation requires "a constant and fixed relation between what can be said of one and what can be said of another" (L 339/G II.112). *Perception* is a special kind of representation, where something complex is represented in something simple – viz. a substance (AG 207, 214/G VI.598, 608). *Sensations* are especially distinct perceptions (AG 208, 215/G VI.599, 619), which are more likely to be noticed by consciousness (AG 216/G VI.611; RB 53-55/G V.47-48). Now, by the principle of continuity, "anything that is noticeable must come from parts that are not: nothing, whether thought or motion, can come into existence suddenly" (RB 117/G V.107). Hence, Leibniz explains the increased distinctness of sensations by appealing to perceptions' size, number, and variance (RB 53/G V.47). Sensations, then, are comprised of *petites perceptions,* which are "vivid in the aggregate but confused as to the parts" (RB 55/G V.48). While not all *petites perceptions* are clear or distinct enough to be apprehended consciously, their aggregation can result in increased distinctness and intensity, such that they form sensations of which we become conscious.

Sensations do not suffice for consciousness, though.[31] Leibniz distinguishes perception in general from *apperception,* "which is *consciousness,* or the reflective knowledge of this internal state [i.e., of perception], something not given to all souls, nor at all times to a given soul" (AG 208/G VI.600). Consciousness can thus be understood as a second-order, reflective perception about first-order perceptions.[32] As for which perceptions are *apperceived,* these are sensations (AG 216/G VI.611; RB 53-55/G V.47-48). Since it is important for Nietzsche's agreement with Leibniz, it merits emphasizing that Leibniz holds that our apperception of sensations is *confused.* Sensations are literally complex, made up of infinitely many *petites perceptions*; yet consciousness apprehends sensations as simple. Leibniz offers the example of our apperception of fire, writing: "there are motions in the fire which the senses cannot clearly detect individually, but which form a confusion – a running together – which is brought within the reach of the senses and is represented to us by the idea of light" (RB 132/G V.119). He similarly describes how a cog, when rotated rapidly, is seen as smooth because consciousness confusedly runs together unconscious perceptions of its teeth (RB 403/G V.384). Generalizing the point: sensations, when apperceived, "appear simple because they are confused and thus do not provide the mind with any way of making discriminations within what they contain" (RB 120/G V.109). Although sensations are literally complex, consciousness apprehends them as simple. Leibniz doubts whether this limitation can be overcome introspectively. He suggests, for example, that even though "we now have a complete analysis of green into blue and yellow, [we remain…] quite unable to discern the ideas of blue and yellow within our sensory idea of green, simply because it is a confused idea."

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[31] On the relation between sensations and consciousness in Leibniz, see Jorgensen (2015).

[32] This rendering of Leibniz's notion of consciousness neglects his emphasis on memory as a feature of apperception (AG 208, 216/G VI.600, 611). The 'higher-order' interpretation of Leibniz's theory of consciousness is controversial for reasons beside this, though, as Jorgensen (2009) argues. Nonetheless, the 'higher-order' interpretation suffices for our discussion insofar as Nietzsche's departure from Leibniz primarily concerns the veracity of consciousness' ideas.

Apperceived sensations are *constitutively* confused, such that "it would never be in our power to recognize their causes sensorily, in our sensory ideas which are the confused effects of bodies acting on us" (RB 403/G V.384). Leibniz countenances ideas besides those that depend on sensations, as we will see. But before turning to that topic, let us consider Nietzsche's agreement with features of Leibniz's philosophy of mind as treated so far.

3.2.2 Nietzsche's Unconscious Drives

One of Nietzsche's overriding philosophical concerns is "to translate humanity back into nature, [… so that] the human being will stand before the human being, just as he already stands before the *rest* of nature today, hardened by the discipline of science" (BGE 230). This naturalist approach to human nature informs his analysis of consciousness and its significance. Whereas "people used to see consciousness, 'spirit', as proof that humanity is descended from something higher, that humanity is divine," Nietzsche thinks we avoid this error once "we have stuck humanity back among the animals" (A 14). Accordingly, he pursues an account of consciousness as "the latest development of the organic" (GS 11), which emerges to satisfy humans' physiological needs.

Nietzsche's naturalist account of human nature, and of consciousness in particular, leads him to study natural history and physiology, as these disciplines suggest why the human species may have developed consciousness for survival. Evidently, he considers Leibniz an indispensable forerunner in this context. Thus, in a central statement of his philosophy of mind, Nietzsche writes:

> The problem of consciousness (or rather, of becoming conscious of something) first confronts us when we begin to realize how much we can do without it; and now we are brought to this initial realization by physiology and natural history (which have thus required two hundred years to catch up with *Leibniz's* precocious suspicion). For we could think, feel, will, remember, and also 'act' in every sense of the term, and yet none of all this would have to 'enter our consciousness'. (GS 354)

The remainder of this passage advances an account of consciousness as emerging to satisfy humans' physiological needs.33 Setting this aside temporarily, we can observe Nietzsche's agreement with Leibniz's view. He describes Leibniz's suspicion regarding the extent of unconscious operations as "precocious," or, more literally, as 'flying ahead' (*vorausfliegenden*). The disciplines Leibniz flies ahead of – physiology and natural history – figure prominently and positively in Nietzsche's thinking, to the point that he calls his time prior to studying them "wasted" (EH III.HH.3). Further evidence that Nietzsche agrees with Leibniz's view of the unconscious occurs in GS 357, where he reflects on "real achievements in philosophical thinking that can be attributed to Germans." The first achievement he considers is

> *Leibniz's* incomparable insight that has been vindicated not only against Descartes but also against everyone who had philosophized before him – that consciousness (*Bewußtheit*) is merely an *accidens* of the power of representation (*Vorstellung*) and not its necessary and essential attribute; so that what we call consciousness (*Bewußtsein*) constitutes only one state of our spiritual and psychic world (perhaps a sick state) and *by no means the whole of it* – is there something German to this idea, the profundity of which has not been exhausted to this day?

Again, Nietzsche portrays Leibniz's account positively. Leibniz's insight is "incomparable" and "vindicated against everyone who philosophized before him" (more literally, is something he 'got right' [*Recht bekam*]). Not only is Leibniz's insight into unconscious representations profound, its profundity "has not been exhausted". Nietzsche describes the experience of learning from Leibniz in still more positive terms, writing, "we feel that something in ourselves has been 'uncovered'

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33 This feature of Nietzsche's account may have developed from his reading of Lange and Teichmüller. In his *History of Materialism,* Lange celebrates Leibniz's notion of monads as superior to materialist atoms because of their perceptive capacities (1866, 127). Nevertheless, Lange worries that Leibniz's *petites perceptions* provide fodder for materialist accounts of consciousness as continuous with other kinds of life (134-35). Teichmüller, in *On the Real and Apparent World,* worries that Leibniz neglects the ways space, time, and species' interests shape points of view and accordingly pursues a more transcendental notion of perspective (1882, 185, 206, 242, *passim*; see also Small 2001, 43-46; and Loukidelis and Brinkmann 2015, 102-03). GS 354 suggests that Nietzsche shares Lange and Teichmüller's characterizations of Leibniz, but differs in *valuing* what that they consider regrettable. Instead of revising Leibniz in favor of a more transcendental account, Nietzsche uses Leibniz's insight regarding unconscious perceptions and appetites to develop a naturalist account of consciousness.

and figured out, and we are grateful and at the same time surprised. [Leibniz's insight] is a thoughtful piece of German self-knowledge, self-experience, and self-conception." Admittedly, the tenor of GS 357 is critical, suggesting that Nietzsche's agreement with Leibniz is qualified. Nevertheless, GS 354 and 357 show that he applauds Leibniz's discovery of unconscious mental operations.

Nietzsche further agrees with Leibniz about the nature of unconscious forces. To appreciate this, consider Nietzsche's notion of drives. Drives can be understood as causes of dispositions in organisms toward behavior of some kind. A sex drive, for example, incites a disposition toward sexual activity, an aggressive drive incites a disposition toward aggressive activity, etc. The complement of drives is Nietzsche's notion of affects, which can be understood as the feeling of being under a drive's influence (Janaway 2007, 213-14).[34] Crucially, the majority of drives operate beneath the surface of consciousness. Nietzsche frequently appeals to drives as a means of explaining the contents of our conscious feelings, judgements, and actions. For example, he describes morality as "*a sign language of the affects*" (BGE 187; see also BGE 201; GS 116) and insists that, "Your judgement 'that is right' has a prehistory in your drives" (GS 335). He explains logical and metaphysical views in the same fashion, by uncovering drives operating beneath consciousness to determine its contents (BGE 3, 6, 9, 158). This explanatory strategy requires that drives are primarily unconscious. Nietzsche also holds that we become conscious only of "*superlative* degrees of these processes and drives," thereby suggesting that heightened intensity (D 115), and perhaps drives' "number and strength" (D 119), partially explains what makes some drives conscious.

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[34] In defense of this analysis of affects and drives, see footnote 51 below.

Drives are also perceptive and appetitive. Their perceptive capacity is entailed by Nietzsche's descriptions of drives as interpreting and evaluating. He states that, "a drive without some kind of knowing evaluation of the worth of its objective, does not exist" (HH I 32; see also KSA 12:1[58]) and holds that drives "do nothing but interpret nervous stimuli" (D 119; see also KSA 12:7[60]). Not all of drives' perceptions are sensed, however. Nietzsche holds that "we have senses for only a selection of perceptions – those with which we have to concern ourselves in order to preserve ourselves" (WP 505/KSA 12:2[95]). Coupled with their primarily unconscious character, drives' perceptive capacities entail that "consciousness is merely an *accidens* of the power of representation and not its necessary and essential attribute" (GS 357). That is, it amounts to agreement with Leibniz.35 Drives' appetitive nature can be seen in Nietzsche's claim that each drive "desires gratification – or the exercise of its strength, or the discharge of its strength, or the saturation of an emptiness" (D 119). If a drive is inhibited from pursuing its aim of expressing itself, this is because something hinders its activity – e.g., it lacks opportunity for expression, or other, more powerful drives dominate or sublimate it (D 109; BGE 189, 200). Nietzsche's view that "every drive craves mastery" over others further explains how some drives might become conscious (BGE 6). As functional adaptations, drives can enlist other drives to increase their intensity and potentially cross the threshold of consciousness. Insofar as drives adjust the pursuit

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35 This feature of Nietzsche's account suggests a partial divergence from that of Schopenhauer. While Schopenhauer admits the existence of unconscious impulses and wills, he further holds that "the will, considered purely in itself, is devoid of knowledge, and is only a blind, irresistible urge" (1969: I 275). The will, for Schopenhauer, lacks perception (139-52, 119-27). Although Nietzsche does not reject Schopenhauer's account of willing wholesale, he nevertheless seems more prepared than Schopenhauer to attribute perceptive and intellectual capacities to unconscious forces, which he at one point calls "the most intelligent type of intelligence so far" (BGE 218; see also KSA 11:37[4]). (On this contrast between Nietzsche and Schopenhauer, see Constáncio [2011].) To the extent that Nietzsche diverges from Schopenhauer here, his philosophy of mind aligns with Leibniz's.

of their aims in response to their perceptions, but without our being conscious of this, Nietzsche

agrees with Leibniz that we can think, will, and act without consciousness (GS 354).[36]

Like Leibniz, Nietzsche thinks that unconscious forces limit the power and accuracy of

conscious introspection. He refers to the introspective domain as "a strange simplification and

falsification" (BGE 24) and claims that "all becoming conscious involves a vast and thorough

corruption, falsification, superficialization, and generalization" (GS 354; see also KSA 12:2[204],

13:11[113], 14[152], 15[90]). Nietzsche distinguishes "the cause of acting," which is some

dominant drive, from "the cause of acting in a certain way […] with a certain goal," which is the

occasion for a dominant drive expressing itself, and suggests that we are typically conscious only

of the latter (GS 360). Nietzsche doubts whether introspection can overcome this opacity. A

representative passage reads: "However far a man may go in self-knowledge, nothing however can

be more incomplete than his image of the totality of *drives* which constitute his being" (D 119).

Not only does Nietzsche agree with Leibniz about the existence and nature of unconscious forces,

he shares Leibniz's reservations about the limits they entail for self-consciousness.

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[36] Responding to Anderson's claim that the contents of unconscious states, for Nietzsche, "can be none other than the *petites perceptions*" (2002, 108), Katsafanas argues that "there is simply no textual support for the claim that Nietzsche's unconscious states are *petites perceptions*." More specifically, Katsafanas notes that Nietzsche can agree about the *existence* of unconscious states without sharing Leibniz's views about their *character*. Considering how the other insights praised in GS 357 – i.e., Kant's restriction of causality to the phenomenal world and Hegel's developmental understanding of species concepts – are not accepted by Nietzsche wholesale, Katsafanas concludes, "In each case, [Nietzsche] is praising a general insight without accepting the particular ways in which the respective philosophers developed these insights" (2005, 28 fn.25). Katsafanas' points are well taken, but they need qualifying. First, there are noteworthy similarities between Leibniz and Nietzsche's understanding of the *nature* of unconscious operations. For both, unconscious forces are perceptive, end-directed, plural, continuous with consciousness, and hierarchically ordered. Even if we follow Katsafanas' not uncontroversial claim that consciousness, for Nietzsche, requires linguistically-articulated concepts, there are grounds for attributing this view to Leibniz too (RB 77/ G V.69-70; AG 271/G VII.191). Second, while Katsafanas is right that Nietzsche's praise of Leibniz is qualified, he doesn't specify this qualification. I argue below that it concerns the unity of the self-conscious subject and the veracity of conscious ideas more than the nature of unconscious forces.

3.3   Nietzsche's Disagreement with Leibniz

3.3.1   Leibniz on the Self's Simplicity

An abiding feature of Leibniz's philosophy is his view that the ultimate constituents of reality, or substances, must be genuine unities. This requires that substances be irreducibly simple. Expressing the point in a letter to Arnauld, he writes: "*where there are only beings by aggregation, there aren't any real beings.* For every being by aggregation presupposes beings endowed with real unity, because every being derives its reality only from the reality of those beings which it is composed" (AG 85/G II.96). From here it is a short distance to Leibniz's view that bodies cannot be the ultimate constituents of reality. Insofar as bodies are divisible aggregates, their reality must depend on genuinely simple and unified substances (AG 198-99/G II.435-36). While the criteria of unity and simplicity preclude bodies from being substances on their own, sometimes Leibniz suggests that bodies figure in composite substances. His correspondence with Des Bosses, for example, contrasts composite substances – which consist of a primitive active force, conferred by a soul, and a primitive passive force, i.e. a body (AG 205/G II.519) – with mere aggregates (AG 200, 203/G II.439, 517). The soul unites its body by providing the principle that actively sustains its organization. Leibniz restricts the scope of such composite substances "to living things alone, that is, to organic machines of nature" (AG 205-06/G II.520). Elsewhere, though, Leibniz *doesn't* firmly distinguish composite substances from aggregates. He seems to suggest that composite substances *are* aggregates when he writes, "a composite substance is a collection of simple substances" (AG 207/G VI.598), and "the composite is nothing more than a collection, or *aggregate*, of simples" (AG 213/G VI.607; see also AG 229/G VI.628). While Leibniz continues to describe organic bodies as unified by a soul's activity, he contrasts these organic, bodily unities with substances strictly speaking (AG 221, 207, 213-14/G VI.617-8, 598, 607-08). Such passages suggest that bodily composites are only substances in a derivative sense. Donald Rutherford

helpfully treats this ambiguity, arguing – persuasively, in my view – that Leibniz's considered

opinion is that bodies are aggregates that owe their apparent unity to souls' activity (1995).[37]

Although Leibniz is not as clear as one might like about the metaphysical status of bodies,

he is certain that *the self* is a substance. Responding to Arnauld's inquiry about what kind of unity

can be attributed to the Earth, the moon, and other corporeal bodies, Leibniz writes: "if I am asked

in particular what I say about [these] and other similar bodies, and even about beasts, I cannot be

absolutely certain whether they are animated, or even whether they are substances, or, indeed,

whether they are simply machines or aggregates of several substances." Nevertheless, the unity

and simplicity of *the self* remains unaffected. If bodies are not genuine substances, it only follows

that, "with the exception of man, there is nothing substantial in the visible world" (AG 80/G II.77).

If Leibniz's considered view is that there are no composite substances, and if he holds that the self

is a substance if anything is, then his considered view is that the self is *not* a composite but *only* a

soul that confers apparent unity on a body (AG 139-40, 144/G IV.478-79, 485).[38]

Leibniz's confidence that the self is a substance cannot be justified by our consciously

sensing ourselves as unified and simple, for he denies apperceived sensations' accuracy. To

appreciate his explanation of our knowledge of ourselves as simple unities, we should consider his

rationalist account of ideas. Ideas, for Leibniz, are mental dispositions activated under appropriate

circumstances (AG 58/G IV.451). In the case of *sensory* ideas, these circumstances concern

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[37] Part of Rutherford's argument is that Leibniz is not committed to the views he develops in the Des Bosses correspondence, as he merely aims to reconcile his metaphysics with Des Bosses' theological views (1995, 158-63). For discussion of how this view of the soul develops out of Leibniz's early and middle periods, see Mercer and Sleigh (1995).

[38] The fact that souls, strictly speaking, are not embodied does not entail that souls, strictly speaking, lack perceptions and appetites. For Leibniz, every simple substance is characterized by perception and appetite (AG 214-5/G VI 608-09). Granted, he further holds that every substance has a body comprised of an infinity of other substances, and that such bodies increase the clarity and distinctness of souls' perceptions (AG 208, 181/G VI.599, II.275). Nevertheless, souls do not *require* bodies for perceptions and appetites, as souls are more metaphysically primitive than embodiment.

sensations. But we also have ideas which are sensible *and intelligible* – e.g., geometrical ideas that can be applied to sensations but are not exhausted by them. We also have ideas that are *purely intelligible* and restricted to the understanding alone – e.g., logical and metaphysical ideas (AG 188/G VI.502).39 As for the origin of our ideas, Leibniz holds that they are innate in the mind. In the *Discourse on Metaphysics,* he appeals to Socrates' ability to cross-examine a boy until he arrives at abstract, geometrical truths as evidence that "our soul knows all these things virtually and requires only *attention* to recognize truths, and that, consequently, it has, at the very least, the ideas upon which these truths depend" (AG 58/G IV.452). Leibniz concludes from this example that *ideas* are innate and that we use these to deduce knowledge of *truths.* Later, in the *New Essays,* he is more confident about what such examples demonstrate. He writes: "although the senses are necessary for all our actual knowledge, they are not sufficient to provide it all, since they never give us anything but instances, that is particular or singular truths. But however many instances confirm a general truth, they do not suffice to establish its universal necessity" (RB 49/G V.43). For example, our knowledge of universal and necessary mathematical propositions cannot be justified by particular and contingent sensory ideas. From this, Leibniz concludes that "necessary truths, such as we find in pure mathematics […] must have principles whose proof does not depend on instances nor, consequently, on the testimony of the senses […] and so the proof of them can only come from inner principles, which are described as innate" (RB 50/G V.43). Whereas the argument from the *Discourse* concerns the *psychological origin* of mathematical ideas, the argument from the *New Essays* concerns mathematical ideas' *justificatory* force; here, Leibniz concludes that innate ideas provide proof of necessary *truths.*40 As for why innate ideas should

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39 For a discussion of Leibniz's taxonomy of ideas, including how they relate to our idea of the self, see McRae (1995).
40 This reading of the relationship between Leibniz's arguments in the *Discourse* and the *New Essays* is defended by Jolley (2005, 109-112).

justify propositions, Leibniz would likely appeal to "that Supreme and Universal Mind […] where [we] find the pattern for the ideas and truths which are engraved in our souls" (RB 447/G V.429). Due to the isomorphic relation between humans' minds and God's, "when God displays a truth to us, we come to possess the truth which is in his understanding," albeit imperfectly (RB 397/G V.378). The justification licensed by innate ideas follows from the way human minds mirror God's mind.[41]

Chief among the purely intellectual ideas inscribed on our minds by God is the idea we have of ourselves as simple unities. The centrality of this idea can be seen in the way Leibniz often refers to it as the model for our idea of substance generally. He tells Arnauld, for example, that "a substantial unity requires a thoroughly indivisible and naturally indestructible being, […] something which can be found neither in shape nor in motion […] but which can be found in a soul or substantial form, on the model of what is called *me*" (AG 79/G II.76). A letter to Queen Sophie similarly reads: "since I conceive that other beings can also have the right to say 'I,' or that it can be said for them, it is through this that I conceive of what is called *substance* in general." Leibniz goes on to claim that "it is also consideration of myself that provides me with other notions of *metaphysics*" (AG 188/G VI.502). The derivation of metaphysical notions from our self-understanding is not limited to private correspondences. In the *Discourse on Metaphysics*, Leibniz contrasts animals' souls with rational souls, writing: "the principle difference is that [animals] do not know what they are nor what they do, and consequently, since they do not reflect on themselves, they cannot discover necessary and universal truths" (AG 65/G IV.459). Likewise, the *New System* contends that the nature of substantial forms "consists in force, and […] from this there follows something analogous to sensation and appetite, so that we must conceive of [substantial forms] on

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[41] This feature of Leibniz's epistemology is also emphasized by Loemkr (1946) and Jolley (2005, 112).

the model of the notion we have of *souls*" and that, "these forms and souls must be indivisible, as our mind is" (AG 139/G IV.479). The *Monadology* also suggests metaphysical knowledge follows from knowledge of ourselves: "in thinking of ourselves, we think of being, of substance, of the simple and of the composite, of the immaterial and of God himself, by conceiving that that which is limited in us is limitless in him" (AG 217/G VI.612). Epistemologically, our purely intellectual idea of the self provides the paradigm for our idea of substance.

3.3.2   Nietzsche on the Self's Complexity

Before considering Nietzsche's wider departure from Leibniz's epistemology, I will focus on one particular idea he considers misleading – namely, our idea of ourselves as simple unities. This idea merits isolating because it occupies pride of place in Leibniz's metaphysics and because Nietzsche's objection to it can be divorced from his more general account of idea-formation.

Nietzsche's naturalism requires that philosophy be consistent with the results of natural science. Leibniz is also a naturalist in this sense, as reflected by his hypothesizing a pre-established harmony between the order of efficient causes and that of final causes, between the kingdom of nature and that of grace (AG 223-24/G VI.620-22).[42] Nevertheless, Nietzsche's naturalism differs from Leibniz's in prohibiting appeals to supernatural explanations – including and especially God. This refusal of divine explanations carries consequences for Nietzsche's understanding of human nature. Expressing the point in a series of rhetorical questions, he asks: "When will all these shadows of God no longer darken us? When will we have completely de-deified nature? When may we begin to *naturalize* humanity with a pure, newly discovered, newly redeemed nature?" (GS 109). In particular, and as we've seen, naturalism leads Nietzsche to investigate the origin and

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[42] The pressure Leibniz feels to make his metaphysics consonant with natural science is emphasized by Savile (2000, 23, 216-19, 224-25).

significance of human consciousness. He considers it a "ridiculous overestimation and misapprehension of consciousness" that "one thinks it constitutes the *kernel* of man, what is abiding, eternal, ultimate, most original in him! [… or] sees it as 'the unity of the organism'!" – though he admits that this error is "very useful" (GS 11). To unpack this further, let us consider Nietzsche's views about the self and self-consciousness.

In keeping with his naturalism, Nietzsche considers the embodied character of the self non-negotiable. Zarathustra claims that only children say "Body am I and soul," whereas "the knowing one says: Body am I through and through, and nothing besides, and soul is just a word for something about the body".43 Zarathustra doesn't deny humans' spiritual life, but merely its priority: "what you call 'spirit' is also a tool of your body", such that "behind your thoughts and feelings […] stands a powerful commander, an unknown wise man – he is called self. He lives in your body, he is your body" (Z I.4). The embodied character of the self is also presupposed by Nietzsche's repeated explanation of moral and metaphysical views in terms of their proponents' physiological conditions (D 542; 48, 120; BGE 208, 58; TI IX.37). Even if Leibniz understands the self as a composite of soul *and* body, the contrast remains. For Nietzsche, the self *is* the body.

Nietzsche also insists that the self is neither unified nor simple.44 After commending Boscovich for replacing materialist atoms with a notion of force, he urges: "we must also put an end to that other and more disastrous form of atomism, the one Christianity has taught best and longest, the *atomism of the soul.* Let this expression signify the belief that the soul is something indestructible, eternal, indivisible, that it is a monad" (BGE 12; see also KSA 11:34[74]; 13:11[73]). Nietzsche considers such spiritual atomism widespread. Behind "'immediate

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43 Translation amended.

44 While he values the unity exhibited by exceptional individuals, Nietzsche considers such unification a rare achievement – not a default condition. He also tends to describe such unity in *aesthetic* terms that contrast with Leibniz's emphasis on *metaphysical* unity.

certainties,' such as 'I think,'" are atomist presuppositions about the existence of the 'I', and about the nature of thinking as an effect requiring the self as a cause (BGE 16). In general, atomism lies in the tendency to look "behind every 'force' that produces effects for that little lump […] in which the force resides, and out of which the effects are produced" (BGE 17). Repudiating spiritual atomism precludes understanding the soul as a monad, but it doesn't require complete abandonment of this idea. After declaring war on the monadic view of the self, Nietzsche entertains "new versions and sophistications of the soul hypothesis – concepts like the 'mortal soul' and the 'soul as subject-multiplicity' and the 'soul as a society constructed out of drives and affects'" (BGE 12). Unlike Leibniz, Nietzsche leaves room for understanding the soul as a complex of drives (GS 113).

Given our tendency to understand the self as a simple unity, Nietzsche owes some explanation for why we overlook the self's complexity. An initial explanation is his suggestion that we only become conscious of superlative degrees of our drives (D 115). While drives interact in complex ways, Nietzsche further claims that consciousness retroactively identifies with whatever drive emerges from these interactions as the strongest (D 109). The self-conscious subject calls this dominant drive its *will* (BGE 19). This *ex post facto* identification with dominant drives also explains why consciousness mistakes the self for a simple unity. But Nietzsche adds another layer to this explanation by claiming that language systematically misleads us into positing a 'doer' behind all 'deeds,' when in fact "there is no such substratum; there is no 'being' behind the doing" (GM I.13; see also BGE 16, 34; KSA 13:11[113]). Indo-Germanic languages' requirement that all verbs be accompanied by a subject encourages us to understand the self as a substratum independent of activity. But just as it is misleading to say 'lightning flashes' (for the lightning *is* the flashing), it is misleading to say that 'the self acts' (GM I.13). The self's apparent

unity and simplicity is thus partly explained by consciousness' superficiality, partly by consciousness' tendency to retroactively identify with dominant drives, and partly by our tendency to imbue grammatical conventions with metaphysical weight.

These explanations mutually reinforcing – and they can be traced back to the way consciousness emerges to satisfy humans' physiological needs. On Nietzsche's naturalist account, "*consciousness in general has developed only under the pressure of the need to communicate*," such that "thinking which becomes *conscious* […] *takes place in words*." Early humans faced environmental challenges they could not meet individually; survival necessitated cooperation. Nietzsche hypothesizes that such cooperation requires the ability to communicate, which, in turn, requires that individuals become conscious of their needs. This story bolsters the claim that language shapes consciousness' view of the self and it adds a social element to Nietzsche's explanation of why we mistake the self for a simple unity. If consciousness "was necessary, was useful, only between persons [… and] developed only in proportion to that usefulness," then consciousness, like language, is shaped by social considerations (GS 354). Nietzsche can thus appeal to social norms as further explanation for why we mistake the self for a simple unity. Insofar as the view of the self of as a substratum is required for moral responsibility (GM I.13), social conventions such as morality reinforce our understanding of the self as a simple unity so as to regulate individuals' behavior.

Like Leibniz, Nietzsche thinks much metaphysics derives from our view of the self as a substance. But unlike Leibniz, he denies that the antecedent condition for these metaphysical notions is met. Rejecting the view of the self as a substance therefore leads Nietzsche to be skeptical of metaphysical notions dependent on it. A characteristic passage claims that philosophers "took the concept of being from the concept of the I, they posited 'things' as beings

in their own image, on the basis of their concept of the I as a cause" (TI VI.3). We have already uncovered a source of this misstep. On Nietzsche's view, "Language began at a time when psychology was in its most rudimentary form," such that "we enter into a crudely fetishistic mindset" when we take language's metaphysical presuppositions at face-value, including the belief in "the I as substance," which language "*projects*" onto reality (TI III.5). Nietzsche's notebooks are also explicit about this: "the concept of substance is a consequence of the concept of the subject: not the reverse! If we relinquish the soul, 'the subject,' the precondition for 'substance' in general disappears" (WP 485/KSA 12:10[19]; see also KSA 12:9[98]). Nietzsche explains our ideas of atoms, of things-in-themselves, and of God in parallel fashion (TI VI.3; KSA 12:14[186]). In each case, we speciously infer the existence of some unity *prior to* and *independent of* activity, when, in fact, *there is only activity.* Nietzsche's account of the self as a complex of interacting forces is thus less localized than it might seem. It leads him to audit metaphysical notions which he considers epistemologically dependent upon it – including our notions of substance and God.

Having identified a primary source of disagreement with Leibniz, we may reconstruct an objection on Nietzsche's behalf. One form this objection could take begins with the embodied character of the self. Coupled with Leibniz's view that the essence of bodies is extension and aggregation, the self's embodiment entails its complexity. Whereas Leibniz might recast this *modus ponens* as a *modus tollens* to the effect that the self cannot be a body due to its simplicity, Nietzsche's confidence in the self's embodiment urges against this move. Another form that Nietzsche's objection might take concerns the origin and justification of our belief that the self is a substance. As we saw, Leibniz cannot explain or justify this belief on the basis of sensations, as he considers sensory ideas confused. He accordingly claims that our idea of ourselves as simple unities is *purely intellectual* and explains its origin and unassailability by appealing to God.

Nietzsche cannot accept this account, as his naturalism prohibits divine explanations. Indeed, he would likely find such an explanation circular. For the justification of our belief that the self is a simple unity is secured by its being God-given (AG 188/G VI.502) – and yet our belief in God depends on our knowledge of ourselves as substances (AG 217/G VI.612). Nietzsche's naturalist account, by contrast, explains the belief in God as a projection of the belief that the self is a substance, which, in turn, is explained by its usefulness – e.g., because it simplifies experience, facilitates communication, and promotes social accountability.[45]

3.4   Nietzsche's Naturalist Account of Ideas

3.4.1   Nietzsche's Critique of 'Idealism'

Nietzsche's naturalism leads him to explain consciousness as emerging to satisfy humans' physiological needs. While this suggests that consciousness is generally useful for promoting human survival, it does not entail that consciousness' conceptualizations are *true*. Consciousness' idea of the self as a substance, for example, simplifies experience, facilitates communication, and enables social accountability – yet, for all that, Nietzsche considers this view mistaken. Nietzsche's naturalism implicates ideas besides this, though. When he claims that "lack of historical sense is the family failing of all philosophers," he goes on to emphasize that human reasoning develops under naturalistic pressures, that "the faculty of cognition has become" (HH I.2). Upon realizing this, Nietzsche becomes skeptical of whether consciousness' ideas answer to demands of unconscious needs rather than demands of veracity.

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[45] Another possible advantage of his account concerns perception. Recall that Leibniz defines perception as the representation of something simple in something complex. This is puzzling; it isn't obvious how something simple might permit the modifications necessary to isomorphically track something complex. If we are uncomfortable here, this discomfort grows – infinitely – when Leibniz adds that the self is *irreducibly simple* and that it houses *infinitely many* perceptions. Nietzsche's view of the self as complex mitigates this difficulty.

Nietzsche calls the tendency to trust ideas based on their apparent clarity to consciousness *idealism.* While he rejects idealism throughout his writing (HH II.344-5; D 328; BGE 15, 39, 131; EH P.2-3), he is not always clear about what he takes idealism to entail or why he considers it objectionable. An exception to this is GS 372. Entitled "*Why we are not idealists,"* the passage claims that idealists hold that (some) ideas are independent of the senses, independent of the body, and more warranted than the deliverances of the senses. This suggests that what Nietzsche calls *idealism* in GS 372 is closer to what is commonly called *rationalism* – i.e., an epistemological position holding that (some) ideas do not depend on sense experience and that they are more warranted as a result.46 Leibniz's account of innate ideas fits this description. Nietzsche rejects this epistemological picture, insisting that, "they [ideas] always lived off of the 'blood' of the philosopher; they always drained his senses and even, if you believe it, his 'heart'" and that "*ideas are worse seductresses than the senses.*" Because idealism overestimates consciousness' veracity and ignores the body, Nietzsche considers it "something like an illness" resulting from weak senses and an overly powerful consciousness (GS 372). It benefits our discussion to reconstruct Nietzsche's reasoning here – as it clarifies his naturalist account of concept-formation and because his primary complaint against Leibniz concerns idealism.47

For Nietzsche, concepts are "more or less determinate pictorial signs for sensations that occur together and recur frequently" (BGE 268). While sensory experiences are singular (GS 354), our concepts emphasize what is common among them (GS 355). This applies to concepts about affective sensations, as when we conceptualize a complex emotional experience as <sadness>, as

46 This is also suggested by the way Nietzsche calls Plato and Spinoza (GS 372), as well as Leibniz and Kant (EH III.CW.2), idealists, despite divergences in their metaphysics.

47 Hereafter, I use 'concept,' in place of 'idea.' This doesn't affect Nietzsche's argument, as both he and Leibniz use 'idea' and 'concept' interchangeably to refer to the building blocks of thought. I use 'concept' instead of 'idea' because it more clearly suggests mental objects more primitive than propositions.

much as to concepts about visual sensations, as when we conceptualize a one-of-a-kind redwood under the concept <tree> (BGE 192). Concepts' abstraction from, and simplification of, sensations follows from their communicative function (BGE 268; GS 354). Maximally detailed concepts wouldn't facilitate communication or survival. Concepts depend upon sensations, then, because they are simplifications of sense experiences. In contrast with Leibniz, who appeals to innate ideas to sidestep the constitutively confused character of sensations, Nietzsche views concepts as abstractions from sensations, with the result that concepts are still further simplifications of perceptions.

Concepts' dependence on the body follows from Nietzsche's view that sense organs produce sensations, abstraction from which yields concepts. Responding to neo-Kantians such as Lange, who argue that physiology demonstrates our inability to know whether anything exists independent of sense organs' operations, Nietzsche writes: "To study physiology with a good conscience, we must insist that the sense organs are *not* appearances in the way that idealist philosophy uses that term: as such they certainly could not be causes!" Since appearances, as the contents of mental states, cannot be causally efficacious, they cannot explain their own emergence.48 The alternative account is circular: "other people even say that the external world is the product of our sense organs? But then our body, as a piece of this external world would really be the product of our sense organs. But then our organs themselves would really be – the product of our organs!" (BGE 15). Nietzsche concludes from this that sense organs' interaction with the

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48 This argument needn't contradict Nietzsche's indictment of atomism, as the notion of causality at work can be modeled on essentially relational *machquanta* rather than discrete causes and effects. This reading of BGE 15 is offered by Riccardi (2013, 226-29), who argues that Drossbach is likely the source of Nietzsche's view on this matter, though Drossbach's neo-Leibnizian account posits power-*substances* where Nietzsche posits *mach-quanta*. This analysis of BGE 15 also doesn't require attribution of an epiphenomenalist understanding of consciousness to Nietzsche, as the claim that appearances 'in the way that idealist philosophy uses that term' cannot be causally efficacious leaves open whether consciousness is such an appearance.

environment produces sensations (see also D 117). As concepts are simplified sensations, which require sense organs, concepts depend on the body.

This account of concepts as simplifications of sensations provides some justification for claiming that concepts are *less accurate* than sensations. But when Nietzsche claims that the senses "do not lie at all, what we *do* with the testimony of the senses, that is where the lies begin" (TI III.2), we might ask: why does simplification amount to *lying*? The answer turns on Nietzsche's view that the criteria that determine what sensations are retained or neglected in concept-formation is a reflection of our drives. The same sensory experience (say, overhearing laughter) is conceptualized differently under the influence of one drive (say, an aggressive drive) as opposed to another (say, a drive for acceptance). Nietzsche holds that all knowledge is interest-dependent because drives are *determinative of* concept-formation (GM III.12; GS 374). However, the superficial nature of consciousness leads us to systematically overlook the role of unconscious drives in concept-formation. Concepts are misleading, then, *insofar as* we mistake the processes that shape them for objective properties of salience among sensations – as though they mirror God's mind – and deny their partiality.

The final rebuke advanced in GS 372 is that idealism is "like an illness." Before reconstructing Nietzsche's reasoning here, it is worth asking what motivates this additional claim. Isn't it enough that idealists' overestimate their conceptual schemes' scope of application? For Nietzsche, this doesn't suffice to warrant a rejection of idealism. While he insists that "there is no pre-established harmony between the furtherance of truth and the well-being of mankind" (HH I.517) and that "something could be true even if it is harmful and dangerous to the highest degree" (BGE 39; see also BGE 2), he also insists that *when* truths conflict with human well-being, we ought to prioritize the latter. "We do not consider the falsity of a judgement as itself an objection

to a judgement; […] The question is how far the judgement promotes and preserves life" (BGE 4). This isn't to suggest that Nietzsche is entirely unconcerned with truth or that he accords it no value. He claims, for example, that "the strength of a spirit would be proportionate to how much of the 'truth' he could withstand" (BGE 39; see also GS 110; EH P.3, IV.5). Nevertheless, he rejects the view that truth is *unconditionally* valuable as a moral prejudice (GS 344). Hence, his rejection of idealism requires – not only that idealists overestimate the scope that their concepts enjoy, but also – that idealism is *harmful.*

For Nietzsche, a healthy individual experiences conflict among drives as "a stimulus and goad to life," such that "proficiency and finesse in waging war with himself […] are inherited and cultivated along with his most powerful and irreconcilable drives." By contrast, an unhealthy individual's "most basic desire is for an end to the war that he *is,*" is "lack of disturbance" (BGE 200). It seems plausible that all individuals have an organic interest in cultivating unity among their drives, but this pursuit can take different forms. Healthy individuals seek "to be just as multiple as whole, just as wide as full," whereas unhealthy individuals seek unity by eliminating conflict among their drives (BGE 212; see also TI IX.49; KSA 11:27[59]). Combined with Nietzsche's view of drives as determinative of concept-formation, this suggests that healthy individuals' cultivation of conflicting drives makes them more likely to employ conflicting conceptual schemes over time, with the result that they are more likely to realize that knowledge is interest-dependent. Thus, Nietzsche associates health with skepticism (GS 297; BGE 41, 44, 202, 212, 284; A 54). Conversely, unhealthy individuals aim to *eliminate* conflict among their drives, with the result that they likely to employ fewer conceptual schemes over time. This makes them more likely to deny that knowledge is interest-dependent and to mistake one conceptual scheme for the essence of things. That is, it makes unhealthy individuals more prone to idealism.

This is still not enough to bear the full weight of Nietzsche's attack, though. While idealism may be *symptomatic* of illness, this merely makes idealists *unfortunate*, whereas Nietzsche often describes idealists as *pernicious*. To justify this stronger claim, consider what follows from idealists' conflation of their particular conceptual schemes with *the* truth. This conflation allows idealists to avoid taking responsibility for the way their drives determine the conceptual schemes they employ. Nietzsche considers this "*cowardice*" and evidence of a lack of intellectual "cleanliness" (EH P.3). Unlike idealists, "*true philosophers are commanders and legislators*" who are aware that "their 'knowing' is *creating*" (BGE 211). The conflation of a particular conceptual scheme with the essence of things also allows idealists to convince *others* to adopt their conceptual paradigms. This can harm healthy individuals, leading them to adopt a single conceptual scheme to the detriment of their ability to express and cultivate conflicting drives. To sharpen the point, consider an idealist approach to normative concepts. Idealists will conflate a particular conceptualization of goodness with goodness *itself*, resulting in a form of moral idealism whereby one understanding of goodness is applied universally. Nietzsche rejects such universal moral prescriptions as harmful to individuals with varied constitutions (e.g., GS 335; BGE 31, 154). Without expounding this feature of Nietzsche's philosophy further, we can appreciate his vehement reproach of idealists. Idealism is not merely *symptomatic* of illness. It is *contagious*, causing sickness that harms healthy individuals' strongest instincts (EH P.2).

3.4.2   Nietzsche's Critique of Leibniz's 'Idealism'

We can now appreciate those passages where Nietzsche criticizes Leibniz *en passant* for his idealism. These passages describe Leibniz as sick and unclean, as cowardly, dishonest, and lacking integrity (A 10, 61; EH III.CW.2-3). While these might seem like vitriolic *ad hominem* attacks, they become more substantial when read with GS 372 in mind. Leibniz's idealism is "sick" in that

it is symptomatic of stagnation and homogeneity among drives, resulting in an overestimation of

the veracity of consciousness' ideas. He is "unclean" and even "cowardly" in failing to interrogate

the way unconscious forces shape the ideas central to his philosophical system. Whereas Nietzsche

associates "intellectual integrity" (A 12) and "courage of conscience" (BGE 5) with the willingness

to question the motivations behind our beliefs, he takes naïve confidence in consciousness'

concepts to reflect a lack of courage, honesty, and integrity (HH I.483; A 55; EH P.3).

Part of these overlapping passages merits isolating, as it nicely captures Nietzsche's view

of Leibniz. He writes:

> There is no doubt about it, Germans are idealists. – Twice already, just when an
> honest, unequivocal, perfectly scientific way of thinking had been achieved, and
> with incredible courage and self-overcoming, the Germans knew how to find a
> secret path back to the old 'ideal', ways of reconciling truth and the 'ideal',
> basically formulas for a right to reject science, a right to *lie*. Leibniz and Kant –
> these two great bumps in the path to Europe's sense of intellectual integrity! (EH
> III.CW.2)

Elsewhere, Nietzsche describes Kant's path back to idealism. Kant, "like Leibniz, is one more drag

on an already precarious German sense of integrity" because his critical project provides "a hidden

path to the old ideal […wherein] the concept of a '*true* world,' the concept of morality as the

essence of the world […] were once again (thanks to an exceedingly uncanny skepticism) if not

provable, then at least no longer *refutable*" (A 10). In short, Kant's path back to idealism consists

in using his critical project to bolster theism, in claiming that he "had to deny knowledge to make

room for faith" (Kant 1998: Bxxx). Leibniz's path back to idealism is less clear, but the foregoing

discussion allows us to venture a good guess. Notwithstanding his insight into the multiplicity of

forces that subtend consciousness and into the questions these raise regarding introspection's

reliability, Leibniz shrinks from becoming skeptical of consciousness' ideas generally. [49] He remains especially confident in our idea of the *self* as a substance – to the point that he doubts the self's embodiment.

If this were the full extent of Nietzsche's disagreement with Leibniz, it would, I think, suffice for a powerful objection. The argument for innate concepts likely seems weak if it begins by assuming some controversial metaphysical proposition is true – e.g., that the self is distinct from the body, or that God exists – and then explains our alleged knowledge of this controversial proposition by inferring the innateness of some metaphysical concept – e.g., the immaterial soul, or God. Nietzsche provides an alternative, naturalist account of such metaphysical concepts, on which the human species is served by the superficial character of consciousness, which leads us to mistake the self for a simple unity. This misleading conceptualization is then projected onto nature in the concept of substance and made superlative in the concept of God. While this requires that Nietzsche deny that the relevant metaphysical propositions are, in fact, known, his naturalist account might better accord with our intuitions regarding the self's embodiment and be less prone to charges of circular justification.

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[49] This criticism of Leibniz may have developed out of Nietzsche's engagement with Kant and Schopenhauer. In his *Inaugural Dissertation,* Kant argues against Leibniz's purely relational understanding of space on the grounds that it cannot explain differences among incongruent counterparts, e.g., one's left and right hand. From this, Kant concludes that conceptual relations and intuitions must be distinct. The first *Critique* expresses this by claiming that "thoughts without concepts are empty, [and] intuitions without concepts are blind" (Kant 1998, A264/B320). Kant thus rebukes Leibniz for failing to distinguish concepts and intuitions, or for intellectualizing appearances and conflating them with things-in-themselves (B322, A270/B326). Schopenhauer accepts this critique of Leibniz (1969, I.418-21, 38, 84, 473-7), but charges Kant with failing to notice that intuitions on their own yield knowledge. While Leibniz is guilty of "having made everything into abstract representations," Kant makes the mistake of "having mixed up the perceptible and the abstract to such an extent that a monstrous hybrid of the two resulted" (474). Ultimately, "Kant's great mistake [is] that he did not properly separate knowledge of perception from abstract knowledge" (464). Nietzsche seems to agree with these criticisms of Leibniz. In EH III.CW.2, for example, he charges – not that Kant is *wrong* about Leibniz, but – that Kant is more like Leibniz than he realizes. Similarly, Nietzsche's view that sensations are closer to reality than ideas suggests agreement with Schopenhauer regarding perceptual knowledge. Nevertheless, Nietzsche breaks with Kant and Schopenhauer, rejecting the notion of the thing-in-itself (BGE 16) and Schopenhauer's "indemonstrable doctrine of *One Will*" (GS 99; see also GS 127). By Nietzsche's lights, the proper reply to Leibniz's idealism is not a *transcendental* form of idealism that appeals to some noumenal realm, but a naturalized account of the self-conscious subject.

The merits of this objection notwithstanding, we have since uncovered a broader source of disagreement that reveals that Nietzsche's indictment of epistemological idealism *isn't* restricted to controversial metaphysical concepts. Following his naturalism, Nietzsche holds that *all of our concepts* originate in the way organic needs lead us to abstract from sense experience. Such an expanded, naturalist account of concept-formation faces additional explanatory burdens, though. Setting aside metaphysical controversies, many logical and mathematical propositions are considered mundane cases of knowledge. Insofar as the universality and necessity of such propositions outstrips the justification afforded by sense experience, our knowledge of them might lead us to infer that logical and mathematical concepts are innate. A naturalist explanation of these concepts is needed to support Nietzsche's broader disagreement with Leibniz.

As with consciousness' conceptualization of the self as a substance, Nietzsche explains the alleged cases of knowledge, as well as the concepts they presuppose, by showing how they are species-preserving – but while denying that, speaking in all rigor, the relevant propositions are true. He gives the example of early human ancestors who adhered to something like Leibniz's Law "with regard to nourishment and hostile animals" – and promptly perished because they were too discerning of differences among things, because they "did not know how to find 'identity' often enough." By contrast, those who "in all cases of similarity immediately guessed that they [food and predators] were identical" were more likely to survive. Conflation of the similar with the identical is species-preserving and this "is what first supplied the foundations of all logic." Strictly speaking, though, the concept of identity doesn't correlate with sense experience; "there is nothing identical as such" (GS 111). Nietzsche explains mathematical concepts in a similar fashion, holding that "without a constant falsification of the world through numbers, people could not live" (BGE 4). This is not to deny the usefulness of logical and mathematical concepts, but precisely the

opposite. Nevertheless, if logical and mathematical propositions can be considered universal and necessary, this is because human cognition succeeds in abstracting from all sensory experiences when forming logical and mathematical concepts. The universality and necessity of such propositions hinges on "our human relation to things" (GS 246).

Although it may seem similar to transcendental idealism, this account remains naturalist. Nietzsche holds that "through immense periods of time, the intellect produced nothing but errors; some of them turned out to be useful and species-preserving," with the result that "such erroneous articles of faith, […] were passed on by inheritance further and further, and finally became part of the basic endowment of the species." Concepts that *seem* to be innate are neither God-given nor transcendental. They are hard-won achievements produced by humans' response to naturalistic pressures exerted over millennia. Nietzsche can thus avoid claiming that the mind is a *tabula rasa,* and can capture much of the intuition behind the view that some concepts are innate, by holding that some concepts become more deeply embedded in human cognition insofar as they promote and preserve the species over vast expanses of time. This is the meaning behind his otherwise puzzling claim that "the *strength* of knowledge lies not in its degree of truth, but in its age, its embeddedness, its character as a condition of life" (GS 110).

Even if Nietzsche can support his broader disagreement with Leibniz regarding the origin of non-metaphysical concepts, it likely seems as though someone sympathetic to Leibniz has no reason to seriously consider this alternative account. To uncover a benefit of Nietzsche's naturalist understanding of consciousness and concept-formation, let us return to the principle of continuity. Adherence to this principle leads Leibniz to explain the emergence of conscious sensations as continuous with unconscious perceptions that grow in intensity and distinctness. Sensory ideas are then explained by our conceptualization of such apperceived sensations. But what about the other

items that populate Leibniz's philosophy of mind and his epistemology? Whence *rational reflection*, or *reason,* and the intellectual ideas it employs? Although Leibniz entertains the panorganicist hypothesis that the world is infused with life, with ensouled organisms permeating the smallest parts of nature, he also emphasizes that not all souls have reason and its purely intellectual ideas. These are distinctive features of *rational souls,* which makes them more like their creator than other creatures (AG 209, 217/G VI.600-01, 611-12). Despite insisting that "nature never makes leaps" (RB 56/G V.49), Leibniz seems to require such a leap in the case of rational souls. Rational minds are afforded with powers and ideas that are different *in kind* from the sensations and sensory ideas possessed by all ensouled creatures. Nietzsche's naturalist account, I submit, adheres more strictly to the principle of continuity. He holds that reflective reasoning is continuous with the rest of human physiology, which, in turn, develops from the rest of organic life, with intellectual ideas developing from our sensations. This is no small benefit for philosophers committed to naturalism. But the cost of this view of human cognition is that we are more opaque to ourselves and less sure of our knowledge than we thought.

3.5   Homuncular Worries

Nietzsche explains the self-conscious subject by reducing its various activities to unconscious drives. Our conscious feelings, thoughts, and judgements, are explained by drives' "evaluations" (HH I.32), "interpretations" (D 119), "perspectives" (KSA 12:1[58]), and claims to "mastery" (BGE 6). Yet it is difficult to see how drives carry out such activities without *some* degree of consciousness, however nascent. Chris Janaway expresses this worry, asking: "if each of the sub-personal elements of the self (whatever they are called) wants mastery, strives, interprets, and grasps something of reality, is not each of them just a miniature subject?" (2007, 216). This presents problems for Nietzsche's account. If drives are a kind of homunculi, then it seems that

drives replicate the self-conscious subject that Nietzsche criticizes. In addition to threatening the consistency of his account, this threatens to make drives explanatorily otiose. We might respond to this problem by insisting that drives are *radically* different from the self-conscious subject, but then we are confronted by another problem. For the more different drives are from the self-conscious subject, the harder it is to see how they can explain the operations conventionally attributed to consciousness.

Nietzsche's engagement with Leibniz is helpful here. His *disagreement* with Leibniz clarifies what he rejects in the traditional understanding of the self – namely, the unity and simplicity of the self as represented by consciousness. In turn, this provides criteria for what must be avoided for his notion of drives to cohere with his criticism. Furthermore, Nietzsche's *agreement* with Leibniz clarifies what he considers adequate for closing the explanatory gap between drives and consciousness – namely, that drives are perceptive and appetitive. Keeping these features of Nietzsche's account in mind, we can address the homuncular problem.

One way that drives might be construed as homunculi is if they are endowed with some nascent form of consciousness. Here we do well to remember that drives are primarily unconscious and that consciousness, on Nietzsche's view, requires language. Nietzsche thus analyzes consciousness as an *emergent property* of unconscious drives. Consequently, to claim that drives are conscious because the subject they constitute is conscious commits the fallacy of composition. How, then, should we understand Nietzsche's talk of drives 'evaluating,' 'interpreting' and so on? These descriptions are plausibly construed as loose talk on Nietzsche's part. When describing drives as "desir[ing] gratification – or exercise of its strength, or discharge of its strength, or the saturation of an emptiness," Nietzsche adds that "these are all metaphors" (D 119). Presumably this proviso also applies to descriptions of drives as 'interpreting' and 'evaluating.' We can analyze

these metaphors in terms of drives' perceptions and appetites. To say that drives 'interpret' or 'evaluate' is to say that they pursue their characteristic activity, their appetite, in an environmentally responsive way, in light of their perceptions. As Nietzsche's agreement with Leibniz demonstrates, such appetites and perceptions do not require consciousness.50

Another way that drives might be homuncular is if they are simple unities or substances. This interpretation of drives should also be resisted. Nietzsche explains the metaphysical notion of substance as a misleading appearance born of consciousness' tendency to simplify the self. Again, we cannot attribute unity and simplicity to drives on the basis of *consciousness'* apparent unity without committing the fallacy of composition. If drives can be called unified, this is only relative to their aim. This is akin to the unity attributable to a vector, which needn't require the *substantial* unity that Nietzsche repudiates. In general, Nietzsche tends to describe drives in essentially *relational* terms. He insists that the unconscious constituents of the self are not "subject 'atoms'" but something "constantly growing or decreasing" (WP 488). Drives' character depends on relations to their aim, to their environment, and to one another. Taking Nietzsche's rejection of spiritual atomism seriously requires not just that the *soul* is not an atom, but that there are no psychological atoms *whatsoever* (BGE 12). Drives can thus be analyzed as composed of further substructures without being substances.51, 52

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50 This explains notebook entries where Nietzsche describes *forces* in intentional and evaluative terms – e.g., "every center of force adopts a *perspective* toward the whole *remainder,* i.e., its wholly determinate *valuation,* mode of action, and mode of resistance" (WP 567/KSA 13:14[184]; see also WP 636, 643/KSA 13:14[186], 12:2[148]). Forces 'evaluate' in that their behavior is environmentally responsive.

51 This analysis of drives is predictable in light of Nietzsche's naturalism. Just as physics replaces the notion of particles with forces, so we should allow the division of drives into ever smaller terms. The resulting regress isn't something that *Leibniz* could object to, for he also posits an infinite regress where each substance has infinite subordinate substances for its body.

52 Drawing on Anderson (2012), Katsafanas provides an alternate resolution to these homuncular worries. He suggests that drives have (i) characteristic activities, or aims, that they pursue and (ii) circumstances, or objects, which occasion these activities (2016, 99-101). He then analyzes affects as consisting of (i) default behavioral responses, as well as (ii) stimulus objects that occasion them (and perhaps [iii] an emotional coloring of these behaviors and stimulus objects) (104-05). Anderson and Katsafanas further suggest that drives and affects enter into various relations, with affects making drives more environmentally sensitive, and drives making affects more focused (105-

Drives, then, are not homunculi – at least not in a way that contradicts Nietzsche's repudiation of the self-conscious subject's unity and simplicity. But are drives so different from this subject that they cannot explain its emergence? Note that Nietzsche does not need drives to be able to explain the *unity and simplicity* of the self-conscious subject, for he denies that this unity and simplicity is genuine. Nevertheless, he does need drives to explain the emergence of consciousness. We've seen that Nietzsche has a fairly complex story to tell here. As drives increase in intensity, they enlist other drives to further amplify their force until they influence the behavior of an organism as a whole. If environmental demands preclude the satisfaction of such drives, they might further increase in intensity to the point of causing individuals to solicit help, which stimulates the development of language and consciousness. This account doesn't require that Nietzsche explain how drives become end-directed or environmentally perceptive. Following his agreement with Leibniz, Nietzsche builds these features into drives from the outset. Nietzsche's account further diminishes the explanatory gap that must be closed by collapsing the emergence of consciousness and the development of language into the same problem. Granted, his story leaves much to be desired – but we cannot fault Nietzsche on *that* score, as though the problem of consciousness or the origin of language were easily solved. But Nietzsche is at least alive to the *need for* such an explanation, unlike those who consider consciousness an irreducible feature of minds.

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06). Anderson and Katsafanas' accounts are well-developed and insightful. But I think they are too technical to be *Nietzsche's* view. While there is textual support for attributing the aim/object distinction to Nietzsche's notion of drives (GS 360), the further claims about affects having three-place complements, and about affects and drives' various complements entering into mutually reinforcing relations, strike me as implausible in light of how fast and loose Nietzsche is with talk of affects and drives. Fortunately, we can mitigate homuncular worries without attributing this high-tech apparatus to Nietzsche.

3.6   Conclusion

Nietzsche agrees with Leibniz regarding the existence and nature of unconscious forces, as well as regarding the doubts they raise about the limits of conscious introspection. Nevertheless, he rejects Leibniz's view of the self as a simple unity and of ideas as innate. Each of these aspects of Nietzsche's relation to Leibniz can be motivated by his naturalism. Naturalism leads Nietzsche to explain consciousness as continuous with the rest of organic nature and as emerging from unconscious drives' perceptive and appetitive capacities, though it also leads him to insist on the self's embodied character and to doubt the veracity of our conscious ideas, including our idea of ourselves as simple unities. Insofar as the latter idea forms the basis for other metaphysical notions such as God and substance, Nietzsche replaces these with an account of the world as composed entirely of forces.

Allow me to conclude by mentioning two further resonances between Leibniz and Nietzsche's philosophies – and to underscore a central disagreement between them. For Leibniz, *force* is a primitive feature inherent in all substances (AG 192, 252-53/G VI.507; IV.395-96). And while his insistence that all substances are essentially active precludes substances from causally affecting one another, he nevertheless maintains that substances enter into complex, hierarchical relations of 'dominance' and 'subordination' that explain the emergence of bodies (AG 211, 222/G VI.605, 619). It is easy to see how this view of the world as permeated with hierarchical relations of dominance and subordination might attract Nietzsche, who analyzes individuals as complexes of command and obedience (BGE 19) and suggests that "life itself is will to power" (BGE 13). Leibniz and Nietzsche agree that *force* and *hierarchical relations* are integral to explaining the natural world. But beneath these striking affinities is a profound disagreement over whether forces, and the hierarchical relations resulting from them, can be explained *without positing metaphysical substances.* Inasmuch as Nietzsche analyzes the world as consisting entirely of forces without

underlying substrata, Leibniz, who insists that any adequate account of reality must begin with simple unities, remains a powerful, if unexpected, interlocutor for thinking through Nietzsche's worldview.

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CHAPTER 4.   ON DELEUZE'S NIETZSCHE: FROM THE WILL TO POWER AND THE OVERMAN TO DESIRING-PRODUCTION AND THE NOMAD WAR MACHINE

Deleuze famously describes himself as belonging "to a generation, one of the last generations, that was more or less bludgeoned to death with the history of philosophy." He expounds on the "patently repressive role" played by the history of philosophy for his generation by describing how students, himself included, were told "'You can't seriously consider saying what you yourself think until you've read this and that, and that on this, and this on that'" (Deleuze 1995, 5). In the same "Letter to a Harsh Critic," he goes on to provide his all-too-frequently cited means of escaping this situation, writing, "the main way I coped with it at the time was to see the history of philosophy as a sort of buggery or (it comes to the same thing) immaculate conception. I saw myself as taking an author from behind and giving him a child that would be his own offspring, yet monstrous" (6). This provocative image makes it somewhat unsurprising that Deleuze's historical monographs receive little attention from scholars seeking clarification on a particular thinker within the philosophical tradition. Scholars sympathetic to Deleuze's philosophical project also tend to neglect these works. Citing Deleuze's call to "experiment, never interpret" (Deleuze and Parnet 2007, 48) and his declaration, with Félix Guattari, that "we will never ask what a book means, signifier or signified; we will not look for anything to understand in it" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 4) – such sympathizers often stress Deleuze's rejection of traditional hermeneutics, to the point that one gets the impression that asking after the *accuracy* of his historical monographs is somehow contrary to his philosophical aims. The general view seems to be that, while these historical works might help clarify *Deleuze's* thinking, they are not serious works within the history of philosophy.

This description of Deleuze's reception is, of course, a generalization. Nevertheless, it reflects a common tendency to neglect Deleuze's historical works *as* close readings in the history of philosophy. This tendency is understandable insofar as it is exceedingly difficult to determine where, in Deleuze's texts, exegesis gives way to interpretation, and interpretation gives way to creation.53 It may seem futile, or perhaps contrary to Deleuze's methods, or at any rate, *not worth the effort*, to attempt to trace a line from an earlier philosopher, through Deleuze's reading of that philosopher, and to Deleuze's conceptual creations. But if there is an exception to be made to this approach to Deleuze's historical works, it is his early work on Nietzsche. Returning to the "Letter to a Harsh Critic" where Deleuze describes his own readings as monstrous, we find that he goes on to write, "It was Nietzsche […] who extricated me from all this. Because you just can't deal with him in the same sort of way. He gets up to all sorts of things behind *your* back. He gives you a perverse taste […] for saying simple things in your own way."54 Here, Deleuze indicates that his reading of Nietzsche *isn't* an instance of philosophical 'buggery.' In fact, reading Nietzsche *frees* Deleuze from needing to adopt such an approach, by allowing him to write in his "own name" (Deleuze 1995, 6). If one is interested in Nietzsche or in Deleuze's philosophical development, there is thus reason to attend to Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy*.

In what follows, I make a case for the unique status of Nietzsche in Deleuze's corpus by showing how the interpretation he advances in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* informs his later work with Guattari. More specifically, I analyze Deleuze's reading of the will to power as a typology of forces and his interpretation of the Overman as a pinnacle of affirmation and activity, with an eye

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53 For a helpful treatment of this feature of Deleuze's thought, see Smith (2012, esp. 18-22).

54 See also Deleuze and Parnet (2002, 16), where Deleuze describes his break with the history of philosophy by claiming "I had paid off my debts, Nietzsche and Spinoza had released me." Deleuze's statement, earlier in this interview, that, "It was on Spinoza that I worked the most seriously according to the norms of the history of philosophy" (2002, 15) suggests that his study of Spinoza should also be taken seriously as a close reading in the history of philosophy, rather than being dismissed or celebrated as creative.

toward showing that these are not merely Deleuzian creations but are also defensible interpretations of Nietzsche. Afterward, I suggest how these aspects of Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche inform the development of celebrated concepts from his later, more creative work with Guattari – namely, the concepts of desiring-production and of the nomad war machine. My hope is that these efforts prove mutually illuminating. Not only might we achieve a deeper appreciation of the indeterminacy of central portions of Nietzsche's thinking, we might also achieve a deeper appreciation of Deleuze's approach to these issues, such that it becomes clearer how Deleuze remains Nietzschean throughout his philosophical development.

4.1   The Will to Power as Typology

4.1.1   Deleuze's Interpretation

Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy* (1962) is the first major study of Nietzsche published in France after the release of Heidegger's four volume work on Nietzsche (1961). Like Heidegger, Deleuze draws extensively from Nietzsche's notebooks.[55] Perhaps it is unsurprising, then, that Deleuze's Nietzsche understands the world as comprised of forces, for while there is some support for this claim in Nietzsche's published materials (e.g., BGE 12, 17; GM I.13),[56] there is much more support for it in his notebooks.[57] Forces, on Deleuze's reading, are relational – "every force is thus

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[55] As far as I know, the closest Deleuze comes to defending this interpretive decision is his suggestion that Nietzsche's works "are difficult to read without the *Nachlass* that is contemporary to each" (Deleuze 2006, 348).

[56] Citations to Nietzsche's works use abbreviations listed in the references following this chapter. Roman numerals refer to major divisions within works; Arabic numerals refer to section numbers.

[57] It is difficult to overstate how widely the concept of force [*Kraft*] is applied in Nietzsche's notes. It is used to analyze the world in general (KSA 11:35[54-55], 36[15], 38[12]; 12:2[143]; 13:14[188]), and to criticize understandings of the world in terms of atoms (13:14[186]), efficient causation (12:2[83, 88], 9[91]; 13:14[98]), nomology (12:2[139, 142], 7:[14]), substances (11:24[10]; 12:2[139]), and teleology (12:9[91]). Nietzsche also analyzes organic life as manifestations of force (10:16[26], 24[14]; 12:2[63], 7[9, 25]; 13:14[81-82, 174]), including human life in particular (10:24[9]; 11:26[231], 40[42]; 12:2[76], 7[1]; 13:11[111], 14[119, 121]. Human phenomenology and psychology are also explained in terms of relations among forces (10:24[9]; 12:7[1]; 13:11[114], 14[93]), as are value judgements (10:24[15]; 11:34[223]; 12:7[6], 9[35, 150], 10[32, 57, 127, 133, 164]; 13:11[38], 15[78-79], 18[16]). Nietzsche likewise analyzes social phenomena in terms of forces (11:25[349], 34[164]; 12:2[175], 9[119, 174],

essentially related to another force" – and plural – "the being of force is plural, it would be absolutely absurd to think about force in the singular" (Deleuze 1983: 6). Deleuze also understands forces as necessarily unequal. He describes the idea of two equal forces as "a coarse and approximate dream, a statistical dream" (1983: 43). We can already see the beginnings of Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche as a thinker of pluralism and difference, but for our purposes what merits emphasizing is that all phenomena result from forces' interactions: "All reality is already quantity of force. There are nothing but quantities of force in mutual 'relations of tension'" (1983: 40, citing KSA 13:14[79]). This leads Deleuze to analyze *forces*, rather than, say, the individuals or social phenomena that forces produce.

Due to their unequal character, whenever two forces relate, one is quantitatively superior to the other. Deleuze describes these unequal relations in terms of command and obedience. Although this difference is quantitative, it gives rise to a *qualitative* difference, which Deleuze analyzes in terms of *activity* and *reactivity* (Deleuze 1983, 40-43; citing KSA 11:36[22]; 12:2[76], 5[11, 64], 7[25]; 13:11[281-82]. This qualitative difference is "that aspect of quantity that cannot be equalized" (Deleuze 1983, 43; citing KSA 12:6[14]). The dynamic interaction among commanding and obedient forces produces bodies. "Every force is related to others and it either obeys or commands. What defines a body is this relation between dominant and dominated forces. Every relationship of forces constitutes a body." Deleuze emphasizes that this account of bodies is not limited to a particular domain, but includes "chemical, biological, social, [and] political" bodies (1983, 40). There is no restriction placed on the scope of application that the concept of force enjoys.

10[57, 82]; 13:15[78-79]), including specific activities such as creating and appreciating aesthetic works (10:24[28]; 12:7[3], 9[119], 10[52, 168]; 13:14[36, 61, 119], 23[2]).

Nietzsche frequently analyzes allegedly primitive concepts – e.g., the soul – as products of more basic, interactive principles – e.g., drives and affects (BGE 12). Deleuze distills this emphasis on underlying, dynamic processes down to a single concept – force. He also distills Nietzsche's emphasis on various qualitative differences – e.g., strong and weak, noble and slavish, healthy and sick – down to a single qualitative distinction – active and reactive. Nevertheless, Deleuze thinks there is at least one aspect of Nietzsche's thinking that this qualitative distinction does *not* account for – namely, his insistence that reactive forces can triumph over active forces *without thereby ceasing to be reactive* (Deleuze 1983, 57, 66, 68; citing GM I, II, III; EH I.1). For example, Nietzsche describes slave morality as a characteristically reactive; "its action is, from the ground up, reaction" (GM I.10). Nietzsche also maintains that slave revolt is successful and continues to shape humanity today (GM I.11-12; BGE 202). Yet, despite this success, slave morality *remains* reactive. This gives rise to two questions which animate much of Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy.* First, how do reactive forces triumph *as* reactive? Second, what accounts for the qualitative difference between active and reactive forces, such that reactive forces remain reactive even when they command?

Deleuze addresses the first of these issues by holding that reactive forces triumph *not* through forming a greater, more active force, but through *decomposing* active forces. Reactive forces "*separate active force from what it can do*; they take away part or almost all of its power. In this way reactive forces do not become active but, on the contrary, they make active forces join them and become reactive in a new sense" (Deleuze 1983, 57). Sometimes, Deleuze cites the whole of Nietzsche's *Genealogy* in support of this claim (e.g., 57), but sometimes he suggests that the claim rests largely on GM I.13 (e.g., 122-24). There, Nietzsche writes:

> just as common people separate the lightning from its flash and take the latter as a *doing*, as an effect of a subject called lightning, so popular morality also separates

strength from the expressions of strength as if there were behind the strong an indifferent substratum that is free to express strength – or not to. But there is no such substratum; there is no 'being' behind the doing, effecting, becoming; 'the doer' is simply fabricated into the doing – the doing is everything. (GM I.13)

Following this, Nietzsche analyzes some inferences licensed by positing the subject-as-substratum – focusing in particular on moral notions of responsibility and equality. The subject-as-substratum authorizes a moral notion of responsibility by distinguishing between agents and actions, thereby making room for causally efficacious, conscious deliberation. Between the subject-as-substratum and the subject's action lies a decision for which the subject is praised or blamed. A moral notion of egalitarianism is also authorized by this model of agency. *Qua* substrata, all subjects are equal, even if their actions differ in strength and efficacy. In these ways, understanding agents as substances provides grounds for moral concepts integral to the slaves' revolt against their masters. Deleuze analyzes this passage in detail, breaking it up into three moments: a moment of causality, in which force is distinguished from its manifestations; a moment of substance, in which force is projected into a substrate and neutralized; and a moment of reciprocal determination, in which force is moralized (Deleuze 1983, 123-24). With this, reactive forces multiply. Whereas reactive forces previously referred only to forces which obey quantitatively superior forces, reactive forces come to include forces that separate active forces from their expression, and previously active forces which have been separated from their activity (67).

What accounts for the qualitative difference between active and reactive forces other than their quantitative differences, so that reactive forces remain reactive, and active forces remain active, in cases where the former command the latter? Deleuze addresses this issue with his interpretation of the will to power. For Deleuze, the will to power is the differential and genetic element that *produces* forces. "*The will to power is the element from which derive both the*

quantitative difference of related forces and the quality that devolves into each force in this relation" (1983, 50; citing KSA 11:36[31]).[58] Qualitative differences in the will to power produce active and reactive forces. If the will to power is affirmative, it is typically expressed in active forces; if it is negative, caught up in the will to nothingness, it is typically expressed in reactive forces. Deleuze writes, "*active* and *reactive* designate the original qualities of force but *affirmative* and *negative* designate the primordial qualities of the will to power. […] Affirmation is not action but the power of becoming active, *becoming active* personified. Negation is not simple reaction, but *becoming reactive*" (1983, 53-4).[59] Deleuze often illustrates this genetic distinction by appealing to GM I.10, 11, and 13. There, Nietzsche describes an evaluative difference between masters and slaves, suggesting that whereas masters move from an affirmative premise ('We are good') to a negative corollary ('therefore what is other is bad'), slaves move from a negative premise ('you are other and evil') to a positive corollary ('therefore we are good'). Deleuze makes much of this genetic difference – and he suggests that it is the genealogist's task to trace forces to back to the quality of the will to power which they express (1983, 75). In its affirmative dimension, the will to power is "the power of transformation, the Dionysian power", is "*essentially creative and giving*" (42, 85). In its negative dimension, the will to power is "the will to nothingness" and the power of "subtraction" (57). Partly because of Nietzsche's descriptions of the will to power as primarily a will to expenditure and the expression of strength, and only derivatively as a will to

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[58] Deleuze calls KSA 11:36[31] "one of the most important texts which Nietzsche wrote to explain what he understood by will to power" (1983, 49). Unfortunately, his transcription of the passage contains an error. It reads: "The *victorious* concept 'force,' by means of which our physicists have created God and the world, still needs to be *completed:* an *inner* will must be ascribed to it, which I designate as 'will to power.'" What is here rendered as 'inner will' (*innere Wille*) is, in fact, 'inner world' (*innere Welt*). This mistake derives from Deleuze's use of *La volonté de puissance,* ed. F. Würzbach, trans. G. Bianquis, Gallimard: Paris, 1942, which unfaithfully renders the relevant text in volume 2, aphorism 309.

[59] The will to power thus prefigures Deleuze's notion of the virtual, which conditions the actual while being no larger than it. Describing the will to power, he writes: "if it constitutes a superior empiricism, this is because it is an essentially *plastic* principle that is no wider than what it conditions, that changes itself with the condition and determines itself in each case along with what it determines" (1983, 50; see also 85, 91, 197).

self-preservation (e.g., GS 349; BGE 13), Deleuze takes the will to power to be fundamentally affirmative, despite its negative qualities.60

Although active forces have an "affinity" with affirmation, and reactive forces with negation (Deleuze 1983, 67-68), the active/reactive and the affirmative/negative distinctions are not the same, for Deleuze. Reactive forces are capable of affirmation, as when they affirm themselves as reactive. Active forces are also capable of negation, as when they actively destroy reactive forces. With each change in the relations among active and reactive forces, there is an accompanying change in the quality of the will to power (50, 85), such that Deleuze's distinctions in the qualities of the will to power become increasingly subtle as his analysis of the relations among forces becomes increasingly complex. For our purposes, what merits emphasizing is that Deleuze thinks that reactive forces can *become* affirmative and active through a "transmutation," whereby reactive forces are destroyed and nihilism is overcome (170-74).

4.1.2   Appraising Deleuze's Interpretation

One of the most striking aspects of Deleuze's account is his transposition of Nietzsche's analysis of the master/slave typology onto the level of forces. This move has been noticed by more than a few, to the point that one commentator writes, "what Deleuze does with this distinction is almost as well known as Nietzsche's distinction itself, as he reframes the noble-slave types in terms of the forces of action and reaction" (Schrift 2006, 188). This is not to suggest that this move is commonly recognized as valid, however. Joseph Ward, for one, criticizes Deleuze on precisely this score.

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60 It is difficult to explain fully this feature of Deleuze's interpretation without treating his reading of the eternal recurrence as a principle that subordinates all negation to affirmation (Deleuze 1983, 69-71). As I cannot treat Deleuze's reading of the eternal recurrence here, I merely note this in passing.

> Of course Nietzsche himself was greatly interested in the connection and correlation between such conceptions as "force" at a physical, "atomic" level and the operations of force in human history, but this surely shouldn't license the straightforward assimilation of descriptions of certain historical phenomena with Nietzsche's tentative thoughts on fundamental physics. (Ward 2010, 103)

Is this a fatal error in Deleuze's interpretation of Nietzsche – or, to re-frame the matter in the overwrought terms of the introduction, a case of philosophical buggery?

It is unclear whether Ward's complaint concerns Deleuze's application of evaluative terms in general to the level of forces, or if his complaint concerns the active/reactive distinction in particular. In either case, there is textual support for Deleuze's interpretation. Nietzsche's analysis of evaluative dispositions doesn't stop at the level of social groups or even individuals. He also attributes evaluations to unconscious, psychological forces. He claims that "a drive without some kind of knowing evaluation of the worth of its objective, does not exist" (HH I.32), that drives "do nothing but interpret nervous stimuli" (D 119), and that "every drive craves mastery" (BGE 6). In his notes, Nietzsche also attributes evaluations to forces. A representative entry reads: "every center of force adopts a *perspective* toward the whole *remainder,* i.e., its wholly determinate *valuation*, mode of action, and mode of resistance" (WP 567/KSA 13:14[184]; see also KSA 13:14[186], 12:2[148]). A similar case can be made for applying the active/reactive distinction broadly. Nietzsche not only describes masters and slaves as active and reactive; he describes *affects* in these terms (GM II.11, 12), and in some passages he contrasts active and reactive *forces* (GM II.18). Nietzsche's notes analyze activity – now contrasted with passivity – in an unrestricted sense: "What is 'active'? – grasping out for power" (WP 657/KSA 12:5[64]) and "What do *active* and *passive* mean? is it not becoming-*master* and becoming *subjugated*?" (WP 700/KSA 12:7[48]). Absent a principled criterion for determining when we ought to take seriously Nietzsche's use of

evaluative language and of the active/reactive distinction, which Ward does not provide, Deleuze's interpretation remains viable.

Ward's concerns are orthogonal to familiar worries about how we ought to interpret the scope of Nietzsche's notion of the will to power. Nietzsche's descriptions of social and cultural phenomena as expressions of the will to power are intuitive enough (GM II.12, III.15, 18), as these involve conscious agents. But he also describes unconscious, psychological forces in terms of the will to power (BGE 9, 198; GM II.18). While some scholars can stomach this, many resist Nietzsche's attribution of the will to power to organic life in general (Z II.12; BGE 13, 36, 259; GM II.12) – and even more stomachs turn when Nietzsche describes the will to power as the "essence" of the world (BGE 186; see also BGE 22). In its least restricted form, the will to power verges on a metaphysical hypothesis – and this is difficult to square with Nietzsche's criticisms of metaphysics (e.g., GS 347). At this point, some commentators deny that Nietzsche takes the will to power seriously. [61] Others restrict the will to power to the psychological [62] or biological domain. [63] And some instead opt to restrict Nietzsche's criticism of metaphysics, so that the will to power is metaphysical in some qualified sense. [64] Part of what makes Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche innovative is that he pursues an alternate path here. He takes the will, in will to power, to be a non-anthropomorphic notion – comparable to Schopenhauer's notion of Will but different in its pluralist and affirmative aspects (Deleuze 1983, 6-8, 82-84). This much is common, but Deleuze further takes the *evaluative* dimension of the will to power to be non-anthropomorphic; evaluation is part of the essence of life. This is why the will to power is a *typology;* it designates affirmative and negative *types.* And typology, Deleuze insists, should not be confused with

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[61] See Clark (1990, 212-21); Berry (2011, 125-32); and Leiter (2015, 258-61).
[62] See Reginster (2006, chapter 3).
[63] See Janaway (2007, chapter 9).
[64] See Schacht (1983, chapter 4); Richardson (1996); and Cox (1999, chapter 5).

metaphysics. It is only when we separate the will to power from the forces that it determines, and which reciprocally determine it, that we fall "into metaphysical abstraction" (Deleuze 1983, 50). Deleuze thinks "it is true that Nietzsche *did* intend to 'go beyond metaphysics'" (195) and, further, that this attempt consists in arguing that metaphysics as such is born of the will to negation: "[Nietzsche] makes nihilism the presupposition of all metaphysics rather than the expression of a particular metaphysics: there is no *metaphysics* which does not judge and depreciate life in the name of a *supra-sensible* world" (34; see also 145).[65] Deleuze applies evaluative language to the level of fundamental physics because he interprets Nietzsche as holding that evaluation goes 'all the way down,' so to speak.

Appreciating Deleuze's view of the will to power allows us to offer another reply to Ward's concern, which turns on how far reaching one takes the effects of the account Nietzsche provides in the *Genealogy* to be. Deleuze will describe the *Genealogy* as "the great book of modern ethnology" (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 190). But already in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, he insists that the *Genealogy* reveals that *ressentiment,* bad conscience, guilt, and the ascetic ideal should not be understood as discrete phenomena. Rather, "this instinct of revenge has gained such a hold on humanity through the centuries that all of metaphysics, psychology, history and above all morality bear its imprint" (Deleuze 1983, 21). He holds that, "far from being a psychological trait the spirit of revenge is the principle on which our whole psychology depends. *Ressentiment* is not part of our psychology but the whole of our psychology, without knowing it, is part of *ressentiment"* (34). If it is the case, as Deleuze takes it to be, that Nietzsche explains the emergence of the subject of consciousness through his analysis of slave morality (GM I.13; II.16), then we can begin to see

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[65] Deleuze breaks with Nietzsche, as he understands him, insofar as he later pursues a metaphysics predicted on difference*,* rather than identity. Nevertheless, there are strong resemblances between Deleuze's metaphysics and the interpretation of the will to power he defends in *Nietzsche and Philosophy.* (See note 58 above.)

the reasoning behind Deleuze's insistence on the *Genealogy*'s importance. For, elsewhere, Nietzsche suggests that our understanding of the subject as a substratum is projected onto nature by means of metaphysical categories, e.g. by applying the notion of substance to nature or by analyzing nature in terms of atoms (TI III.5; VI.3; KSA 12:9[98], 10[19]). And just *after* he criticizes the understanding of the subject-as-substrate in GM I.13, he suggests there is a correlate of this view in physics, writing, "natural scientists do no better when they say 'force moves, force causes,' and so on" – as though force were an *atom* behind its expression (see also BGE 12). Attending to these portions of Nietzsche's thought leads Deleuze to hold that the slave revolt is not restricted to the moral domain. It carries consequences for the basic categories that we use to interpret the world. *Pace* Ward's suggestion that Deleuze assimilates Nietzsche's analysis of 'fundamental physics' under his analysis of 'certain historical phenomena,' Deleuze takes the slave revolt to be the *definitive* historical phenomenon, one which fundamentally transforms humanity's outlook by subsuming it under a negative will to power.

4.2 The Overman as Creative Transformation

4.2.1 Deleuze's Interpretation

The Overman is a difficult concept to grasp. Nietzsche primarily discusses the figure in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* – a decidedly literary work that presents the views of its namesake character rather than those of its author. While we might try to clarify the Overman through an exemplar, this strategy is thwarted by Zarathustra's declaration that "never has there been an Overman" (Z II.4). Despite such difficulties, I take it as uncontroversial that the Overman somehow contrasts with human nature. For this reason, we can begin to appreciate Deleuze's reading of the Overman by considering his interpretation of Nietzsche's view of human nature.

For Deleuze's Nietzsche, humanity is "essentially reactive" (Deleuze 1983, 140; see also 21, 34-35, 167). This claim might appear too strong in light of Nietzsche's tendency to deny that humanity has an essence. In representative passages, he criticizes those who "think of 'man' as an *aeterna veritas*, as something that remains constant in the midst of all flux" (HH I.2) and calls human beings "*the still undetermined animals*" (BGE 62; see also GS 143; TI V.6). Deleuze's view can sidestep these worries, though. His claim that humanity is *essentially* reactive should be interpreted as claiming that *insofar as* humanity has *an essence*, this essence must be reactive, for positing metaphysical essences is a reactive gesture that arrests active forces (Deleuze 1983, 34, 76-77). This isn't to suggest that Deleuze attributes an otherwise positive view of humanity to Nietzsche. He maintains that humanity is "the becoming-reactive of forces" (169), such that even though humanity is in flux, it is flux in decline. As for how humanity enters into this condition, Deleuze takes Nietzsche to analyze this process in the *Genealogy*.

Deleuze's reading of the *Genealogy,* like the *Genealogy* itself, is complex and non-linear, but his explanation of how the slave revolt enacts a fundamental transformation of human nature doesn't diverge wildly from Nietzsche's telling of the story. Some brutish type overpowers those weaker than them and violently imposes some form of social organization (GM II.17). This produces *ressentiment* among the subjugated, as they cannot physically overpower their masters. But for slaves' *ressentiment* to become effective, they require the help of another type – priests. The priest, for Deleuze, is "the accomplice of reactive forces but only their accomplice and not part of them" (1983, 126). These priests forge the fiction of force separated from what it can do, of an agent that is a substrate endowed with volitional control over their actions (GM I.13). Somehow or another, the cunning inventions of slave morality defeats the masters. This results in the internalization of masters' instincts, comparable to the internalization of slaves' resentment

(Deleuze 1983, 128). Nietzsche calls this internalization of instincts "the most fundamental of all changes [humans] ever experienced," going so far as to compare it to animals' transition from water to land, and says that this results in "the entire inner world" of humans growing in "depth, breadth, [and] height" (GM II.16; see also GM I.6). But in addition to producing psychological complexity, the socialization of human beings produces *pain*.[66] This pain forms the foundation of bad conscience. When coupled with an ideal of selflessness, pain becomes a sense of guilt (Deleuze 1983, 129; citing GM II.18). Guilt redirects *ressentiment* inward, producing self-hatred (132; citing GM III.15). Drawing on Nietzsche's description of how memory is produced in the human animal through inflictions of pain (GM II.3), Deleuze recharacterizes culture, in its dominant and historical sense, as nothing other than the use of pain to further domesticate individuals (Deleuze 1983, 139; citing GM III.13-20; BGE 62). The continual infliction of various degrees and types of pain is the price paid for the retention of myriad social norms.

This sketch leaves out much of Nietzsche's *Genealogy* and much of Deleuze's analysis of it, but it suffices to motivate Deleuze's view that the slave revolt lies at the origin of the subject of interiority. Reading Nietzsche alongside Freud, Deleuze suggests that the human animal has two reactive systems – one unconscious and one conscious (1983, 112; citing GM II.1, I.10). The unconscious reactive system contains "mnemonic traces" and "lasting imprints", akin to a species' memory that is responsible for processes such as digestion. The conscious reactive system, by contrast, registers external forces' influence on a body and determines "in what form and under what conditions reaction can be acted" (113). For consciousness to carry out this process, unconscious mnemonic traces "must not invade consciousness" – and this requires "an active super-conscious faculty of forgetting" (Ibid.; citing GM II.1, I.10; UM II.1). At this stage,

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[66] While some commentators suggest that pain is produced specifically by the internalization of the instinct of cruelty (e.g., Leiter [2015, 185-88]), Deleuze suggests that *all* internalized instincts are experienced as painful (1983, 128).

consciousness is reactive in the sense that it registers superior, external forces, which healthy individuals react to immediately (Deleuze 1983, 111; citing GM I.10). Matters change with the triumph of the slave revolt, however. Deleuze suggests that the internalization of instincts thins the membrane separating unconscious and conscious reactive systems, that it weakens the force of active forgetting and replaces it with "a prodigious memory" (115; citing GM I.10, II.1). As a result, reaction ceases to be acted as subjects consciously invest in producing mnemonic traces of the excitations they receive. This process is exacerbated with the transformation of bad conscience into guilt, as moralized subjects attribute the cause of their pain and suffering to themselves (GM III.20), with the result that they become ever more inward directed (Deleuze 1983, 127-29, 141-42).

We can further motivate Deleuze's view of humanity as reactive by turning to Nietzsche's analysis of the belief that truth is unconditionally valuable as a manifestation of the ascetic ideal (GM III.24-27). It can be difficult to pin down Deleuze's understanding of this part of the *Genealogy,* as his use of it is often enthymematic and, when he turns to it explicitly, he insists that "*the ascetic ideal was also there from the start*" (1983, 144). Nevertheless, this much is clear. Deleuze understands the genealogist's task to be one of tracing values to the quality of the will to power that produces them. And the unconditional valuation of truth is produced by a negative will to power. The belief that truth is always valuable could not arise from the will not to let oneself *be* deceived without assuming in advance that truth is always beneficial, when, in fact, some truths are useless and even harmful, whereas some illusions are useful and even beneficial (95; citing BGE 1; GS 344). Hence the belief that truth is unconditionally valuable must arise from a *moral judgement* to never deceive, not even to deceive oneself (96; citing GS 344). It is easy to see how this belief might be ascetic or life-negating in cases where truth is harmful or illusion is life

promoting. But Deleuze goes further at this point, suggesting that the attribution of anything more than instrumental value to any truth is ascetic in the sense that it has already left behind life as the ultimate arbiter of value.[67] It is difficult to overstate how wide-ranging Deleuze takes such asceticism to be. The corollary of his view that only reactive forces can be known (39-41, 171-75) is that humanity's subordination of thought to knowledge is categorically reactive; "knowledge gives life laws that separate it from what it can do, that keep it from acting, that forbid it to act, maintaining it in the narrow framework of scientifically observable reaction: almost like an animal in a zoo" (1983, 100). When Deleuze claims that "Nietzsche, in the *Genealogy,* wanted to rewrite the *Critique of Pure Reason,*" he is deadly serious (88). He takes Nietzsche to provide a genetic, rather than transcendental, account of reason, the understanding, and the understanding's categories out of a negative will to power (91). As a result, humanity's pursuit of knowledge as an end is symptomatic of an attempt to arrest the dynamic forces of life (172-73).

This discussion of the reactive character of humanity helps us appreciate why Deleuze does not think that *ressentiment* and nihilism are part of human psychology, but instead holds that human psychology is part of *ressentiment* and nihilism. It also allows us to appreciate Deleuze's insistence that the death of God is not sufficient to overcome nihilism. For nihilism to be defeated, we must also pursue the death of Man – replacing our understanding of humanity as a sphere of interiority with an understanding of humanity as a field of forces. As he later writes in *Difference and Repetition,* "Nietzsche seems to have been the first to see that the death of God becomes effective only with the dissolution of the Self" (Deleuze 1994, 58). This is also why Deleuze insists that the Overman must not be confused for the Higher Men who follow Zarathustra, for these men

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[67] This aspect of Deleuze's reading contrasts with those scholars who understand Nietzsche as only criticizing the *unconditional* valuing of truth (e.g., Clark 1990, 181-84; Janaway 2007, 229-39). Deleuze's point seems to be that truth's value is not merely conditional, but that it is only instrumental. If we posit truth as a final end, we are already ascetics.

are products of a reactive culture (Deleuze 1983, 164-66, 168-70). How Deleuze explains the *emergence* of the Overman is a complicated matter. At minimum, it involves the auto-destruction of reactive forces, whereby they pursue their own self-annihilation and break with the will to nothingness (171-75), an unlocking of a negative power within affirmation that allows affirmation to triumph over reactivity (175-80), and – perhaps most troublesome – a highly original reading of the eternal recurrence as a selective principle of cosmology and physics (44-47), as well as of ethics and ontology (68-72). I cannot enter these thorny interpretive issues here. For our purposes, we can set aside the question of *how* the Overman is produced and content ourselves with identifying some of its primary attributes.

In contrast with humanity's essentially reactive and negative character, the Overman is principally active and affirmative (1983, xiii). This entails a break with *ressentiment* (35), which, as we have seen, Deleuze takes to lie at the origins of consciousness and knowledge. Hence Deleuze describes the Overman as differing from "the ego" and as defined by "*a new way of feeling:* he is a different subject from man […] *a new way of thinking,* predicates other than the divine ones [… and] *a new way of evaluating* […] a change and reversal in the element from which the value of values derives" (163). As this last difference suggests, the Overman proceeds from an affirmative will to power. This is why the Overman is characterized above all by becoming-active, by transmutation, and by excessive vitality (175). Perhaps a more helpful way of fleshing out Deleuze's understanding of the Overman is by noting how the Overman relates to thought. Unlike humanity, which subordinates thought to an ideal of truth, the Overman subordinates thought to *life.* Deleuze explains this difference by appealing to Nietzsche's celebration of art as superior to knowledge insofar as it better promotes life (102-03; citing GM III.25). Emphasizing the

Overman's creativity, Deleuze claims the Overman uses thought for "*discovering, inventing, new possibilities of life*" (1983, 101).

4.2.2   Appraising Deleuze's Interpretation

In "Postmodernism's Use and Abuse of Nietzsche," Ken Gemes argues that "postmodernists who take Nietzsche's disparaging comments about unity as an endorsement of a decentered pluralism have mistaken the target of Nietzsche's polemic. He is not against unity but rather wants to expose our lack of unity by exposing the myth of the Cartesian unified self" (2001, 354). Analyzing the architectural metaphor of self-construction in Nietzsche's early works (344-49), Gemes suggests that Nietzsche champions an ideal of a self unified by an dominant will, and claims that if Nietzsche emphasizes the construction of a unified self less in his later publications this is partly because he takes his point to have been made and partly because he realizes that his polemic needs to be more critical if it is to unseat the Judeo-Christian understanding of the self (353). From this, Gemes concludes, "the de-centered self celebrated by the postmodernists is for Nietzsche the self-conception of the nihilistic Last Man. The construction of a unified self is the goal of Nietzsche's Overman" (339). The target of Gemes' analysis is not Deleuze, but Foucault's reading of Nietzsche. Nevertheless, it is worth considering how his argument bears on Deleuze's interpretation because of his call for the death of Man – viz. the replacement of the subject of interiority with an understanding of the subject as a field of forces.[68] For Deleuze, "no one extended the critique of identity further than Nietzsche" (Deleuze 1983, xi), a view he maintains in his later work with

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[68] In fact, Deleuze seems more open to Gemes' attack than Foucault. Whereas Foucault analyzes subjects in terms of individual, human bodies, Deleuze suggests that subjects are relations of forces, such that they can be greater than individuals, as in cases of social and political bodies. See Schrift (2006, 191).

Guattari (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 21; Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 6). So, he seems vulnerable to Gemes' attack.

By emphasizing the active/reactive distinction as a key to the problem of nihilism, Deleuze can mitigate the thrust of Gemes' point and better countenance Nietzsche's emphasis on change and becoming. While Gemes and Deleuze agree that unity is not a pre-given feature of subjects in a *metaphysical* sense, Deleuze thinks that unity is nonetheless given to subjects by the cultural forces of *ressentiment.* He describes the Last Man, as well as Zarathustra's Higher Men, as unified, but insists that this "unity is that of the thread tying them together, the thread of nihilism and reaction" (1983, 164). The Last Man, as the highest expression of passive nihilism, is particularly prone to accepting this reactive unity (151). This suggests that Deleuze might respond to Gemes by asking what precludes subjects from fashioning themselves into a coherent whole by making *all* of their forces reactive. For Deleuze, unity is not sufficient to overcome nihilism. We must also free active forces and create affirmative values.

The active/reactive distinction also implicates Deleuze's understanding of the Overman in a way that contrasts with Gemes' view. Regardless of whether the Last Man is understood as a passive acceptance of disorganized chaos, as Gemes suggests, or as a passive acceptance of reactive unity, as Deleuze thinks, the de-subjectivation that the Overman pursues is *not* passive acceptance. "What Nietzsche calls self-destruction, active destruction, must not, above all, be confused with the passive extinction of the last man" (Deleuze 1983, 174; citing Z P.4, 5, I.21). The Overman's negation is *active*; it requires *work.* This critical aspect of Deleuze's Overman enables creation of new, affirmative values, and potentially of a new mode of culture freed from reactivity (106). This project is unified, but it is not the unity of a reactive substrate, but the unity of a *vector*, of an active force. While this may seem like a minor revision of Gemes' otherwise

well-taken point, if we share Deleuze's view of Nietzsche as primarily concerned with forces, with becoming, then the point carries significant consequences. *Pace* Gemes, the Overman cannot be "a complete construction" (Gemes 2001, 358), because the Overman is not a *state* but an *activity*. For Deleuze, the Overman is not a being – but a type of becoming-active (Schrift 1995, 70-74).[69]

This discussion brushes against more general interpretive controversies surrounding Nietzsche's Overman. Some scholars take the Overman to be a universal ideal that everyone ought to strive to attain.[70] Unfortunately, this interpretation is in tension with Nietzsche's repudiation of idealism (e.g., EH P.2) and his criticism of universal moral prescriptions (e.g., GS 335; BGE 31, 154). This leads some commentators to downplay the significance of the Overman for Nietzsche and to suggest that the Overman is replaced by some other criterion of affirmation, such as the ability to embrace the eternal recurrence of one's life[71] or to create oneself.[72] This deflationary reading is difficult to square with Nietzsche's endorsement of the Overman in his later works, however (GM II.24-25; EH III.1, IV.5). Other commentators suggest that the Overman is – not replaced, but – explicated by notions such as the eternal recurrence,[73] self-creation,[74] or both.[75] Deleuze's interpretation is closest to this third group. He avoids worries associated with the idealist reading insofar as he doesn't posit a set of 'first-order' characteristics that might define the Overman. He also avoids the need to 'explain away' Nietzsche's later references to the concept. Nevertheless, Deleuze's interpretation is original. Although it is common to explicate the Overman by appealing to the eternal recurrence, Deleuze understands this notion not as a mere thought

[69] This also suggests that Deleuze might allow for *Übermenschlich* forces *within* individuals, similar to the way that Nietzsche describes modern individuals as containing both masterly and slavish tendencies (BGE 260).
[70] See Kaufmann (1956, 274-74); Danto (1965, 199-200); and Stern (1979, 117).
[71] See Lampert (1987, 258); Pippin (1988, 54); and Clark (1990, 284-85)
[72] See Conway (1989, 213-16).
[73] See Magnus (1983, 644); and Loeb (2005, 87-91).
[74] See Nehamas (1985, 174); and Gemes (2001, 358-59).
[75] See Ansell-Pearson (1994, 105-07, 118-20); and Richardson (1996, 67-72).

experiment but as a selective ontological principle that ensures the becoming-active of all forces. Moreover, unlike those who understand the Overman as pursuing *self*-creation, Deleuze takes the Overman's creative activity to *actively undermine* traditional notions of subjectivity. This is fortuitous in as much as notions of self-creation are fraught with interpretive questions about how the self can be both the agent and object of creation without being a metaphysical substrate endowed with libertarian freedom, which Nietzsche rejects.[76] The cost of Deleuze's interpretation, though, is that he maintains an exceedingly high standard for what constitutes a life defined by creative activity. It is not enough for the forces comprising the subject to be organized into a cohesive interior that serves an active force; the subject needs to be 'opened' so that they resonate with and amplify active forces in the world.

4.3   The Will to Power Revisited: Desiring-Production

4.3.1   The Connection

Capitalism and Schizophrenia is taken to belong squarely within Deleuze's 'creative' work; he has already written in his own name – authoring *Difference and Repetition* and *the Logic of Sense* – and is now interested in extending his philosophical analysis into new registers by collaborating with Félix Guattari. This demarcation of Deleuze's works into historical, original, and collaborative periods is helpful in some cases, but it also risks obscuring continuity in Deleuze's development. In this section and the next, I demonstrate Nietzsche's lasting influence on Deleuze by showing how his interpretation of Nietzsche's will to power and the Overman figure in two central notions of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* – namely, desiring-production and nomadology.

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[76] For criticisms of this sense of self-creation as inconsistent with Nietzsche's view of the subject, see Leiter (1998) and Pippin (2009).

Throughout *Capitalism and Schizophrenia,* Deleuze and Guattari suggest underlying resonances between their claim that desire is productive and Nietzsche's notion of the will to power. The most overt of these suggestions takes the form of a shared enemy. Deleuze and Guattari's thesis that desire is productive is their most fundamental critique of the psychoanalytic understanding of desire as issuing from lack. It is therefore telling that they repeatedly describe psychoanalysts as *priests.* A representative quotation reads: "As Nietzsche put it, there never was but one psychology, that of the priest" (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 111). While this claim might initially seem obscure, it takes on depth when read against *Nietzsche and Philosophy,* where Deleuze argues that the whole of psychology belongs to *ressentiment*. Deleuze and Guattari run with this suggestion, claiming, "the most recent figure of the priest is the psychoanalyst" (1987, 154). One noteworthy parallel between Nietzsche's treatment of the priest in the *Genealogy* and Deleuze and Guattari's treatment of the psychoanalyst in *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* concerns their methods: just as the priestly class convinces others that the pain they experience from internalizing their instincts is evidence of their guilt, the psychoanalyst convinces modern subjects that their psychic frustration is evidence of their unconscious desire to kill their father and sleep with their mother (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 64-65). Deleuze and Guattari criticize the Oedipus complex in Nietzsche's terminology, describing it as "the double direction given to *ressentiment,* the turning back against oneself, and the projection against the Other: the father is dead, it's my fault, who killed him? it's your fault." They go on to write: "this whole *priest's psychology* – there is not a single one of these tactics that does not find in Oedipus its land of milk and honey" before concluding, psychoanalysis is "the new avatar of the 'ascetic ideal'" (269). The parallel continues when we consider how priests and psychoanalysts appeal to this sense of guilt to increase others' reliance upon them: priests convince subjects of their guilt and subsequently appeal to this guilt to

motivate Christianity's promise of redemption; psychoanalysts convince subjects that their libido is trapped within the family and then subsequently appeal to this psychic pain to motivate psychoanalysis' promise of psychological liberation. Moreover, similar to the way the Christian God's self-sacrifice results in an infinite sense of guilt and debt that cannot be repaid, psychoanalysts' notion of inexhaustible transference that makes analysis interminable (64-65; see also Schrift 1996, 342-43). In all of this, psychoanalysts, as Deleuze and Guattari view them, are building on of the priest's invention of the fiction of a force separated from what it can do (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 110-11). This is predictable insofar as Deleuze, in *Nietzsche and Philosophy,* claims that this is the origin of the subject of interiority.

Deleuze and Guattari's view of desire as productive must not be understood as a denial that lack is ever experienced. Rather, they argue that lack is not *constitutive* of desire, such that when lack is consciously experienced, this is an effect produced by desire at a more fundamental, unconscious level. They write: "needs are derived from desire; they are counterproductions within the real that desire produces. Lack is a countereffect of desire; it is deposited, distributed, vacuolized within a real that is natural and social" (27). To understand desire as constituted by lack is therefore to remain content with a superficial understanding of desire. You may *think* your desire for some object is defined by your lacking it, but beneath this conscious experience of lack is a complex series of unconscious machinations that produce your investment in the object in question and in the kind of subject who possesses it. There is a parallel here with Nietzsche's *Genealogy.* The suggestion that "life itself is will to power" (BGE 13) must address some rather obvious counterexamples – especially ascetics who make an ideal of denying life. Nietzsche addresses these counterexamples by showing that they are merely apparent: the ascetic ideal expresses the will to power of a particular, albeit unhealthy, mode of life (GM III.11). What seemed

like a denial of the will turns out to be proof of its ubiquity. This is Nietzsche's great discovery, that "man would rather will *nothingness* than *not* will" (GM III.28). Similarly, Deleuze and Guattari set out to prove that desire is fundamentally productive – but they need to address cases of repression. "Hence the goal of schizoanalysis: to analyze the specific nature of the libidinal investments in the economic and political spheres, and thereby to show how, in the subject who desires, desire can be made to desire its own repression" (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 105). Desire may turn back against itself, but it is not any less productive for that.

Deleuze and Guattari's view of desire as productive will strike us as counterintuitive if we remain committed to an understanding of desire as a property of a conscious subject. Desire, on their view, is not a property of individuals, but a non-anthropomorphic force that *produces* individuals. This view of desire as more fundamental than subjects is unsurprising when read against the backdrop of Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche. In *Nietzsche and Philosophy,* Deleuze not only claims that *will* is built into the fabric of reality, so to speak, but also that it contains an irreducible *evaluative* dimension, which expresses the affirmative or negative qualities of the will to power (Deleuze 1983, 54). Recall that, for Deleuze, the will to power is expressed in active and reactive forces, as well as their interaction, and that these forces produce bodies. The will to power is a non-anthropomorphic concept that produces subjects and objects alike. Deleuze and Guattari's analysis of desire proceeds similarly. This is why they claim that "desire is part of the infrastructure" (1983, 348, 104). Their point is not merely that desire is at work in the broader infrastructure which produces the various commodities that modern subjects desire. More fundamentally, desire *literally produces* objects. This is one reason why they analyze desiring *machines*, instead of desiring subjects – to emphasize that the subject is a field of desires. "The subject is produced as

a mere residuum alongside the desiring-machines" (17). Desire, like the will to power, produces subjects and objects alike.

If we further recall Deleuze's suggestion in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* that humanity is essentially reactive, we will not be surprised to learn that the productive character of desire escapes the attention of conscious subjects. We consciously attend only to reactive forces; we cannot consciously capture desire's activity without arresting part of this production. But beneath reactive forces and repressed desires, Deleuze posits an active and creative principle – the will to power and desiring-production. These are only some of the ways that Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche continues to operate in his collaboration with Guattari. But they suffice for us to appreciate a statement Deleuze makes shortly before the release of *A Thousand Plateaus:* "Desire: who, except priests, would call it 'lack'? Nietzsche called it 'will to power'" (Deleuze 2009, 91).

4.3.2   Appraising the Connection

To my knowledge, no one argues against reading desiring-production as a post-Freudian expression of Nietzsche's will to power (as Deleuze understands it). But a careful reader may notice a tension between Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche and the theory of desiring-production just described. In particular, one might think there is a tension between Deleuze's later notion of desiring-production and his earlier analysis of reactive forces operating at the level of the unconscious. That Deleuze reads Nietzsche alongside Freud at this point might make matters worse, as Freud is one of the principle targets of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia.* Perhaps this indicates that Deleuze breaks with his understanding of Nietzsche when collaborating with Guattari.

This worry is shallow, but explaining why it is misguided bolsters the case for reading desiring-production as a post-Freudian expression of the will to power. If we return to the relevant

portions of *Nietzsche and Philosophy,* we find that Deleuze does not claim that, for Nietzsche, the unconscious is reactive; rather, he claims that reactive forces are found in the unconscious, that part of "the reactive apparatus" is unconscious (Deleuze 1983, 112). Deleuze attaches a note to this statement, one that warns against the worry we are considering. He writes: "there are several kinds of unconscious in Nietzsche, but this unconscious must not be confused with that of reactive forces" (211 n.3; citing GM II.11, I.10). Here, Deleuze makes room for an active, or productive, unconscious in Nietzsche's philosophy. At the end of this section, we find a second note that mitigates these concerns further. Deleuze writes: "We can imagine what Nietzsche would have thought of Freud: once again he would have denounced a too 'reactive' conception of psychic life, an ignorance of true 'activity,' and inability to conceive and provoke the true 'transmutation'" (211 n.5). Not only does Deleuze foreshadow his later criticisms of the Freudian unconscious here. He also suggests that Nietzsche provides an alternative model of the unconscious that is pluralist and active.

In *Nietzsche and Philosophy,* Deleuze had not yet developed the notion of desiring-production. He seems to take for granted that desire refers to a lack of some kind. Yet, if we keep this in mind, Deleuze's emphatic contrast of the will to power with desire becomes revealing. In a representative passage, he writes: "What does 'will to power' mean? Not, primarily, that the will wants power, that it desires or seeks out power as an end, nor that power is the motive of the will. The expression 'desiring power' is no less absurd than 'willing to live'" (Deleuze 1983, 79; citing Z II.12; see also Deleuze 1983, xi; 80-82; 84-87). In contrasting the will to power with desire in such passages, Deleuze aims to show that "*the will to power is essentially creative and giving:* it does not aspire, it does not seek, it does not desire, above all it does not desire power. It *gives*" (85). Throughout *Nietzsche and Philosophy,* Deleuze insists that the will to power is *productive.*

4.4   The Overman Revisited: The Nomad War Machine

4.4.1   The Connection

One of the most creative and frequently discussed concepts from *A Thousand Plateaus* is the nomad war machine. Several scholars detect a Nietzschean influence in this concept.[77] But, to my knowledge, no one has specified the nature of this influence. I hope to rectify this by discussing the principal features of the nomad war machine before showing how it might plausibly be read as developing out of Deleuze's interpretation of the Overman in *Nietzsche and Philosophy.*

A principal aim of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* is to synthesize the insights of Marx and Freud into a theory of desiring-production. Asked whether individuals' psychological investments reduce to ideological structures or the reverse, Deleuze and Guattari reply that question presents a false choice; the libidinal and political economies are the same.[78] As we've seen, Deleuze and Guattari understand desire not as a property of individuals, but as a non-anthropomorphic force that produces individuals. Departing from Marxist and psychoanalytic vernacular alike, they analyze the libidinal-political economy in terms of 'flows' and 'codes.' These nominal notions cannot be defined apart from one another (Deleuze 2002, 291). There are flows of water, goods, ideas, populations, money, etc. – only on the condition that these flows are codified (Smith 2012, 160-61). And "desire is present wherever something flows" (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 105). As the codification of flows defines libidinal-political structures, Deleuze and Guattari hold that "the general theory of society is a generalized theory of flows" (1983, 262). They also analyze the codification of flows in terms of processes of de- and re-territoralization.

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[77] See Ansell-Pearson (1994, 178-79); Patton (2012, 202-03); Smith (2012, 403 n.72); Widder (2012, 133); and Shapiro (2014, 305).

[78] Note, however, that the libidinal-political economy is expressed under different regimes (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 31). For further discussion of this point, see Smith (2012, 162-63).

Anti-Oedipus offers a typology of social formations based on their codification of flows (33). Territorial societies trace flows to the earth (140-41) and codify them as territories, allocating flows according to lines of alliance and filiation (147). Despotic societies, or states, de-codify territorial societies' flows, before re-codifying them as abstract notions of property, labor, and money – which redirect flows to a ruling despot (197-99). Capitalist societies de-codify flows further still, generating abstract and self-replicating flows of capital, untethered from states' notions of property, labor, and money (226-28). The last type of social formation, introduced in *A Thousand Plateaus,* is nomadic. Unlike territorial, despotic, and capitalist societies, which de-codify and de-territorialize flows only to re-codify and re-territorialize them, nomadic societies oppose *all* codification and territorialization. They pursue absolute, rather than relative, de-codification and de-territorialization (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 229-30; 422-3; see also Patton 2000, 110).

The name 'nomad war machine' is something of a misnomer. The social formation has little to do with empirical cases of nomadic peoples. Deleuze and Guattari also emphasize that the nomad war machine "*in no way has war as its object*" but instead aims to produce "mutations" (1987, 229; see also Patton 2000, 117-19). A more illuminating means of characterizing this mutation machine is by noting that it is "exterior to the state apparatus" (Deleuze and Guattari 1987, 351). The other principle aspects of the war machine – e.g. its relationship to space, number, and affect – are explained through this opposition. In fact, the nomad war machine actively *combats* the apparatus of capture that Deleuze and Guattari call 'the State.'

In *Nietzsche and Philosophy,* Deleuze argues that Nietzsche's critique of reactive values entails the creation of new values, and new forms of culture, distinct from those that "benefit the state" (1983, 106). Drawing heavily from Nietzsche's "Schopenhauer as Educator," Deleuze

suggests that genuine philosophy and genuine culture actively oppose the state (109; citing UM III. 4, 6, 8). This fits with Deleuze's analysis of culture – in its dominant, historical form – as the production of docile subjects of interiority, or, to use his later terminology, as an apparatus of capture. That Deleuze remains committed to this reading of Nietzsche is seen in his post-*Anti-Oedipus* description of traditional philosophy as a project that "conforms to the goals of the real state, to the dominant meanings and the requirements of the established order," after which he adds, "Nietzsche said everything on this point in *Schopenhauer Educator* [sic]" (Deleuze and Parnet 2007, 13). Depending on how much weight we give Nietzsche's early essays, Deleuze's contention that Nietzsche is a thorough critic of the state might seem like an overstatement. But there are many later texts where Nietzsche criticizes nation states. For example, he calls state-centered politics "a politics of dissolution" and a mere "*entr'acte* politics" (BGE 256). He also insists that states are more historically fluid than we typically think (BGE 251; Z I.11). Nietzsche's works also contain various repudiations of nationalism, as many scholars sympathetic to Nietzsche emphasize (e.g., GS 377; BGE 242, 256). Perhaps more surprisingly, Nietzsche celebrates "the nomadic life" made possible by "a weakening and finally an abolition of nations" (HH I.475) and promotes "an essentially supra-national and nomadic type" (BGE 242). Even if he doesn't provide citations for it, Deleuze is attentive to this dimension of Nietzsche's thinking. He characterizes Nietzsche as one of the few "nomad thinkers" in the history of philosophy (Deleuze and Parnet 2007, 32).

In addition to these strong thematic resonances between Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche and his concept of the nomad war machine, there may be a case for Nietzsche's direct influence here. Shortly before the release of *Anti-Oedipus* (1972), Deleuze is interviewed about his collaboration with Foucault on volume one of the French edition of Nietzsche's complete works.

In that March 1968 interview, he describes the importance of pursuing the death of Man in the wake of the death of God (Deleuze 2002, 137). Deleuze emphasizes the political applications of this point, stating, "Individuation is no longer enclosed […] This is really important, especially politically […] the forces of repression always need a Self that can be assigned, they need determinate individuals on which they can assign their power" (138). Not only is the subject an effect of forces; it is an effect of the same forces that produce the State. Deleuze also underscores how Nietzsche's analysis of subjects as multiplicities of forces marks a turning point in philosophy here, stating: "we get the feeling that we can't go on writing philosophy books in the old style much longer" (141). After the events of May '68, Deleuze and Guattari release *Anti-Oedipus*: a book that breaks with the 'old style' and fights against repressed, Oedipal subject in favor of desiring-production. In the intervening years before the publication of *A Thousand Plateaus,* Deleuze authors another essay on Nietzsche, entitled "Nomad Thought" (1972). There he suggests that Nietzsche's philosophy pursues "decodification […] in an absolute sense" (1985, 143). Harkening back to his critique of interiority from *Nietzsche and Philosophy,* but now reading Nietzsche alongside Blanchot, Deleuze describes Nietzsche as placing thought in "relation with the outside, the exterior" (144). He then describes this procedure as *nomadism*, "a perpetual displacement of intensities" outside the subject of interiority (146). After recalling Nietzsche's account of the imposition of the state by masters in the *Genealogy,* Deleuze first introduces the concept of the "nomad war machine," which is "extrinsic" to the state, but "correlative, interrelated" with it (148). The essay concludes by describing nomad thought as a counter-philosophy that transforms thought into a battering ram of creative affirmation (149). Years later, amidst Deleuze and Guattari's elaboration on the nomad war machine, we are brought back to Nietzsche. Not only do they tell us that, "Nietzsche's *Schopenhauer as Educator* is perhaps the greatest critique ever

directed against the image of thought and its relation to the state", they also suggest that the nomad war machine is "a strange undertaking whose precise procedures can be studied in Nietzsche" (376-77). The influence is undeniable.

When encountering Deleuze's later description of nomads as "machines of mutation" (Deleuze and Parnet 2007, 132), it is difficult not to recall his earlier description of the Overman in terms of "*transmutation*" (Deleuze 1983, 71). Granted, Deleuze had not developed the concept of desiring-machines at this time, but there is a parallel in the way both concepts pursue de-subjectivation by destroying interiority and enabling creative affirmation. In "Nomad Thought," Deleuze further describes Nietzsche's philosophy in these terms, as bringing about a "transmutation" of thought through a critique of interiority (Deleuze 1985, 147). The parallel is not merely semantic. The life of affirmative activity, for Deleuze, entails continual transformation. On one level, this is a process of becoming-Overman, of opening the subject to the outside by heightening the intensity of its active forces. On another level, this is a process of becoming-nomadic, of opening a social milieu to the exterior, again, by unleashing active forces. Zarathustra asks: "where the state *ends* – look there, my brothers! Do you not see it, the rainbow and the bridges of the overman?" (Z I.11). Deleuze answers affirmatively.

4.4.2   Appraising the Connection

One might worry that the foregoing analysis commits a kind of category mistake. Nietzsche's Overman is a type of *individual* and the nomad war machine is a type of *social formation.* In light of the differences between individuals and societies, it may seem problematic to transpose Deleuze's reading of the Overman to the level of social configurations. To mitigate this concern, we might note that individuals and societies have been analogized at least since Plato's *Republic*, where Socrates analyzes cities as macrocosms of individuals' characters (368b-69b). But in the

case of Deleuze's philosophy, these comparisons are less strained than they might be for Socrates. Attending to Nietzsche's descriptions of the individual as "a society constructed out of drives and affects" (BGE 12; see also BGE 19), Deleuze takes Nietzsche to understand individuals as comprised of forces. He draws a similar conclusion from Nietzsche's analysis of social organizations in terms of active and reactive forces (GM II.18), which helps explain Nietzsche's view that individuals and societies mutually shape one another (BGE 66; TI IX.44). Deleuze carries this view forward with Guattari. Their identification of the libidinal and political economies denies any hard distinction between individuals and societies, even if they analyze individuals and societies in terms of syntheses of flows and codes rather than forces. For Deleuze, and for Deleuze's Nietzsche, individuals and societies differ not in their constitutive elements, but in relative complexity. Interactions of active and reactive forces, of flows and codes produce individuals and societies alike.

Yet, this reply is still too deferential. For one of the primary points advanced by Deleuze is that the Overman should *not* be understood as a subject with interiority, but as an *activity* that pursues the subject's exterior. The temptation to understand the nomad war machine as a type of society must likewise be resisted. Counterintuitive though it may seem, none of Deleuze and Guattari's social formations exclude the others. When they write that, "war machines have a *power of metamorphosis,* which of course allows them to be captured by States," they do not contradict their definition of the war machine as essentially opposed to states (1987, 437). Rather, they are underscoring the way each social formation mixes with others in a "coexistence of becomings" (430). The nomad war machine designates *forces* of social transformation, when flows are de-codified and de-territorialized. Societies re-codify and re-territorialize in the wake of the war machine. Deleuze and Guattari describe the effect of reading Nietzsche's aphorisms in similar

terms, writing, "unity is constantly thwarted and obstructed in the object, while a new type of unity triumphs in the subject" (6). But the likenesses between the Overman and the nomad war machine as transformative processes shouldn't be overshadowed by the way these processes are followed by interiority, re-codification, and re-territorialization.

A different worry one might have with the foregoing analysis is whether Deleuze's interpretation of Nietzsche remains consistent from *Nietzsche and Philosophy* to *A Thousand Plateaus.* Paul Patton raises a version of this concern when he emphasizes the striking differences between Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy* and his reading of Nietzsche in "Nomad Thought" and *A Thousand Plateaus.* Patton suggest that "the first is a rigorous and systematic thinker who constructed a philosophy of nature around the complex concept of the will to power," whereas "the second Nietzsche hardly belongs in philosophy at all. He is rather the inventor of a new kind of discourse, a counter-philosophy that is defined by its essential relation to the outside" (Patton 2010, 11-12). Emphasizing the difference between Deleuze's systematic and his fragmentary readings of Nietzsche, Patton concludes, "Deleuze's successive treatment of Nietzsche present us with a different thinker on each occasion" (12). Perhaps, then, there is not a line of continuity running from *Nietzsche and Philosophy* through Deleuze's later works as I have suggested.

Patton is correct that Deleuze's early reflections on Nietzsche emphasize the systematicity of his thought whereas Deleuze's later reflections present him as a fragmentary thinker. However, I think that this does not reflect a change in Deleuze's understanding of Nietzsche. It reflects a change in Deleuze's focus. His early work undertakes an analysis of the *content* of Nietzsche's thought, including Nietzsche's criticism of traditional philosophy as dogmatic (1983, 103-10). His later work extends this analysis by examining how Nietzsche's *style* facilitates his philosophical aims. Hence Deleuze's later reflections emphasize Nietzsche's use of aphorisms and the

distinctively literary style of *Zarathustra* (Deleuze 1985, 144-46). Deleuze praises Nietzsche's writing style for the way it refuses to be subdued, for the way it continually invites connections with other texts, with other forces. Thus, in *A Thousand Plateaus,* we read: "an aphorism always awaits its meaning from a new external force, a final force that might conquer and subjugate it" (1987, 377). Nietzsche's style is commendable because it encourages readers to attend to their own interpretive activity. If we are to avoid interpreting Deleuze as praising obscurity for obscurity's sake, this praise of Nietzsche's style must be read with *Nietzsche and Philosophy* in mind. There, Deleuze interprets Nietzsche as a virulent critic of all becoming-reactive, which lies at the origin of the subject of interiority, and as a triumphantly affirmative thinker who promotes activity. Nietzsche's style is commendable because it expresses the aims that Deleuze attributes to Nietzsche in his early study of him.

4.5   Conclusion

Nietzsche and Philosophy is a highly original study of an exceedingly difficult thinker within the history of philosophy. Nevertheless, Deleuze's interpretations of Nietzsche's concepts of the will to power and of the Overman, while innovative, are not so far from Nietzsche's texts that they merit attention only from those interested in Deleuze. Nietzsche scholars can benefit from attending to Deleuze's unique responses to the longstanding interpretive difficulties surrounding these vexed topics. But Deleuze scholars can also benefit from revisiting *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. Not only does this work contain nascent versions of Deleuze's later notions of desiring-production and the nomad war machine, as I argue, it also contains the seeds of Deleuze's transcendental empiricism, of his rejection of the dogmatic image of thought, and of his understanding of philosophy as a process of concept creation. For those who think such paths of inquiry remain overly committed to the 'old style' of philosophy, though, perhaps there is still something to be

gleaned from the foregoing discussion, as it suggests that the most innovative aspects of Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche lie elsewhere than in his interpretations of the will to power and the Overman. In particular, Deleuze's interpretation of the eternal recurrence as a selective ontological principle is highly creative, perhaps implausibly so. A similar statement could be made about Deleuze's contention that "the whole of Nietzsche's philosophy" is an attack on Hegel's dialectic (Deleuze 1983, 196). But even here, as in Deleuze's creative readings of other figures from the history of philosophy, there is a sense in which Deleuze remains thoroughly Nietzschean. For Deleuze takes Nietzsche's "greatest lesson" to be that "to think is to create" (xiv).

4.6   References

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D   *Daybreak.* Edited by Maudemarie Clark and Brian Leiter. Translated by R.J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

EH   *Ecce Homo*. Translated by Judith Norman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

GM   *On the Genealogy of Morality*. Translated by Maudemarie Clark and Alan J. Swensen. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998.

GS   *The Gay Science*. Translated by Josefine Naukhoff and Adrian Del Caro. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

HH   *Human, All-Too Human.* Translated by R.J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

KSA   *Kritische Studienausgabe.* 15 vols. Edited by Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1999.

TI   *Twilight of the Idols.* Translated by Judith Norman. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

UM   *Untimely Meditations.* Translated by R.J. Hollingdale. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

WP   *The Will to Power.* Translated by Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale. New York: Vintage, 1968.

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