

The Political Implications of Nietzsche's Perspectivism

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Abstract

In the first chapter of my doctoral thesis, entitled *The Political Implications of Nietzsche's Perspectivism*, I argue that due to conflicting passages present throughout his *oeuvre*, Nietzsche is best understood as a twofold metaphysical sceptic. That is, a sceptic about the existence of the external world, and consequently, as a sceptic about such a world's correspondence to our perspectives. Nietzsche presents a threefold conceptualization of 'nihilism' and a twofold one of the 'will to power.' Neutral nihilism is humanity's inescapable condition of having no non-humanly created meanings and values. This state can be interpreted positively as an opportunity to create one's own meanings and values, or negatively as a terrifying incentive to return to dogmatism. The will to power is life before and as it becomes life, the unqualified will to power, and all the realities in it, the qualifiable will to power. The combination of these ontological concepts brings me to my second chapter and to the determination of Nietzsche's general epistemology: perspectivism. Perspectivism is an admittedly created, ontologically derived interpretation of knowledge, which both entails and goes beyond relativism. Nietzsche's perspectivism is constructed to support any norm that allows for univocal evaluations, not just Nietzsche's. Moreover, it can be derived from any ontology that conceptualizes life as a unit of growth and decay and human beings as creators of all their perspectives. These two elastic concepts allow me to propose, in my third chapter, that, although his texts disavow an all-inclusive democracy in favour of a new spiritual aristocracy, on the one hand, the proper political implications of perspectivism allow for democracy, while on the other hand, Nietzsche can be read as disapproving of an all inclusive or representative democracy, yet as approving of the direct democracy that arises naturally among elite peers.

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List of Abbreviations

The Birth of Tragedy, Or: Hellenism and Pessimism (c1872): BT;

Homer's Contest, Preface to an Unwritten Book (1872): HC;

On Truth and Lies in an Extra-moral Sense (c1873): OTL;

On the Use and Abuse of History for Life (c1874) from *Untimely Meditations, Thoughts Out of Season, Parts I and II*: UAH;

Human, All-Too-Human, A Book for Free Spirits (c1878/1880): HATH;

Assorted Opinions and Maxims (c1879): AOM;

The Wanderer and His Shadow (c1880): WS;

The Dawn of Day (c1881): DD;

The Gay Science (c1882/1887): GS;

Beyond Good and Evil, Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future (c1886): BGE;

Thus Spoke Zarathustra, A Book for All and None (c1884/5): Z;

On the Genealogy of Morals, A Polemic (c1887): GM;

The Antichrist, An Attempt at a Critique of Christianity (1888/posthumous c1895): A;

Ecce Homo, How One Becomes What One Is (1888/posthumous c1908): EH;

Twilight of the Idols, Or How One Philosophizes with a Hammer (c1889): TI;

The Will to Power (posthumous, c1904): WP.

For everyone's ease, rather than using the traditional *Kritische Gesamtausgabe Werke und Briefe*, in my bibliographical references, Nietzsche's works are abbreviated as noted above, followed by the name or number of the essay, the number of the section and the page number, i.e., (GM, II, §11, p. 511).

Introduction

During my exegetical research, I realized that my doctoral thesis, entitled *The Political Implications of Nietzsche's Perspectivism*, constituted a search for answers to two questions: what are perspectivism's textual political implications, and what are the political implications that emerge from its proper application? My realization illustrates the adverse effects of Nietzsche's writings being (in)famously cryptic: employing aphorisms and storytelling instead of developing philosophical essays.

Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche is a complex thinker who notoriously presents his theories unconventionally and thus obscurely. Nietzsche consciously uses poetry, aphorisms, narratives and the like in his philosophy.¹ In 1888, he proposes that his multiple styles are the result of a rich inner life that is filled with many different inner states: "To communicate a state, an inward tension of pathos, by means of signs, including the tempo of these signs — that is the meaning of every style; and considering that the multiplicity of inward states is exceptionally large in my case, I have many stylistic possibilities — the most multifarious art of style" (EH, Books, §4, p. 721). Nietzsche claims that the diversity of one's outward styles depends on the diversity of one's inward states. Conscious of his variety of styles and of the interpretational difficulties they present, as the self-professed author of "the first language for a new series of experiences," he expects that of his works: "simply nothing will be heard, but there will be the acoustic illusion that where nothing is heard, nothing is there. This is, in the end, my average experience and, if you will, the originality of my experience" (EH, Books, §1 p. 717). He claims that the philosoph-

¹ William H. F. Altman (2013) offers an example of a contemporary use of Nietzsche's own style in an analysis of this complex, since largely unintentional and unrecognized, relationship to his era and the Second Reich.

ical vacuity that is attributed to his writings is merely an illusion. Having something to say and the gradually diminishing hope of being heard and understood, Nietzsche wrote profusely until his last lucid year.²

Given Nietzsche's various styles, many conflicting interpretations of his philosophy arise.³ In large measure because of his stylistic choices, Nietzsche is considered by some readers and interpreters as being too convoluted to reconstruct into useful philosophical theories; such readers relegate him to literary analyses. Others read Nietzsche as proposing theories that however are either plainly incoherent or an "attempt to abolish all decent feelings" (EH, Books, §1, p. 716). He was aware of these last two streams of misinterpretation; they are respectively represented by the reviews of Spitteler and Widmann of his books *Thus Spoke Zarathustra, A Book for All and None*, and *Beyond Good and Evil, Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*. Thus, in his next book, in 1887, he writes, in his own preemptive defence:

² Paul Valadier (1998) claims that Nietzsche wishes not for disciples, but to transform his readers' perspectives; for although our morality changes, its dichotomies and effects remains the same. Joseph Westfall (2009) proposes an understanding of Nietzsche's style as *maieutic* achieved via irony, and Tracy B. Strong (2010) details further how Nietzsche aims to transform his readers. Christa Davis Acampora (2006a) proposes an explanation of the interplay, especially in and for Nietzsche, of reading and rewriting, or artfully appropriating, a text. Babette E. Babich (2006) claims that Nietzsche's aphoristic style affects his readers' convictions; although, Nietzsche was painful worried the he would be misread, and his tones, misheard. Christopher Janaway (2007) proposes that Nietzsche writes stylistically to interact with his readers and affect their affects, and thereby their perceptions of certain phenomena, such as morality or the variety of interpretations we give suffering. For instance, Janaway claims that morality is essential for human survival, yet to be healthy and desirable, it must allow us to perfect ourselves. Completing Janaway's impulse, David Owen (2008) proposes that Nietzsche's perspectivism serves knowledge's transformative effect. I likewise claim that all of Nietzsche's writings share this effect.

³ According to David Couzens Hoy (1994), Nietzsche understands the facts in genealogy as themselves interpretations, which must be interpreted. Couzens Hoy proposes that this explains the divergence among interpretations. He claims further that no interpretation is false in itself; each depends upon its interpretational context for acceptability or refusal as a valid explanation.

If this book is incomprehensible to anyone and jars on his ears, the fault, it seems to me, is not necessarily mine. It is clear enough, assuming, as I do assume, that one has first read my earlier writings and has not spared some trouble in doing so: for they are, indeed, not easy to penetrate. ... To be sure, one thing is necessary above all if one is to practice reading as an *art* in this way, something that has been unlearned most thoroughly nowadays — and therefore it will be some time before my writings are 'readable' — something for which one has almost to be a cow and in any case *not* a 'modern man': *ruminatio* (GM, P, §8, pp. 458-459).

Nietzsche claims that if his book is misunderstood, the fault lies more heavily upon his readers, who have not ruminated about their readings. When ruminating, cows digest the same cud over multiple times; thus, similarly, Nietzsche expects his readers to reread and reconsider the same writings. In addition, to understand his book, Nietzsche expects that his readers have read his previous works multiple times and have let them sink in and swirl around, that is, that they have ruminated about all their readings.

Regarding the exegetical portion of this thesis, then, since Nietzsche in his later works references his earlier works and rewrites their prefaces, my reading of his theories draws from his lifetime of various published works (as well as those clearly intended for publication⁴). As an illustration, I refer to this passage from his 1887 book, *On the Genealogy of Morals, A Polemic*, which refers to his 1878 book: "My ideas on the origins of our moral prejudices — for this is the subject of this polemic — received their first, brief, and provisional expression in the collection aphorisms that bears the title *Human, All-Too-Human, A Book for Free Spirits* ... let us hope the long interval has done them good, that they have become riper, clearer, stronger, more perfect" (GM, P, §2, p. 452)! Nietzsche claims that its ideas have been ruminating for nine years.

⁴ The posthumously published, *The Will to Power*, is only used once for its literary convenience in highlighting an idea also found in published passages, as Nietzsche's intent for the publication of this work is questionable due to its manipulations by others after his incapacitation as well as to my uncertainty regarding his overall intent for readers to access his (letters and) notes.

He goes on to state that he expects his readers to have ruminated their readings of his earlier works too and to have submitted each of his aphorisms to an exegesis as exemplified by its *Third Essay*. Likewise, in his final book from 1888, *Ecce Homo, How One Becomes What One Is*, Nietzsche writes that his 1876 *Richard Wagner in Bayreuth* can be reread with 'Zarathustra' or 'Nietzsche' in place of 'Wagner' as the "pre-existent poet of *Zarathustra*" (EH, BT, §4, p. 730). He is claiming an intimacy between writings at least seven years apart. Only of his first book, from 1872, *The Birth of Tragedy, Or: Hellenism and Pessimism*, does he warn: "to be fair to [it], one has to forget a few things" (EH, BT, §1, p. 726). Even when seen from the distance of fifteen years, Nietzsche's last two *Untimely Meditations, Thoughts Out of Season*, still "at bottom they speak only of me" (EH, UO, §3, p. 737). In accordance with Nietzsche's admitted continuity of thought over his lifework and his desire to be ruminated upon, that is, to be given lengthy efforts in reading and reflecting, I draw from across Nietzsche's works to reassemble his theories and offer interpretations that best accommodate his apparent paradoxes.⁵

Despite the difficulties for interpretation that are posed by Nietzsche's writings and style, he insists that his ideas are worth the effort of rumination they intentionally purposefully require. In 1888, his last productive year, he writes: "Let us look ahead a century; let us suppose that my

⁵ "I have a subtler sense of smell for the signs of ascent and decline than any other human being before me; I am the teacher *par excellence* for this - I know both, I am both" (EH, Wise §1, p. 678).

attempt to assassinate two millennia of antinature and desecration of man were to succeed"⁶ (EH, BT, §4, p. 730). Nietzsche claims that his theories are ahead of their time and that their audience is yet to come,⁷ yet he acknowledges that his philosophical offerings are not easily accessible due to both their form and their content.

Still, aware of the genuine question that charitable readers could ask him, Nietzsche writes, in their voices: "What are you really doing, erecting an ideal or knocking one down?" I may perhaps be asked" (GM, II, §24, p. 531). To answer this question, my doctoral thesis, which ultimately endeavours to determine the political implications of Nietzsche's perspectivism, initially provides his account of ideals and, more generally, of metaphysics. The current readings of Nietzsche on metaphysics are divided into seeing him either as an abolisher or as a sustainer of metaphysics, similar to the ancient Academics and Dogmatists, since he writes passages that support each stance. However, my first chapter argues that my reading of Nietzsche as a twofold metaphysical sceptic offers a more satisfactory interpretation of his paradoxical passages. I read them as congruent, since he claims that some metaphysics is essential to human surviving and thriving. The passages that support the destruction of metaphysics, I argue, only concern traditio-

⁶ This rest of this passage is written so that the reader wonders and has to verify, if Nietzsche is referencing the sixth section of *The Birth of Tragedy* as Karl Schlechta advances, or that of *Richard Wagner in Bayreuth* (c1876), as Walter Kaufmann counters:

I promise a tragic age: the highest art in Yes saying to life, tragedy, will be reborn when humanity has weathered the consciousness of the hardest but most necessary wars *without suffering from it*. ... and no more magnificent expression could be found for the *event* of *Zarathustra*, the act of a tremendous purification and consecration of humanity, than was found in section 6 (EH, BT, §4, p. 730).

I agree that Nietzsche is sending his reader to *RWB*, as the three previous references can only pertain to it; there, he writes of "two tremendous acts of purifications and consecration to accomplish" (RWB, §6, p. 220).

⁷ See Robert C. Holub (1992) for an interpretation in which Nietzsche is neither as untimely as he would like, when taken in context, nor is he the precursor to post-modernism.

nal dogmatic metaphysics; while the supportive passages, only his own metaphysical scepticism, which he pragmatically populates with the concepts of nihilism and the will to power.

My attempt to determine the meanings of these ontological concepts is respectively undertaken in the second and third sections of the first chapter. Since Nietzsche is unsure of the existence of reality independently of humanity, as we cannot escape our perspectives to make such a determination, which is to say that there is neither a non-humanly-perspectival, nor an omni-perspectival, nor an extra-perspectival view of reality that is ever available to humans, and since, accordingly, he must be unsure of our perspectives' correspondence to the posit of such a reality, nihilism describes the foundation of the human experience. It is our natural state of meaninglessness and valuelessness. If we are unsure of the existence and therefore nature of an independent reality, then we must also be unsure of its independent meaning and value. All we can know are our own experiences, meanings and values. Nihilism is itself a neutral event, but its realization can be a positive or a negative experience. Negatively interpreting nihilism entails either a paralyzing terror before the infinite possible meanings and values or a conscious return to a dogmatic stance that denies nihilism. Positively interpreting nihilism entails celebrating and utilizing its infinite possibilities. Nietzsche claims that the choice of how one interprets nihilism depends on one's type as a will to power.

Thus, 'the will to power' is both an ontological and an anthropological term. It describes the fundamental building-blocks of all reality. Whatever exists, exists because it is the same unqualified will to power. Yet, 'the will to power' also describes every component of reality. Whatever exists, exists as a qualifiable will to power. Nietzsche claims that depending on its specific qualities, each human will to power is qualifiable into one of five types: master, slave, priest, ill

master and the *Übermensch*. His ideal type, the *Übermensch*, has as its main traits: an acceptance of perspectivism that engenders the noble tolerance of having the great health, an affirmation of all of itself and life through the test of the eternal recurrence, a socially stabilizing ability to sanction promises, an incorporation of its communities' interests into its own self-interest, which results in the egotistical altruism of a collective individual and a balance of the masterly care for the body and its instincts with the slavish one for the intellect and reason. Nietzsche destroys all dogmatic metaphysics so he can replace them with his twofold metaphysical scepticism. In 1888, he writes that his books from *Beyond Good and Evil*, *Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future* on explore the destruction required for the affirmative proposals of his previous writings. "After the Yes-saying part of my task had been solved, the turn had come for the No-saying, *No-doing* part" (EH, BGE, §1, p. 766). Given this procedural inversion, not only could Nietzsche aim to both destroy and rebuild metaphysics, but some of his later concepts, such as 'the *Übermensch*' or the 'will to power,' could have already been developed in his earlier works, although namelessly.⁸

With these interpretational obstacles as well as Nietzsche's perspectives on metaphysics in mind, in the second chapter, I examine his theory of knowledge as derived from the combination of his ontological and anthropological positions. It would indeed seem that how human beings know the world depends on what they and it are. Perspectivism, I propose, is Nietzsche's constructed, relativistic, general epistemology, which moves beyond its relativism by adopting his proposed norm of evaluation. Nietzsche's suggested standard is based on and meant to mimic his observation that life generates both self-affirming vigorous forms and self-denying decrepit ones, but it favours the former over the latter. Thus, he proposes that perspectives are equal in their

⁸ In *Nietzsche et la métaphore* (1972), Sarah Kofman states that this is the case for his concept of 'the will to power.'

ability to preserve human beings and life, so they must be also judged by their unequal ability to enhance the self-affirming vitality of their individual holders, their societies, humanity and life. In addition, Nietzsche claims that although it is as unverifiable as every general epistemology, by being admittedly interpretative, his perspectivism is better than traditional theories of knowledge at accounting for the personal and shared perspectives that each human being as a qualifiable will to power inevitably makes or holds. For instance, perspectival objectivity is the gathering of as many different perspectives as possible. Nietzsche claims that his perspectivism triumphs over dogmatic perspectives that deny that they are shared metaphors, deny that they serve life, or deny that competing perspectives exist or have any legitimacy.

With Nietzsche's perspectivism determined, in the third chapter of my thesis, I turn to its main question: what are the proper and textual political implications of perspectivism? I argue that the proper application of Nietzsche's perspectivism implies a flexible multi-leader procedural political system, which is mostly coherence focused, non-exclusive, participatory and discursive; although in his books, he advocates new spiritual aristocracy. In accordance with Nietzsche's position that he is firmly anti-democratic, I propose the original reading that the internal organization of his proposed aristocracy is a direct democracy. Thus, despite his claims to be anti-democratic, I argue that Nietzsche admires the elitist direct democracies that occur naturally among the ruling, noble peers. Since Nietzsche claims that being more wary of social obligations given their noble characteristics, the masters initially only congregate together, and being exclusively among peers, they naturally arrive at stable political compromises that are mutual and fair and wherein justice is understood as 'equality for the equal, and inequality for the unequal'; which is to say that they establish an elitist direct democracy. I propose that Nietzsche's aversion is thus only to

inclusive democracy. Largely, since it limits public *agon* by its universal concept of absolute equality, which favours the levelling-down of its citizens and stifles their differences. Nietzsche repudiates inclusive democracies, except for the adaptive powers they infuse in their citizens; powers which he proposes his foreseen aristocrats can employ, if they are not so few that they must maintain their distance from the masses.

I end the chapter by proposing that the political implications of Nietzsche's perspectivism as he describes them overtly do not coincide with the political implications proper to his perspectivism after thorough and fair interpretation. Yet, given its compatibility with other ontologies and norms, such as Mill's, Nietzsche's perspectivism and its proper political implications are compatible with and therefore relevant in our contemporary liberal democracies. In addition, although they are perhaps undesirable, the prerequisites of Nietzsche's aristocrats, perspectivism, sovereign promising and positive nihilism, are also currently vaguely feasible. First, like pluralism, perspectivism embraces the given that individuals are equally freely able to form their own ideas of the good and right, whether or not they do. Yet unlike pluralism, Nietzsche's perspectivism embraces a substantive norm for their evaluation. Second, even if genuine, promises are currently mostly unsanctioned: they may be broken in certain circumstances. Sanctioned promises are kept from personal integrity, not moral obligation, and thus, they are unbreakable and demonstrate and enhance (self-) respect(s), hence their rarity. Third, despite the current pluralism, nihilism is still mostly unconscious as shown by the current faith in science and grammar as absolute truth-tellers.

I conclude my doctoral thesis, which endeavoured to determine the political implications of Nietzsche's perspectivism, by proposing that appropriating Nietzsche's philosophy is both

questionable and defensible: questionable, as many gruesome interpretations can be and were drawn from it; defensible, as his perspectivism is sceptical, inclusive, amenable to a variety of shared standards for the evaluation of our manifold available perspectives, and thereby, its appropriate political implications are procedural fairness with political equality, which are consistent with and may even enhance contemporary liberal democracies.

Chapter One

The Metaphysics of Nietzsche's Perspectivism

In 1887, towards the end of his writing career, Nietzsche proposes that perspectivism, which avoids the more contentious term of "appearance" (OTL, I, p. 260), deals with the common superficial world that it is necessary for human beings to create in order for their consciousness to emerge:

This is the essence of phenomenalism and perspectivism as I understand them: Owing to the nature of *animal consciousness*. The world of which we can become conscious is only a surface- and sign-world, a world that is made common and meaner; whatever becomes conscious *becomes* by the same token shallow, thin, relatively stupid, general, sign, herd signal; all becoming conscious involves a great and through corruption, falsification, reduction to superficialities, and generalization (GS, V, §354, pp. 299-300).

Nietzsche claims that in order to become conscious, we must generate perspectives that confine our individual experiences of world to superficialities that can be shared. Perspectivism is therefore a theory of knowledge. Thus, before I proceed to determining the political implications of Nietzsche's perspectivism, I must begin by establishing his position on the nature of reality apart from humanity, that is, his metaphysics. For, one's position on metaphysics contains one's general theory about the ultimate components of reality, or one's ontology, and one's ontology generates anthropological claims, or a theory about the specific nature of human beings. In addition, once one's ontological and anthropological claims combine, they yield one's theory about the knowledge that human beings have of reality, or one's general epistemology. Therefore, the related questions of Nietzsche's approach to and conception of metaphysics, and more notably of consciousness, arise before the implications of his perspectivism can be settled.

Nietzsche is renowned for his apparently contradictory positions on a variety of issues, including the metaphysical queries about the existence of an independent, objective, absolute truth or reality. In some passages, Nietzsche clearly denies their possibility (EH, Human, §6); in others, he just as firmly affirms their existence (EH, Z, §6), and in others still, he seems unsure and (re-⁹)states, in a seemingly aporetic manner: "What are man's truths ultimately? Merely his *irrefutable* errors" (GS, III, §265, p. 219). These three passages seem contradictory. For, together they cover all the main stances on metaphysics as proposed by the Ancient Pyrrhonist, Sextus Empiricus.

In *Book I* of his *Outlines of Scepticism*, Sextus Empiricus proposes that the Dogmatists are the ones who assert truths; they "think that they have discovered truth" (i, p. 3). They firmly answer metaphysical queries affirmatively. Conversely, the Academics are those who definitely deny that truths are possible; "things cannot be apprehended" (*Ibid.*). That is, they firmly answer the same questions negatively. Lastly, Sextus Empiricus proposes that the Sceptics, like himself, are the ones who lack certainty in their answers to metaphysical questions. For that reason, they postpone their judgements and pursue their questioning. Sceptics only posit provisional realities and they do so only for pragmatic purposes: "it appears to us that honey sweetens (we concede this inasmuch as we are sweetened in a perceptual way); but whether (as far as the argument goes) it is actually sweet is something we investigate - and this is not what is apparent but something said about what is apparent" (Sextus, x, p. 8). Henceforth, I shall apply these distinctions, which cover the main possible directions for a position on metaphysics, to distinguish the main

⁹ Much earlier, he wrote conversely: "Insofar, however, as all metaphysics has had principally to do with substance and freedom of will, one may designate it the science that treats of the fundamental errors of mankind — but does so as though they were fundamental truths" (HATH, I, §18, p. 22).

readings regarding Nietzsche's approach to and conception of metaphysics, since, given his contrasting claims about metaphysics, some interpreters read him as being a Dogmatist, others read him as being an Academic, and others still, as being a Sceptic.

1.1 Nietzsche's Perspectives on Metaphysics

Those¹⁰ who read Nietzsche as an Academic hold that he completely discards metaphysics and denies even the possibility of objective truth, offering only a destructive critical philosophy. On this interpretation, Nietzsche proposes no replacement for the metaphysics he aims to destroy, and his philosophy maintains no positive metaphysical position. That is, it asserts no views about the nature of reality or about what is ultimately true.

On one end of this interpretive scale, Babich writes, in "Self-Deconstruction: Nietzsche's Philosophy as Style" (1990), that Nietzsche's "truths" are aimed at:

those individuals physically and spiritually constituted with the power to face what is no ultimate vision of truth but only the emptiness behind the masks of culture, to see reality and to savour this raw reality in the moment purchased by laughter and delight, until, as it eternally recurs, the balance of life shudders and decays (p. 114).

Babich claims that for Nietzsche, there are no objective truths behind the masks that humans place upon reality; there is no absolute truth for one to seek or proclaim. Understanding is always appropriating and thus always misunderstanding. "Any activity of understanding necessarily transforms its object, appropriates it from its own perspective and for its own possibilities, and

¹⁰ According to André Stanguennec's *Le questionnement moral de Nietzsche* (2005), because the will to power allows one to conceive of multiple possible perspectives on a single phenomenon, Nietzsche's genealogy is not metaphysical but phenomenological. For more readings of Nietzsche as an Academic, see Rudi Visker's "Can Genealogy be Critical? A Somewhat Unromantic Look at Nietzsche and Foucault" (1990) and Micheal Allan Gillespie's "Nietzsche and the Premodernist Critique of Postmodernity"(1997).

thus misunderstands" (Babich, 1990, 111). Babich (mis-)understands Nietzsche's style as being self-deconstruction; all understanding is done for one's own purposes. Understanding serves not to preserve life, but to test the knower's capacity for life. Babich reads Nietzsche as an Academic who is centred on issues about the self, notably one's historical position and its connection with and differences from what is (mis)understood.

On the other end of this interpretative scale, in *Nietzsche and Metaphysics* (1995), Peter Poellner claims that: "perspectivism, if it is to be coherent, does not ultimately conflict with or rule out the latter notion [metaphysics], but rather itself involves a particular kind of metaphysics, although, if our reading is correct, this is contrary to Nietzsche's intention" (p. 297). Poellner claims that Nietzsche unsuccessfully tries to avoid proposing any metaphysics. He adds, in "Nietzsche's Metaphysical Sketches: Causality and the Will to Power" (2013), that Nietzsche's "metaphysical sketches read, to a reasonably unprejudiced reader, like the record of a suppressed desire (the 'bad conscience'?) of a philosopher who, in the published writings of the final period, predominantly argues for *metaphysical indifferentism*" (p. 696). Poellner proposes that Nietzsche, by his later writings, is indifferent to metaphysics, which he understands as composed entirely of purely theoretical thought experiments; by then, he is dedicated only to practical concerns, given that metaphysics may be discarded without any loss of the behaviours with which it is said to be associated. Poellner thus reads Nietzsche as an Academic, albeit a failed one.

Assuredly, both these interpreters and their likeminded peers are correct that Nietzsche both denies that human beings can obtain absolute or objective truth and disparages (dogmatic) metaphysics throughout his writings from *Human, All Too Human*, *A Book for Free Spirits* to

Ecce Homo, How One Becomes What One Is: "there is no intelligible world..." (EH, Human, §6, p. 745). In this passage from 1888, Nietzsche adds to his quote from ten years prior (HATH, II, §37) that the non-physical or metaphysical world does not exist. In his 'middle period,' he writes of this unavoidable limitation: "there are no means of exit or escape to the real world" (DD, II, §117, p. 123)! Therefore, Nietzsche consistently claims that there is only the physical world, and accordingly, that human beings must limit their experiences and knowledge to their perspectives, which are physical in origin and education. There is no going behind or beyond these perspectives to the intelligible reality that traditionally provides the correlate for objective truth. Thus, I agree that Nietzsche has an Academic stance.

Yet, Nietzsche does not merely discard objective truth. Objective truth is not eliminated, only redefined. It is no longer obtained by the absence of partial perspectives; now, it is obtained by gathering them. Perspectives are partial; each one's knowledge is completed by the addition of more perspectives. For instance, we know that there are multiple conflicting partial perspectives by individuals' or even a single individual's contrasting experiences of the same entity or event. For example, suppose you and I observe a pear; we could perceive the same pear from the same place without having the same perspectives on it. Each of us can also realize that in order for us to see the exterior of the pear completely we must modify and gather our perspectives.¹¹ In §19 of the *Third Essay* of his *On the Genealogy of Morals, A Polemic*, Nietzsche proposes embracing an "honest" rather than a "dishonest" lie about humanity's capacity to obtain objective truth. He claims that objective truth is traditionally understood as being independent of any partial human

¹¹ From there, one can imagine a perspective that could see all those perspectives simultaneously, if not also the whole pear. This absolute perspective, although only imagined, is understood as traditionally objective reality, as "God's-eye-view."

perspective, and as such, it is dishonest and unattainable. We perceive the same world very differently because it is perceived only through our own distinct perspectives. Nietzsche imagines six different reactions one could have to a stranger “laughing at us. . . . What are our experiences, then? Much more what we attribute to them than what they really are” (DD, II, §119, pp. 127-128). Human beings can only honestly attain perspectival objectivity. In the middle of the *Third Essay of On the Genealogy of Morals, A Polemic*, Nietzsche suggests a replacement for the traditional, impossible, unattainable ideal of absolute objective truth: the perspectival conception of objective truth (§12).¹² This ideal is more realistic and practical; it is the collecting of all perspectives. Metaphysics or all truths about things in themselves are not rejected. They are merely not discussed without also invoking their related limited perspectives. He neither asserts nor denies that perspectives are true of things in themselves. Humanity ought to pursue its investigations on such unknown matters. Truth is not known, closed and unquestionable.

Thus, the Academic interpretation fails to account for his infrequent but significant passages supporting the possibility of metaphysics. For instance, he claims, in 1878: "It is true, there could be a metaphysical world; the absolute possibility of it is hardly to be disputed" (HATH, I, §9, p. 15). Ten years later, although he vehemently denies traditional unquestionable or absolutely objective truth, he still concurrently offers his own account of truth: a redemptive account as "first created by Zarathustra" (EH, Z, §6, p. 760). Since truth is necessary for human endeavours, provisional truths must be consciously asserted. For pragmatic reasons, we must decide which

¹² He writes: "to *want* to see differently, is no small discipline and preparation of the intellect for its future 'objectivity' — the latter understood not as 'contemplation without interest' (which is a nonsensical absurdity), but as the ability *to control* one's Pro and Con and to dispose of them, so that one knows how to employ a *variety* of perspectives and affective interpretations in the service of knowledge" (GM, III, §12, p. 555).

perspectives we uphold as ultimately true. However, we must never conclude that an absolute truth has been obtained, especially one about the essence of reality. Truth is idiosyncratic, not a zero-sum game: "Truth is not something which one person might have and another not have" (A, §53, p. 636). Truth is not absolute.

Thus, as illustrated by his only apparently paradoxical claims about truth, reading Nietzsche as an Academic disregards his 1887 recommendation that one should destroy to better rebuild: "But have you ever asked yourselves sufficiently how much the erection of *every* ideal on earth has cost? ... If a temple is to be erected *a temple must be destroyed*: that is the law — let anyone who can show me a case in which it is not fulfilled" (GM, II, §24, p. 531)! Taking his own advice, Nietzsche offers new truth tablets, thus replacing the old ones he helped break (Z, III, Tablets). He claims to write *On the Genealogy of Morals* as "a polemic" that destroys old moral truths and that in so doing, he exposes a new one: "As the will to truth thus gains self-consciousness — there can be no doubt of that — morality will gradually *perish* now" (GM, III, §27, p. 597). Of his attempt at establishing a new truth after destroying another, Nietzsche claims a year later: "In the end, in the midst of perfectly gruesome detonations, a new truth becomes visible every time among thick clouds" (EH, GM, p. 768). Nietzsche writes *On the Genealogy of Morals, A Polemic* to attack the traditional (mainly Judaeo-Christian) conception of morality by exposing that its origins are in the ascetic ideal, which serves to preserve and protect self-denying life (GM, III, §13). The ascetic ideal devalues one's experienced and construed reality in favour of another reality constructed in opposition to this interpreted experience. Nietzsche proposes: "with the 'beyond' one *kills life*" (A, §58, p. 650). More specifically, he claims that it kills vitalistic life-affirming life. Still, the ascetic desire to be other perversely leads to 'bettering' the human

experience by giving some meaning to suffering, which at the very least preserves humanity and life, although as stagnant and decadent.

The ascetic ideal is inherently sick and sickening. Through it, the naturally perspectival experience of reality is replaced by a virtual or imaginary, non-perspectival or absolutely objective truth, or by the search for one. Nietzsche seeks to replace dogmatic or irrefutable ascetic truths with perspectival, aesthetic, vitality-affirming truths. Almost at the end of the *Third Essay* of his *On the Genealogy of Morals, A Polemic*, Nietzsche claims that its mockery (§27), or art, is the best candidate for opposing the ascetic ideal (§25). The creation of any new truth or ideal requires the destruction of an older one beforehand (GM, III, §24). Truth is an ideal that is to be understood not ascetically, but aesthetically. Truth ought not devalue the perspectival or human experience of reality; it ought to reflect and enhance it.¹³ The Academic interpretational stance thus misses or ignores Nietzsche's claims about the two-sided necessity of rebuilding after destroying and of destroying to allow better rebuilding as well as his applications of them through his new replacement truths. All creators are first destroyers¹⁴: "whoever must be a creator in good and evil, verily, he must first be an annihilator and break values" (Z, II, Overcoming, p. 228). Nietzsche wants creators who are as hard as hammers, which can both build and destroy, and thus, who also take joy in both building and destroying.

The metaphysical concerns and suggestions found throughout Nietzsche's corpus speak against the interpreters who deny him any constructive or replacement metaphysical theories.

¹³ Similarly, dreams best any "pure fiction ... as the [former] *mirrors* reality, whereas the [latter] falsifies, devalues, and negates reality" (A, §15, p. 582).

¹⁴ See *EH*, 'Destiny,' §2, as well.

Like morality¹⁵, traditional metaphysics needs to be destroyed to be replaced. So now, the question arises: does rejecting readings of Nietzsche as an Academic lead to reading him as a Dogmatist?

Reading Nietzsche as a Dogmatist means seeing him not as merely being destructive and critical, but as also asserting new truths, as suggesting a new positive metaphysical philosophy, if perhaps an untenable or inconsistent one, with which to replace the annihilated dogmatic ascetic ones. For example, Steven D. Hales and Rex Welsch write, in *Nietzsche's Perspectivism* (2000): "it is easy to get wrapped up in Nietzsche's powerful language and devastating analytic abilities, but one mustn't lose sight of the second, constructive, part of his dialectic" (p. 38). Their view is that Nietzsche's constructive project is central, albeit secondary, to his critical philosophy. In "Twilight of Modernity: Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Politics" (1994), Leslie Paul Thiele claims

¹⁵ For instance, Nietzsche admittedly undertook this task repeatedly for morality, if most notably with his genealogy. Visker (1990) argues that Nietzsche's genealogy has a critical aim, and in his "Introduction" to *Nietzsche, Genealogy, Morality* (1994), Richard Schacht argues that Nietzsche wants to unmask ascetic morality in order to vanquish and overcome it. As Maudemarie Clark claims, in "Nietzsche's Immoralism and the Concept of Morality" (1994), moral values cannot exhaust the field of values, as Nietzsche must be criticizing moral values from the standpoint of other ones. Or as Alex McIntyre's *The Sovereignty of Joy: Nietzsche's Vision of Grand Politics* (1997) proposes, Nietzsche offers three meanings to the word 'morality': there are the morality of the masters, of the slaves and of the herd, whereby the past lives on in the present. Herd morality, as an individual's submission to and insertion into its community is natural and can be either of the masters or of the slaves. Currently, it is of the latter type, although, claims McIntyre, Nietzsche hopes that it returns to the former. In *What Nietzsche Really Said* (2000), Richard C. Solomon and Kathleen M. Higgins claim that there are only two meanings for 'morality' in Nietzsche. One is as a rigid rule-based system of behaviour and thought regulation that is external to and hostile toward the individual, such as God's Ten Commandments or Kant's Categorical Imperative. Morality's other meaning is as a more general basic human characteristic that merely influences behaviour and thought. The co-authors argue that Nietzsche aims to replace the former with the latter. Kristen Brown (2006) proposes that through the concept of capability, two levels of moral evaluations exist. All morality is dependent upon its era and holders. Thus, to become more fair, social moral evaluations must become more flexible.

that Nietzsche does not abandon but rather reverses metaphysics: the *Übermensch* replaces God. Thiele claims that with Nietzsche, metaphysics becomes a vague internal political guide. Thus, the ongoing vigorous debate within this interpretational camp revolves around Nietzsche's view of metaphysics as necessary but constructed. When Nietzsche is taken to be a Dogmatist, the question becomes: 'what truth(s) does he assert?' Some interpreters understand him as claiming the one that no independent reality exists; others, that such a reality does exist, but that humanity has either a limited access to it or none at all.

The interpreters in the first subgroup propose in various fashions that it is absolutely true that no world independent of human perspectives exists for the philosopher. They claim that Nietzsche insists upon the truth of an independent reality's non-existence, hence reality depends solely, completely on human perspectives. Nietzsche collapses the imaginary divider traditionally erected between the real and the apparent. These concepts become entirely coextensive. Reality is appearance. Strong proposes, in *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of Transformation* (1975/2000): "there can be no thing without perspective, which is not a perspective" (p. 306). Reality is always appearance, and there exist only particular appearances. In other words, what is called 'reality' consists of appearances to particular beings. Similarly, Alan D. Schrift, in *Nietzsche and the Question of Interpretation* (1990), writes:

there is no 'in-itself' that is given to disinterested appropriation as the dogmatic Platonic-Kantian-Christian metaphysical and epistemological tradition has presupposed. Rather, there are only perspectively informed interpretations of limited scope and value. ... The world holds no single, univocal truth, and our cognitive methods should reflect this situation (cf. WP, 600) (p. 155).

Objective beings and absolute truths are entirely fictional. The only reality humans can access is the one they are already interpreting in accessing it. Reality is always already permeated by our limited perspectives. In *The Ontology of Becoming and the Ethics of Particularity: Art, Truth, and Illusion, Nietzsche's Ontology* (posthumous, 2012), Martin C. Dillon writes that, given Nietzsche's ontology of becoming, the only reality that is even conceivable by a finite subject is one that is mediated by that subject: "The only reality we can experience is reality-for-us. Reality, what we construe to be real independently of us, is an illusion because it is only real-for-us" (p. 3). Any non-perspectival reality is unreal, illusory and, in earnest, inconceivable. Dillon claims that there exists "a world that transcends us; it is the phenomenal world in which we live, but about which we know relatively little" (c2012, p. 73). For us, reality exists solely within limited perspectives. Thus, we cannot know how things are independently of our perspectives; we cannot even conceive of them in that manner.

Although Nietzsche writes many passages that deny the existence of an independent world,¹⁶ I fail to see how this interpretational direction can square with the few passages that do allow for its possibility as an inaccessible unknown. In 1878, Nietzsche certainly entertains the possibility of the existence of an independent world: "there could be a metaphysical world; the absolute possibility of it is hardly to be disputed" (HATH, I, §9, p. 15). Five years earlier, he writes that reality-in-itself exists, but it is unknowable from a human perspective: "nature knows no forms or concepts and therefore no species either, but only an X which, for us, is inaccessible and undefinable" (OTL, I, p. 257). We cannot certify that reality's truth beyond or outside of our

¹⁶ For example, in 1888, Nietzsche writes: "The 'true world' and the 'apparent world' — that means: the mendaciously invented world and reality" (EH, P, §2, p. 674)

interpretations; for, they are inescapable. "We behold all things through the human head and cannot cut off this head; while the question nonetheless remains what of the world would still be there if one had cut it off" (HATH, I, §9, p. 15). If an independent reality does exist, being beyond our sense-perception's reach, it is an unverifiable likelihood in which we need to believe in order to justify our perspectives. Nietzsche posits the existence of the external world, but the truth of this posit remains non-perspectively unverifiable: it cannot be verified by human beings, as we cannot escape our perspectives.

In later writings, Nietzsche discards the radical, pessimistic opposition between reality and appearance; pessimistic since it breeds pessimism by denying the value of appearance and radical since it denies that reality and appearance are interwoven. Nietzsche collapses the division between the true world and the apparent one. In 1888, he writes: "With the true world we have also abolished the apparent one. (Noon; moment of the briefest shadow; end of the longest error; high point of humanity; INCIPIT ZARATHUSTRA.)" (TI, Fable, §6, p. 486). Ten years earlier, in 1878, Nietzsche conflates appearance and reality because "it is the human intellect that has made appearance appear and transported its erroneous basic conceptions into things" (HATH, I, §16, p. 20). The intellect does not have the ability to grasp the things-in-themselves that it posits beyond or behind the appearances it generates. Similarly, Nietzsche allows for "a higher judge of beauty" to exist, but he denies that we can ever accede to it or its verdicts. "Man believes the world itself to be overload with beauty — and he forgets himself as the cause of this" (TI, Skirmishes, §19, pp. 525-526). Nietzsche only denies that the thing-in-itself and its appearances exist independently for us; "for we do not 'know' nearly enough to be entitled to any such distinction" (GS, V, §354, p. 300). Based on this passage from 1887, they could exist and they could exist indepen-

dently, just not for human beings. He writes, one year later: "if we subtract the nervous system and the senses — the 'moral shroud' — *then we miscalculate* — that is all" (A, §14, p. 581)! We ought to rely on our only access to the world, our bodily senses and perceptions. "[Without the testimony of the senses] reality is not encountered at all, not even as a problem" (TI, Reason, 3, p. 481). Perspectives cannot be opposed to reality. "For 'appearance' in this case means reality *once more*, only by way of selection, reinforcement, and correction" (TI, Reason, §6, p. 484). Appearance is an artistic apprehension of reality. It ought to be understood as artistic optimism (GM, III, §25). Yet, despite this, human perspectives are reliable renditions of reality for human purposes. This displaces the focus on appearances from being on perspectives that attain the thing-in-itself to being on our selection of the ones that best suit our purposes.

The independent world is a critically useful posit, based on selected human perspectives and interpretations, which are chosen out of practical concerns and "transmitted through many generations" (OTL, I, p. 260). For instance, despite perceiving reality as ever-changing, human beings must interpret it as stable in order to survive and thrive. We interpret the perceivably ever-changing world, the world of becoming, as the stable and identical world of being, lest we be "condemned to see 'becoming' everywhere" (UAH, I, p. 98), which is an unliveable state. In 1882, Nietzsche writes that: "it was likewise necessary that for a long time one did not see nor perceive the changes in things. The beings that did not see so precisely had an advantage over those that saw everything 'in flux'" (GS, III, §111, p. 171). There are no non-humanly mediated perspectives of stable beings; humans merely interpret their perspectives of becoming as such beings. Six years later, he writes: "Insofar as the senses show becoming, passing away, and change, they do not lie. But Heraclitus will remain eternally right with his assertion that being is

an empty fiction” (TI, Reason, §2, pp. 480-481). Although the world is perceived as becomings, it must be interpreted as beings (GS, III, §111). This error or fiction is necessary for the species to survive and thrive. Humans cannot experience or know reality as it is outside of their perspectives and interpretations; we cannot rid ourselves of them. The question now arises of whether or not these inescapable partial perspectives mean that the independent world exists as wholly or as partially inaccessible. In answering it, I must turn to and evaluate the claims of the second subgroup that reads Nietzsche as a Dogmatist.

The interpreters in the second Dogmatist subgroup suggest that reality's entire dependence on perspectives follows from Nietzsche's assertions that independent reality exists but as either partially or totally inaccessible. They propose that Nietzsche holds as true both the existence of an independent world and its either complete or partial inaccessibility. As a representative of the sub-subgroup that argues for the complete inaccessibility of the independent world, in *Nietzsche: Life as Literature* (1985), Alexander Nehamas argues that the world lacks an ontological structure that we can experience. For our access to that world, there is only genealogy, which involves creating multifaceted interpretations of the world as though it were a text and of "the things within it as if they were the characters and other fictional entities of which texts consist" (Nehamas, 1985, p. 104). Although the text is objectively or independently real, it can only be interpreted; it has no independent or absolute objective truth. Nehamas claims that Nietzsche accepts that there is a reality independent of human existence, but he insists that humans have no objective access to it, no knowledge of it as such. Nehamas draws attention to the centrality of interpretation in Nietzsche's philosophy. Reality exists for humans as a network of interpretations; the world and one's life are like texts that are simultaneously written and interpreted. Independent reality for

humans can only be experienced by interpretation, even if it does inaccessiblely exist independently.

Similarly, in "La métaphysique nietzschéenne de la vie" (1991), Robert Legros states that for Nietzsche reality exists as the sum of all difference and diversity before and beyond human perspectives, that is, prior to reality's separation of sensation from thought, although reality never appears without one of its masks: ideas, things, or sensations. "Le sensible est en lui-même non-sensible car imprégné de sens multiples, cachés et irréductibles les uns aux autres, et l'idée est en elle-même sensible car diversifiée en elle-même, éparpillée en apparences multiples dont elle n'est jamais séparable" (Legros, 1991, p. 164). Here, Legros proposes that sensations always have multiple meanings and ideas are always spread into multiple appearances. Nature is not radically opposed to norms; life is incarnate thought and meaningful sensation. Thus, in this sub-subgroup of Dogmatist interpreters, it is argued that Nietzsche believes that an independent reality exists as wholly inaccessible to human beings.

By contrast, members of the second sub-subgroup propose that independent reality is only partially inaccessible. For instance, in *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy* (1990), Clark claims that the later mature Nietzsche adheres to a "minimal correspondence theory" of truth, which evolved over the course of his writings. It was progressively born of "namely, the equivalence principle (that 'grass is green' is true, for instance, iff grass is green) and common sense realism (the claim that the world exists independently of our representations of it)" (Clark, 1990, p. 40). Clark claims that perspectives are all that is needed for a minimal correspondence theory of truth. Clark proposes that Nietzsche denies the existence of 'things-in-themselves,' but he affirms that objective truth obtains of sentences corresponding to the 'common sense' facts about the world.

He accepts the existence of the independent world, but he minimizes our access to it. In *Nietzsche on Epistemology and Metaphysics, The World in View* (2009), Tsarina Doyle claims that the world exists independently of human perspectives, but it is only accessible through them. Reality is “mind-independent but knowable” (Doyle, 2009, p. 53). The world creates itself in such a manner that humanity may discover it. Doyle proposes that our perspectives upon the world both allow and limit our knowledge of it. Thus, in this sub-subgroup, an independent reality exists, but it is only partially accessible to human beings.

Although reading Nietzsche as a Dogmatist that believes in the existence of a totally or partially inaccessible external world is coherent with many excerpts, these sub-substances do square with the passages that deny reality and truth, passages that are highlighted by and are the focus of the Academic camp. For instance, from 1881¹⁷: “It is not the things themselves, but the opinions about things that do not exist, which have been such a source of trouble to mankind” (DD, V, §563, pp. 390-391). Since both sets of passages span over Nietzsche’s works, lest he be incoherent, he is consistently an unconfessed Sceptic. Given that passages supporting each of the opposing positions are found throughout his corpus, he has not undergone the radical changes in position that he writes about in *Twilight of the Idols* (“How the ‘True World’ Finally Became a Fable”) as those who argue for his strict periodization uphold (I shall develop more on this in the subsequent chapter). Reading Nietzsche as a Sceptic allows for both sets of passages, those denying the existence of a human-independent reality and those upholding its existence as either totally or partially inaccessible, to coherently coexist. By being neither certain that a reality independent of humans exists nor that it does not exist, Nietzsche chooses the sceptical option of

¹⁷ Or, seven years later: “the ‘true’ world is merely added by a lie” (TI, Reason, §2, p. 481).

pursuing the investigation and only pragmatically positing its existence and the accuracy of its representations in human perspectives. In 1888, he writes: "There are questions in which man is not entitled to a decision about the truth and untruth; all the highest questions, all the highest value problems, lie beyond human reason. To comprehend the limits of reason — that alone is truly philosophy" (A, §54, p. 641). Nietzsche accepts reality as independent of human beings and as corresponding to human perspectives to the extent of their value for pursuing human affairs, not their truth. That is beyond our limits and philosophy.

Human beings must make these kinds of assumptions about the world in order to survive and thrive. Nevertheless, our ability to know through our perspectives both if there are things-in-themselves and anything about them is unsure and highly suspicious. We fabricate those elements that are essential for our existence and expansion. In 1886, he writes: "without measuring reality against the purely invented world of the unconditional and self-identical, without a constant falsification of the world by means of numbers, man could not live-" (BGE, I, §4, p. 202). Human claims about true being are necessary for the species' functioning and wellbeing, despite remaining unverifiable. Humanity's conception of reality suits it, but he does not reject the possibility, or even the probability, that it is illusory from other perspectives or under different circumstances.

We operate only with things that do not exist: lines, planes, bodies, atoms, divisible time spans, divisible spaces. How should explanations be at all possible when we first turn everything into an *image*, our image! ... An intellect that could see cause and effect as a continuum and a flux and not, as we do, in terms of an arbitrary division and dismemberment, would repudiate the concept of cause and effect and deny all conditionality (GS, III, §112, p. 172).

Here, in 1882, Nietzsche highlights the anthropocentrism of human perspectives and truths as well as the necessity of the metaphors, illusions and myths by which we assess and navigate our

world (and which are determined by our drives and instincts), such as cause and effect or beings and identity. For, without such fictions, we would be paralyzed. Still, their unabashed extension to reality itself is repudiated, barring pragmatically. "One should not wrongly reify 'cause' and 'effect' ... one should use 'cause' and 'effect' only as pure concepts, that is to say, as conventional fictions for the purpose of designation and communication — *not* for explanation" (BGE, I, §21, p. 219). In 1886, Nietzsche claims that our causal perceptions of reality are no proof of causality's (or even of reality's) independent existence. In this manner, similarly to Kant and Hume before him, Nietzsche insists that the concepts of cause and effect are necessary for science as well as ubiquitous in common sense explanations of reality, but, ultimately, they are unverifiable or unknowable. Hence they should be treated as the conceptual aids that they are, and they should not be reified into actually existing in the world independently of humanity.

Metaphysics is fundamental for yet fabricated by human beings. Nietzsche does not stop questioning and denying dogmatic metaphysics, while upholding his own non-dogmatic theory about reality's existence and nature independent of humanity. In 1882, he writes: "We have arranged for ourselves a world in which we can live — by positing bodies, lines, planes, causes and effects, motion and rest, form and content; without these articles of faith nobody now could endure life. But that does not prove them" (GS, III, §121, p. 177). Metaphysics is now redefined and limited by perspectives, founded on "articles of faith". Perspectives have to be of something in order to be perspectives. Yet, given that they are inescapable, partial, modifiable and sometimes conflicting metaphors that humans employ to perceive that something, there is a fundamental uncertainty as to their source independently of all human perspectives. Still, despite that uncertainty, for the purpose of conducting human affairs, affirming and trusting in an independent

reality and its correspondence to human endowments are sufficient; for, if one does not accept such posits, one risks being unable to act effectively or even to live at all.

Nietzsche's position on metaphysics is sceptical or non-metaphysical¹⁸, because he both maintains and modifies the traditional conceptualization of metaphysics. He preserves it in that he posits overarching theories regarding the existence and nature of the external world. However, unlike and against traditional dogmatic metaphysicians, Nietzsche claims that his metaphysical position is an aesthetic or artistic one¹⁹, as it is never upheld as an absolute truth or dogmatic certainty, but only as a perspectival truth or sceptical certainty, as pragmatically posited. We do not have the perceptual apparatus that is needed to certify our metaphysical beliefs. "It is *we* alone who have devised cause, sequence, for-each-other, relativity, constraint, number, law, freedom, motive, and purpose; and when we project and mix this symbol world into things as if it existed 'in itself,' we act once more as we have always acted — *mythologically*" (BGE, I, §21, p. 219). Nietzsche claims that we describe reality to and for ourselves, which "does not involve any *comprehension*" (GS, III, §112, p. 172). Human beings do not need understanding to function, we merely need a practical working theory of reality; in this light, metaphysics is inescapable and pragmatic. It is a posited conceptual system or grid that is necessary for the interpretation and management of reality. Human beings need certainty about the existence of the independent world and about its accuracy in our perspectives to avoid the inability to act (UAH, I, p. 98). Metaphysics might not be otherwise useful or true.

¹⁸ I suggest it must be argued (elsewhere) that in order to better account for Nietzsche's reinterpretation of metaphysics (among most other concepts), a new term is needed.

¹⁹ See *BT* or *GM*.

Nietzsche denies that we can know if our perspectives correspond to a reality independent of our perspectives, if it exists. There could be non-human perspectives and they might be more accurate depictions of the external world, but they would not be useful to us. In 1887, he writes: "I should think that today we are at least far from the ridiculous immodesty that would be involved in decreeing from our corner that perspectives are permitted only from this corner" (GS, V, §374, p. 336). Still, given that our perspectives are all that we have to navigate reality, they are all that we require. Without any access to an otherwise objective perspective upon the world, if it exists as we mostly intuit, our perspectives and interpretations are all that we have and need to access reality. Nietzsche proposes his own selected interpretations of reality, humanity and knowledge, and consciously elevates these selected interpretations to an unquestioned stance. For, although he claims that it is currently impossible to answer metaphysical questions with any certainty, he acknowledges that in order for us to live and thrive, we must firmly and preferably also consciously answer these questions. Despite the validity of these answers being uncertain, they might be true or false, they are useful fictions. In 1886, Nietzsche writes: "we are fundamentally inclined to claim that the falsest judgements (which include the synthetic judgements *a priori*) are the most indispensable for us" (BGE, I, §4, p. 202). Some errors must be treated as certainties; they are necessary for everyday living and science. Hence one must accept two metaphysical uncertainties: the existence of the world independently of our perspectives and its correspondence to our perspectives and interpretations of it. Despite being unverifiable, partial and biased, our perspectives are still considered substantially reliable for our purposes. I call this Nietzsche's "two-fold metaphysical scepticism."

Given his twofold metaphysical scepticism, despite being treated as certainties, Nietzsche's metaphysical answers are not and cannot be considered certainties outside of the practical purposes they serve. In this manner, Nietzsche has a pragmatic metaphysical theory. He contests any traditionally dogmatic answers. He reviles solitary or absolute truths. "Are there not grounds for the suspicion that all philosophers, insofar as they were dogmatists, have been very inexpert about [truths]" (BGE, P, p.192)? He therefore posits his temporary dynamic interpretations as the metaphysical answers that humanity requires to live and thrive, without claiming their absolute truth. As Valadier writes in *Nietzsche, Cruauté et noblesse du droit* (1998): "il est dans la logique de l'herméneutique nietzschéenne de ne pas fermer le sens (du droit ou de la morale) sur une conception particulière qui serait la seule vraie et la seule juste, comme si vérité et justice pouvaient être jamais embrassées par une théorie" (p. 84) Meanings, especially those of truth and justice, are not ever completely or finally determined by the human grasp. In 1880, he writes: "We would not let ourselves be burned to death for our opinions: we are not sure enough of them for that. But perhaps for the right to possess our opinions and to change them" (WS, §333, p. 391). And two years earlier, he claims that experience leads him to his stance as a Sceptic:

that which we humans call life and experience — has gradually become, is indeed still fully in course of becoming, and should thus not be regarded as a fixed object on the basis of which a conclusion as to the nature of its originator (the sufficient reason) may either be drawn or pronounced undrawable (sic) (HATH, I, §16, p. 20).

Humans can neither affirm nor deny the origins of reality from their experiences, thus they must continue to search.

Nine years later, Nietzsche makes similar claims about traditional metaphysical systems "and convictions of all kinds" (GS, V, §347, p. 288), which, in 1880, he had likened to fossilized common fish, rather than to "*one's own* fish, *one's own* opinions. I am speaking here of living opinions, of living fish" (WS, §317, p. 389). All convictions are dogmas. They are unqualified absolute truths, rather than posited, temporary, flexible ones. "Conviction is the belief that on some particular point of knowledge one is in possession of the unqualified truth" (HATH, IX, §630, p. 199). By replacing rigid dogmatic metaphysics with his own dynamic sceptical system, Nietzsche fulfills his own proposed quest to replace static convictions with dynamic beliefs. The truly "*free spirits*" no longer have any "*faith in truth*" (GM, III, §24, p. 586), which is not to say have no truths. They simply recognize truths as a specific type of error: one necessary for humanity's survival and enhancement. Interestingly, then, even well before his explicit theorizing of his metaphysical posits, the will to power and perspectivism, Nietzsche claims that all opinions lack certainty, and thus, they must be flexible, temporary and dynamic. He was thus certain of the non-dogmatic quality of his posits earlier than he was certain of his actual posits. He remains unsure of any assured answers to metaphysical queries, while temporarily offering the constructed ones he deems best in their description of and service to the various human aims. Nietzsche is conscious that the metaphysical myths or fictions that human beings must initially create in order to live are subsequently reified into realities independent of their creators: enter dogmatic metaphysics.

It is for these reasons that I contend that dogmatic interpreters misrepresent Nietzsche's position on metaphysics with strong statements about the nature of reality, such as: "it is not only possible to regard one's perspectival view of the world as just that, a perspective *on the world*,

but that the perspectival limitation is a measure of the reality of what is seen: it is the nature of the real to reveal itself only partially in space and time” (Dillon, 2012, p. 37). If an independent reality does exist, then human beings do not know its nature outside of our perspectives on it. Furthermore, although we need to believe in an independent reality in order to survive and strive, it need not be opposed to or different from experienced reality. In 1882, he writes: "What is appearance for me now? Certainly not a dead mask that one could place on an unknown x or remove from it! Appearance is for me that which lives and is effective" (GS, I, §54, p. 116). External reality is as it appears to be in every available perspective. Appearance is reality. The dichotomy between the apparent and the real worlds is destroyed. Nietzsche posits that the world is perspectival. The independent existence of the world and its correspondence to human perspectives are non-perspectively unverifiable. Yet, given the importance of metaphysical beliefs, he continuously acknowledges that both are strong beliefs, even that they are constructs that are necessary for human life and activity. Nevertheless, belief is no indication of truth: "strong belief demonstrates only its strength, not the truth of that which is believed" (HATH, I, §15, p. 19). The world is not flat despite any strong beliefs to the contrary.

Thus, although Nietzsche is certainly known for his virulent descriptions of and attacks on metaphysics, these only concern those metaphysicians who posit that their theories are certain beyond their practical concerns: dogmatists (both Academic and Dogmatist). Nietzsche cannot²⁰ reject all theories about how reality is. Rather, he discards all theories about how reality is independently of human beings that claim any certainty beyond specific pragmatic concerns.

²⁰ I claim that one cannot not take a metaphysical position just as with one's belief in the divine or lack thereof. One can be sure of divinity's existence or sure that no divinity exists or unsure either way, but one cannot avoid any position.

Nietzsche presents his understanding of how reality is as a merely practical certainty. It is true because it best serves his conception of human survival and vitality. For instance, in light of his values and aims, concepts that were commonly understood as radical opposites are now better understood as complimentary gradations (BGE, II, §34). The metaphysical world is traditionally constructed as radically opposite to the reality that human beings experience. Yet, throughout his works²¹, Nietzsche insists that there is no basis for such a divorce. In 1886, he asks: “Indeed, what forces us at all to suppose that there is an essential opposition of ‘true’ and ‘false’?” (BGE, II, §34, p. 236)? Nietzsche primarily bases his unwavering critique of dogmatic metaphysics upon its complete disregard for one of the pair, for becoming in favour of its absolute opposite, being, or, for false in favour of true. His targets are those metaphysical theories that maintain the indubitable existence of a separate reality that is deemed objectively or absolutely knowable, truer and better; that is, those theories that posit exclusive opposites²². As a twofold metaphysical sceptic, Nietzsche criticizes all similarly radical dualities.

As Vanessa Lemm states in "Is Nietzsche a Perfectionist?: Rawls, Cavell, and the Politics of Culture in Nietzsche's "Schopenhauer as Educator"" (2007): "Already in his early writings, Nietzsche identifies the human not as a being but as a perpetual becoming" (p. 18). Over one's lifespan one changes considerably, yet one is still considered the same person. Likewise a single leaf will change considerably over its lifespan; nevertheless, it will be considered the same leaf. In 1878, he writes, similarly, that: “As certainly as no leaf is ever completely identical to another,

²¹ For example: *OTL* I, *UAH* I, *HATH* §16, *GS* §354 and *TI*, "Fable."

²² Jean Granier, in *Le problème de la vérité dans la philosophie de Nietzsche* (1966), argues that Nietzsche overturns traditional metaphysical, or simplistic and radical oppositions, such as the body and the soul, which even Descartes' drastic doubt had quickly sidelined.

so certainly the concept of leaf is formed by arbitrarily shelving these individual differences or forgetting the distinguishing features" (OTL, I, p. 256-7). Likewise, although no human beings are the same, they are conceptualized as equally human. In this manner, concepts and identities must neglect reality's changes and idiosyncrasies. "Thus, the attribution of 'reality' to something is merely another human contribution to the world of becoming which, if we are to accept the traditional grounds for such an attribution, appears unjustifiable" (Schrift, 1990, p. 151). Thus, Nietzsche's virulent assertions against metaphysics only relate to its dogmatic denial of our actual experiences of reality and their value. He denounces in rigid traditional metaphysics their denial of the changes in our perspectives of a seemingly constantly changing reality, which devalues those apparent or perceptible changes in favour of illusory stability.²³

The dogmatic metaphysical divisions, such as between the physical and intelligible, the temporal and eternal, the practical and theoretical, replicate the earlier religious separation of the body from the soul, which is itself but a version of the earliest absolute division: that of slavish moral values into evil and good. In 1886, Nietzsche asks: "Indeed, if one would explain how the abstrusest metaphysical claims of a philosopher really came about, it is always well (and wise) to ask first: at what morality does all this (does *he*) aim" (BGE, I, §6, p. 203)? The morality that upholds the absolute opposites of 'evil and good' for that reason also brings forth other dogmatic exclusionary metaphysical beliefs. These other beliefs are subsequent human constructions that

²³ My understanding of Nietzsche's critique of dogmatic metaphysics as coming from a sceptical standpoint parallels Clark's (1994) claim that moral values cannot exhaust the field of values, as Nietzsche must be criticizing moral values from the standpoint of other ones, as well as Solomon and Higgins's (2000) claim that Nietzsche aimed to replace a rigid conceptualization of morality with a dynamic individualized one. Accordingly, I dispute McIntyre's (1997) claim that Nietzsche hopes for a return to the herd morality of the masters. I propose that he rather looks forward to new, individualized, dynamic, non-moral meanings and values.

correspond to conceiving of reality as a radical exclusive duality. "The fundamental faith of the metaphysicians is *the faith in opposite values*" (BGE, I, §2, p. 200). This faith is unrealistic, as it is opposed to human experiences and perspectives. It puts itself above them. "Presuming that everything man 'knows' does not merely fail to satisfy his desire but rather contradicts them and produces a sense of horror, what a divine way out to have the right to seek the responsibility for this not in 'desire' but in 'knowledge'" (GM, III, §25, p. 592). The faith in absolute opposites is inherently antagonistic to affirming life. Radical duality is necessary for the establishment and support of the fundamentally reactive life-denying morality. In this morality, each value seeks the elimination of its opposite, and this absolute polarity permeates all realms of evaluation and valuation. "The metaphysical need is not the *origin* of religions, as Schopenhauer supposed, but merely a late offshoot" (GS, III, §151, p. 196). When religion can no longer secure life-denying morality, metaphysics and science take up the task.

Dogmatic metaphysical systems, as later variations of the long-established life-denying morality, also serve to uphold the absolute authority of reason in all evaluation and judgement. By its overestimation of reason's role and value, dogmatic metaphysics leads most individuals, as it did Schopenhauer, to embrace the ascetic ideal: "he uttered metaphysics: no wonder he one day finally uttered *ascetic ideals*" (GM, III, §5, p. 539). A conviction in absolute opposites leads to the devaluation of one of the pair, such as that of instincts for reason. Dogmatic metaphysics turns "logic and the categories of reason" against the reality they are meant to serve; it utilizes them to posit an unknown, objective, true world that depreciates the actual known one. In 1882, Nietzsche writes: "But what first led to the positing of 'another world' in primeval times was not some impulse or need but an *error* in the interpretation of certain natural events, a failure of the

intellect" (GS, III, §151, p. 196). These intellectual failures include all fundamental traditional metaphysical convictions: stability, equality, identity, objectivity and an absolutely free moral will. Although they are not grounded in experience and observation, but are rather opposed to them, these erroneous beliefs are originally useful to humans in assessing and navigating their world. However, dogmatic metaphysics makes them absolutely true by fictionalizing, fossilizing and worshipping them (GS, III, §110). Metaphysics is thus responsible for the improper extension of the authority of reason beyond its actual limits as a tool for the affects. In 1886, Nietzsche writes: "one must follow the instincts but persuade reason to assist them with good reasons. ... reason is merely an instrument" (BGE, V, §191, p. 294). Misunderstanding this — that is to say, understanding reason as the ultimate judge and jury of reality — comes from positing another world, an opposite, better, (Platonic) metaphysical world that corresponds to one's, or rather, to reason's posits, i.e., stability, identity, binary truth values, non-contradiction. "To invent fables about a world 'other' than this one has no meaning at all, unless an instinct of slander, detraction, and suspicion against life has gained the upper hand in us" (TI, Reason, §6, p. 484). The outcome of dogmatic metaphysics is irrationally divinizing exclusionary reason²⁴. Yet Nietzsche insists that reason need not be exclusionary and that it must remain an instrument of the affects.

To serve human purposes, reason simply requires the ideas of 'beings,' 'opposites,' 'causes', not certainty about their existence; for with such concepts, one defines that which one wants to communicate. "Semantics requires domains, but domains can be populated equally with realist or anti-realist things; logic can be laid over whatever metaphysics of things one adopts" (Hales and

²⁴ Gillespie, in "Nietzsche and the Premodernist Critique of Postmodernity" (1998), argues that Nietzsche combats the return to ancient rationalism by showing the nihilistic tendencies of reason as a problem for modernity.

Welsch, 2000, p. 50). That logic needs entities to manipulate is proof of the usefulness of these entities, but it is not proof of their existence. (Language²⁵ and) logic congeals becoming into beings in order to ensure and secure (communal) living; as such, these fictions are necessary to humans because they are useful, not because they are truthful:

Innumerable beings who made inferences in a way different from ours perished; for all that, their ways might have been truer. ... In order that the concept of substance could originate — which is indispensable for logic although in the strictest sense nothing real corresponds to it — it was likewise necessary that for a long time one did not see nor perceive the changes in things. The beings that did not see so precisely had an advantage over those that saw everything 'in flux' (GS, III, §111, p. 171).

Nietzsche remains uncertain whether the world is itself becoming or if it only appears to be so to human beings, but regardless, he proposes that using logic, we need to solidify and simplify becoming into beings in order to survive and thrive. Therefore, reality probably exists as becoming, but it is definitely best perceived by humans as beings.

Traditional metaphysical convictions, such as being, identity, essence and stability, are considered absolutely better than physical ones, such as becoming, appearance and change, by ignoring that they are constructed from a reversal of these physical ones. Traditional dogmatic metaphysicians not only affirm the existence of an ultimate and stable reality, they also search for knowledge of this other reality. Paradoxically, however, they specifically invented their reality to be opposed to perceived reality, and thus, to be imperceptible, unattainable and unknowable²⁶.

This aporetic position follows from the assertions that an independent reality definitely exists and

²⁵ Nietzsche makes a similar case for the truth: "To the creator of language too, the 'thing-in-itself' (which would be precisely the pure truth without consequences) is quite incomprehensible and not at all desirable" (OTL, I, p. 256). Truth is not inherent to words; it is only associated to them, if they are that group's accepted, habitual and expedient means of communication.

²⁶ See *TI*, 'Fable' for the progression of the "true world" from cherished ideal to abolished error.

is accessible and knowable. As a twofold metaphysical sceptic, Nietzsche does not assert or deny the validity of metaphysical claims, he only pragmatically posits an independent reality and a temporary correspondence between perspectives and reality. He questions the *noumenal/phenomena* cleavage: "for we do not 'know' nearly enough to be entitled to any such distinction" (GS, V, §354, p. 300), and he favours positing reality as appearance. We must refrain from making radical distinctions that we are unable to verify from our perspectives. Thus, although I dispute that Nietzsche is convinced of its independent existence, I agree that he embraces a new flexible realism that is "committed to the world" as Dillon puts it; that is, one that accepts changing empirical evidence and perspectives as grounds for the metaphors that become language and knowledge (2012, p. 26). Since metaphors are the only human experience to reality, Nietzsche's scepticism proposes that that which is perceived is probably independent of the perceiver, but that it is only grasped by the perceiver via perceiver-dependent metaphors. "Let at least this much be admitted: there would be no life at all if not on the basis of perspective estimates and appearances" (BGE, II, §34, p. 236). Reality probably exists independently of perspectives, but it is definitely only experienced through them.

Given Nietzsche's twofold metaphysical scepticism, ultimate reality is only accessibly through perspectives that create beings from perceived becoming. Dogmatic metaphysical beings, which oppose and devalue perceived becoming, are unknowable or unattainable. "Heraclitus will remain eternally right with his assertion that being is an empty fiction" (TI, Reason, §2, p. 481). It is the fundamentally human aversion to senseless living and suffering that motivates the creation of dogmatic metaphysics, the radical and exclusionary opposition between being and non-being or the "metaphysical need". The radical distinction between good and evil is made by those

who suffer most and most often; those who suffer in and from physical realities are those who feel the need to create their opposites: "The creator wanted to look away from himself; so he created the world. ... It was suffering and incapacity that created all afterworlds — this and the brief madness of bliss which is experienced by those who suffer most deeply" (Z, I, Afterworldly, p. 143). Thus, traditional absolute metaphysical dualities are inconsistencies that are created to alleviate one's senseless suffering. In 1888, Nietzsche asks and answers: "Who alone has good reason to lie his way out of reality? He who suffers from it" (A, §15, p. 582). The most physically compromised need to justify or to make sense of their sufferings. They embrace an invented separate reality that is considered better because it is devoid of suffering, and in which their previous earthly suffering is recompensed, if only by its cessation.

In 1878, Nietzsche claims that knowledge of an unknown dogmatic metaphysical reality is a folly, a paradox, a contradiction. How can one perceive or know something that is unknown and imperceptible? If one perceives and knows, that which is perceived and known is necessarily perceivable and perceived, knowable and known. Moreover, there is a fundamental contradiction in the idea of knowledge of the indeterminate: "more rigorous logicians, having clearly identified the concept of the metaphysical as the unconditioned, consequently also unconditioning (sic), have disputed any connection between the unconditioned (the metaphysical world) and the world we know" (HATH, I, §16, p. 19). Knowing determines. Even if knowledge of the unknown exists, it cannot be verified by our perspectives. "For one could assert nothing at all of the metaphysical world except that it was a being-other, an inaccessible, incomprehensible being-other; it would be a thing with negative qualities" (HATH, I, §9, p. 15). Even if something could be asserted of the metaphysical world, the assertion would be useless to human beings: "— Even if the existence of

such a world were never so well demonstrated, it is certain that knowledge of it would be the most useless of all knowledge: more useless even than knowledge of the chemical composition water must be to the sailor in danger of shipwreck" (HATH, I, §9, pp. 15-16). Even if we could access and know the inaccessible unknown, the information would serve no practical purposes. Accordingly, Nietzsche denies what he sees as the contradictory traditional metaphysical claim that one can gain access to and know the inaccessible unknowable.

The inconsistent knowledge of traditional dogmatic metaphysics cannot justify or furnish any information about the physical realm. This is the work of the body and its senses: "Today we possess science precisely to the extent to which we have decided to *accept* the testimony of the senses"(TI, Reason, §3, p. 481). All knowledge is based on the presupposition that the bodily senses can and do connect to reality, even if one presupposes that they do so incorrectly. In 1888, he writes that: "[without the testimony of the senses] reality is not encountered at all, not even as a problem" (*Ibid.*). Still, Nietzsche claims that modern science succumbs to the metaphysical need, as does any system convinced of a monolithic and true divine regardless of its form. In 1887, he writes: "it is still a *metaphysical faith* upon which our faith in science rests — that even we seekers after knowledge today, we godless anti-metaphysicians still take our fire, too, from the flame lit by a faith that is thousands of years old ... that truth is divine" (GS, V, §344, p. 283). As moral quests, traditional dogmatic metaphysics and modern science equally presuppose an objective and true reality that exists as absolutely valuable and that may be discovered by accessing the inaccessible.

Nietzsche deems that to be admissible, metaphysics must admit that reality is experienced fluidly and perspectively, that is, as a constant becoming, and accordingly, it must posit it as such.

This is not to say that stable beings cannot be posited; in fact they must be for human living and thriving to be possible. These posits may be errors, but they are errors necessary for human endeavours. "*Ultimate skepsis*.—What are man's truths ultimately? Merely his *irrefutable* errors" (GS, III, §265, p. 219). However, metaphysical posits must be recognized as errors that are consciously accepted as true. Metaphysics must be humbled and constrained by the limitations of the human experience: perspectives. It must neither posit a reality independent of any perspective nor one dependent on an all-encompassing perspective; at least, not without an admission that these posits are invented in radical opposition to human experiences of reality.

Nietzsche rejects all dogmatic metaphysics without rejecting metaphysics altogether. Sceptical metaphysics must be reframed and contained entirely within human perspectives. He redefines metaphysics non-dogmatically. It is now limited to discussions about what reality as experienced from human perspectives might be independently of human perspectives. "We behold all things through the human head and cannot cut off this head; while the question nonetheless remains what of the world would still be there if one had cut it off" (HATH, I, §9, p. 15). Hence humanity's highest point comes at the abolition of the true and apparent worlds (*TI*, 'Fable'). To abolish the true world, not the real one, all dogmatic metaphysical concepts need stark revision, but given their snare's breadth, all traditional concepts and theories must also be revised into non-doctrinaire versions able to inspire living, not solely comfort suffering. Nietzsche thus proposes non-dogmatic claims about the essences of reality and humanity; ones he deems overall most helpful in stimulating living beyond meaningful suffering. He is thus clearing the modern metaphysical plains to gain more room to build better.

Nietzsche's metaphysical posits are admittedly sceptical, pragmatic, dynamic, temporary interpretations that are suggested to serve humanity best in light of his own values. His suggested temporary fluid metaphysical constructs as based on his twofold metaphysical agnosticism or scepticism are the positive counterpart to his attacks on dogmatic metaphysics. In 1887, he claims that metaphysics is really only problematic when it is conserved by a need for certainty, by a faith in an absolute truth (GS, V, §347): when it is dogmatic. He is sceptical of dogmatic metaphysics, but he is not sceptical of pragmatic or non-dogmatic metaphysics. Nietzsche favours his "second," stronger, twofold, "German form of" scepticism over the "first" "great vampire, the spider of skepticism" (BGE, VI, §209, p. 322), which is illogical, untenable and leads to negative nihilism (which will be discussed in next point). Hence, Nietzsche seeks to humble, not eliminate metaphysics. In 1878, he claims that after one discards dogmatic metaphysics, one returns to a new form of metaphysics: "The most enlightened get only as far as liberating themselves from metaphysics and looking back on it from above: whereas here too, as in the hippodrome, at the end of the track it is necessary to turn the corner" (HATH, I, §20, p. 23). One's liberation from traditional metaphysics comes full circle into one's new conception of metaphysics: a sceptical or non-metaphysical one, that is, a "twofold metaphysical scepticism."

Nietzsche's proposed scepticism only makes provisional metaphysical claims. His claims are metaphysical in that they deal with what reality is thought to be, but they are sceptical, in that they only deal with reality from human perspectives, for reality can only be grasped from within these perspectives. Nietzsche's metaphysical claims are provisional in that he accepts that better theories might arise, and, he claims that, should some arise, those for whom they arise ought to accept them. In 1882, Nietzsche writes: "I wish that many such new suns were yet to be created!"

Those who are evil or unhappy and the exceptional human being – all these should also have their philosophy, their good right, their sunshine! ... There is yet another world to be discovered — and more than one. Embark, philosophers” (GS, IV, §289, pp. 231-232)! He insists that at least his students ought to seek for their own answers, unless they wish to repay him badly. "One repays a teacher badly if one always remains nothing but a pupil" (Z, I, Virtue, §3, p. 190); “I bid you lose me and find yourselves; and only when you have all denied me will I return to you” (Z, I, Gift-Giving, §3, p. 190). Pending this manifold of new answers from at least his students and friends, Nietzsche’s proposals are meant to better represent and serve self-affirming vital individuals, their societies, humanity and life. For instance, in 1886, he hypothesizes that reality is composed entirely of diversely antagonizing affects (forces, drives, instincts, passions, desires):

Suppose nothing else were 'given' as real except our world of desires and passions, and we could not get down, or up, to any other 'reality' besides the reality of our drives — for thinking is merely a relation of these drives to each other: is it not permitted to make the experiment and to ask the question whether this 'given' would not be *sufficient* for also understanding on the basis of this kind of thing the so-called mechanistic (or 'material') world? I mean, not as a deception, as 'mere appearance' ... but as holding the same rank of reality as our affects — as a more primitive form of the world of affects in which everything still lies contained in a powerful unity before it undergoes ramifications and developments in the organic process ... as a *pre-form* of life (BGE, II, §36, pp. 237-238).

In this passage, Nietzsche supposes that the world before it is given to the affects probably exists, but it is only accessible after as the perceived anthropocentric world. To be perceived, reality must be captured either by a partial and personal perspective or by a shared interpretation based on the socially dominant perspectives.

Nietzsche insists that his dynamic sceptical metaphysics is a better interpretation of reality than his targets, the metaphysical concepts and theories that dogmatically posit opposite beings,

since his is a self-presenting conceptual aid for (social) living and not an unrealistic, unverifiable, yet said accurate replica of an independent reality. Metaphysics is an interpretation of reality from human perspectives; it is no longer contrasted with or independent of perspectives. In 1881, he writes: "For things are but the boundaries of man" (DD, I, §48, p. 53). Metaphysics is no longer literal but metaphorical, as the only available answers to the metaphysical query of what reality is are interpretations. "Supposing that this also is only interpretation—and you will be eager enough to make this objection?—well, so much the better" (BGE, I, §22, pp. 220-221). Nietzsche deems his interpretation of reality to be the best, as it is consciously an interpretation. He is thus a coherent metaphysical Sceptic. He does not have metaphysical convictions, barring pragmatically. In 1888, he writes:

Zarathustra is a skeptic. ... Great passion, the ground and the power of [the great spirit's] existence, even more enlightened, even more despotic than he is himself, employs his whole intellect; it makes him unhesitating; it gives him courage even for unholy means; under certain circumstances it does not begrudge him convictions. Convictions as a *means*: many things are attained only by means of a conviction (A, §54, p. 638).

Convictions are means. Dogmas must be held for merely pragmatic reasons. Hence, Nietzsche abstains from affirming or denying that the independent world exists; he only strategically posits it. Likewise, he abstains from affirming or denying the independent world's correspondence or lack thereof to human perspectives. In 1873, he writes: "our contrast between the individual and the species is also anthropomorphic and does not stem from the essence of things, even though we dare not say that it does not correspond to it, because that would be a dogmatic assertion and

as such just as unprovable as its opposite" (OTL, I, p. 257)²⁷. Nietzsche suggests that in order to live and thrive, we ought to accept the hypothesis that they correspond. Whether or not this is true outside of our perspectives, it is necessary within them.

About the "new species" of "coming philosophers," of which he is "herald and precursor," Nietzsche writes: "they will certainly not be dogmatists. It must offend their pride, also their taste, if their truth is supposed to be a truth for everyman — which has so far been the secret wish and hidden meaning of all dogmatic aspirations" (BGE, II, §43, p. 243). Due to his distaste for traditional dogmatic metaphysical systems (which are held by both Academics and Dogmatists), Nietzsche wishes to replace them with his own sceptical metaphysical posits, which he considers more realistic, as his concepts are as flexible and dynamic as appearances and perspectives, are. Of "nature's conformity to law," Nietzsche writes: "this is interpretation, not text; and somebody might come along who, with opposite intentions and modes of interpretation, could read out the same 'nature,' and with regard to the same phenomena, rather the tyrannically inconsiderate and relentless enforcement of claims of power-" (BGE, I, §22, p. 220); which he proceeds to do, recognizing that created offerings may be different for others or invalid for different purposes as well as eventually surpassed.

Thus, throughout his writings, Nietzsche is a twofold metaphysical sceptic. He discards all imperious claims that a reality independent of humanity exists or not and that it corresponds to human perspectives and interpretations of it or not. He also refutes all dogmatic claims about reality's independent existence and nature; for, perspectives, being humanity's only grasp upon reali-

²⁷ Nietzsche reiterates this position in 1887, when writing of the idealists' fear of the seduction of the senses: "We today are inclined to make the opposite judgement (which actually could be equally wrong)" (GS, V, §372, pp. 332-333).

ty, suffice to allow human life to proceed and even flourish. As Aaron Ridley claims in *Nietzsche's Conscience, Six Character Studies from the Genealogy* (1998): "the last role of truthfulness is truthfully to surrender to the necessity of deceiving oneself" (p. 140). Nietzsche's search for truth begins from the only available starting-point: perspectives. In 1888, he embraces their necessary distortions and deceptions: "What we *make* of [the senses'] testimony, that alone introduces lies; for example, the lie of unity, the lie of thinghood, of substance, of permanence. 'Reason' is the cause of our falsification of the testimony of the senses" (TI, Reason, §2, p. 480). Since perspectives are both lies about our senses' perceptions and our only available working truths, the question becomes to what end do we deceive ourselves and others.

In sum, rather than being either a believer in or an abolisher of metaphysics, a Dogmatist or an Academic, I have argued that Nietzsche is best read as a twofold metaphysical Sceptic who accepts as his working theory that the external world exists and corresponds to human perspectives. This leads him to his theory of neutral nihilism and to a duplex ontology of the will to power. I turn next to Nietzsche's use of 'nihilism,' before moving on to his posited two-story ontology of 'the will to power,' which he affirms is still no more than a posit, if most realistic or natural and useful, given that humanity's knowledge of reality is always posited. Finally, given his twofold metaphysical scepticism, Nietzsche's concern becomes that of deciding which interpretations should be provisionally upheld as necessary and thus as unquestionable in view of the type of life at which one aims. "Ultimately, it is a matter of the end to which one lies" (A, §56, p. 642). He claims that these choices depend largely upon the types of interpretations that are already held as true, thereby shaping their holders and their societies. Nihilism is such an interpretation.

1.2 Nihilism

I propose that nihilism is the first provisional posit, or pragmatically suggested ultimate human description of reality, that follows from Nietzsche's twofold metaphysical scepticism. In this subsection, I shall review proponents who clearly exemplify the main interpretive directions available on this issue as well as examine Nietzsche's writings in order to determine nihilism's meaning(s). In order to determine for how much seemingly paradoxical text they can account, while remaining coherent with his twofold sceptical metaphysical theories as established so far, the relevant Nietzschean passages will be compared to the main types of interpretation found in the recent literature on Nietzsche's nihilism.

Nihilism divides Nietzsche's interpreters into two general groups. Members of the first camp espouse nihilism as merely negative and destructive; it represents Nietzsche's avowal of the absolute relativity of all meanings and values, radical relativism, and it leads to meaninglessness and despair. This interpretation of nihilism evacuates the possibility of any non-relativistic truth. In contrast, those in the second interpretational camp see Nietzsche as also espousing a positive meaning for this concept, one he is viewed as promoting himself. In this interpretation, nihilism is the clean slate that Nietzsche deems necessary for creating as well as assessing and recreating interpretations, evaluations and values. I recognize that some interpreters in both camps disagree that Nietzsche's nihilism is an ontological posit, as they deny the presence of any metaphysics in Nietzsche. However, I argue that when metaphysics is redefined as a theory about the ultimate nature of reality that is constrained by human perspectives, as I have shown Nietzsche suggests it is, then nihilism is such a posit.

As the representative of the first camp, Legros argues that Nietzsche's philosophy is two-fold: "Nietzsche est à la fois un démystificateur (celui qui abat les idoles) et un 'généalogiste' (celui qui sait qu'on n'atteint jamais une origine première)" (1991, p. 155). That is, Nietzsche seeks to both demystify and reinterpret the world. It should follow that his concept of nihilism is dual as well. However, states Legros, nihilism solely describes the progressive recognition that the world is more complex than our concepts for it; each appearance upon which concepts are based contains ever more appearances yet cannot be reduced to them. Reality's vast complexity, though always still there, is imperceptible in its appearances. Legros claims that nihilism is complete when all metaphysical oppositions are discarded and one accepts that: "rien n'est vrai, rien n'est réductible à une vérité-identité, aucune valeur n'a de sens" (1991, p. 169). Complete nihilism thus embraces total meaninglessness. Nevertheless, proposes Legros, complete nihilism is not what Nietzsche understands by Dionysian affirmation, "c'est-à-dire la création de l'unité des contraires, de l'identité des différences" (1991, p. 169). Once completed, nihilism must still be criticized, as it represents "toute forme de négation de la vie" (Legros, 1991, p. 178). Complete nihilism still must be altered into an autonomous or Dionysian creation of the world.²⁸

Representing the camp where Nietzsche is understood as advancing a further positive meaning for nihilism, Michel Haar claims in *Nietzsche and Metaphysics* (1996), that Nietzsche presents nihilism in (at least²⁹) three conceptual pairs. In the first, nihilism is the state of human

²⁸ However, Legros criticizes: "le monde est une création humain (n'est pas de l'ordre de la *physis*) mais n'est pas une création produite par l'homme (n'est pas de l'ordre du *nomos*)" (1991, p. 175). Legros claims here that after the wholly negative experience of nihilism, Nietzsche re-creates the metaphysical problem which he had dispersed; for, fully autonomous creation denies our actual symbiotic creation of yet with reality.

²⁹ Lastly, Haar sees nihilism as the fourth pair of "*critical thought*" and "*critical condition*" of humanity and its culture (1996, p. 11).

affairs as well as the historical process leading to it. As a process, nihilism is the gradual loss in authority of all previous meanings and values through which one sees that meanings and values are all equivalent, one and the same. "Between the larval nihilism of triumphant metaphysics and the 'complete' nihilism declaring that none of the earlier constructions, nor any value, has any meaning, we encounter various forms of 'incomplete nihilism'" (Haar, 1996, p. 12). Nihilism as a process has as many incomplete forms as there are steps in its development. As a state, nihilism is twofold. Haar claims that Nietzsche's nihilism is our fundamental plight as well as the modern predicament of our still-enduring illness: "Concurring with the very humanity of man, it can be rightly called man's 'normal condition' ... But insofar as it is the peculiar disease of contemporary man (one requiring a homeopathic remedy), Nihilism is also a 'passing pathological condition'" (1996, p. 10). Nihilism illustrates not only the negating impotence of the will to power that posits and forms the logic of the ascetic ideal but also its metaphysical dualities and the initial neutral state of chaos in meaning and value that allows any will to power its support of any meanings and values. Finally, Haar develops that the possibility of reaffirming one's initial, inescapable and complete control over values and meanings leads Nietzsche to distinguish the mere ascent to absolute authority of the will to nothingness, complete nihilism, from its transformation into and overcoming by the "'Dionysian': the perspective of the joyous, pure affirmation of the unity of contraries" (1996, p. 14). Nihilism can either simply be complete or it can also be consummated and unite opposite as gradations.

Nihilism is not overcome simply because the essential metaphysical distinctions cease to be of value. In order to transform 'complete' nihilism into 'consummated' nihilism (or 'ecstatic' nihilism, that which precisely allows us to take leave [*ek-statis*] of the difference), it is necessary that we pass from the mere observation of the dissolution to an active, affirmative dissolution (Haar, 1996, p. 13).

In the final distinction, then, nihilism is the acceptance of relativism either merely negatively, whereby life is solely and sadly the meaningless infinite shifting of appearances, or negatively as well as positively, wherein the Dionysian state of full affirmation of all appearances is actively achieved.

In *The Gay Science*, nihilism has two meanings. Nietzsche foresees the upcoming European nihilism as: “the terrifying Either/Or: 'Either abolish your reverences or — *yourselves!*' The latter would be nihilism; but would not the former also be — nihilism? — This is *our* question mark” (GS, V, §346, p. 287). Either nihilism is the eradication of all errors, certainties and false interpretations of the world that humans believe they need merely to make life endurable, or it is their stubborn self-harming acceptance, the need to believe in them. The former allows for a clean slate of meaning; the latter leads to a complete loss of meaning. Both arrive at a lack of definite meanings and values, at “the *belief in unbelief*” (GS, V, §347, p. 289). However, they are not the same outcome; it is neither the same “unbelief” nor the same belief in it. In the former, nihilism is believing; in the latter, it is needing to believe. In the former, it is suspension of belief in the humanity or the divinity of the world; in the latter, unbelief in the world (and divinity) consisting in humanity.

In order for nihilism to coherently be both, Nietzsche must understand nihilism as neutral itself, which allows for it to be interpreted and experienced in two opposing ways. Nihilism is the neutral realization that the world lacks non-assigned meanings and values. It is unbelief’s victory over belief. There are two possible reactions to this certainty about uncertainty. Reacting positively to nihilism, one abandons all certainties and reverences. One thereby affirms that the world has no meanings or values accessible to humanity beside those that it creates for itself. Here, unbelief

breeds creativity and creation. Reacting negatively to nihilism, one clings to certainties even after they crumble under their own weight. One thereby denies that the world has no meanings and values accessible to humanity beside those that it creates for itself, and accordingly, one denies one's innate creative ability. Here, unbelief breeds a need for belief in dogmas or in unbelief; that is, either one returns to belief in unproven metaphysics or one turns to belief in nothingness. Being the denial of one's creative ability and of all non-humanly assigned meaning and values, at once, nihilism must be itself neutral, but its interpretations, that is, our reactions to it, are not.

Nihilism is thus neutral and it engenders either a positive or negative reaction. It is the neutral realization that the natural human state is completely lacking in non-assigned meanings and values. In 1888, he writes: "Judgements, judgements of value, concerning life, for it or against it, can, in the end, never be true" (TI, Socrates, §2, p. 474) Nihilism is the realization or stance that follows from Nietzsche's twofold metaphysical scepticism, according to which one must refrain from asserting when one is uncertain; one must assume only what is pragmatically necessary for striving and thriving. Accepting nihilism, or that there are no non-humanly assigned meanings and values, follows from accepting the affirmation that humanity's access to and knowledge of the world is limited to posits based on non-humanly verifiable perspectives.

Ours is no longer the bitterness and passion of the person who has torn himself away and still feel compelled to turn his unbelief into a new belief, a purpose, a martyrdom. ... that the world is *not* worth what we thought it was, that is about as certain as anything of which your mistrust has finally got hold. The more mistrust, the more philosophy. We are far from claiming that the world is worth less; indeed it would seem laughable to us today if man were to insist on inventing values that were supposed to *excel* the value of the actual world. This is precisely what we have turned our backs on as an extravagant aberration of human vanity and unreason that for a long time was not recognized as such (GS, V, §346, p. 286).

Nietzsche does not encourage the claims that the world is “worth less” or more. He claims that the “unbelief” in non-humanly assigned values and meanings does not need to be made into a new belief in any. We must recognize that we cannot claim to know the world outside of our perspectives. All claims to such an ability are vain and unreasonable. We are unable to verify the accuracy of our perspectives and interpretations against whole or neutral ones; therefore we must refrain from asserting the whole or neutral truth of any of our perspectives and interpretations, including of our meanings and values, except for pragmatically. 'Nihilism' is Nietzsche's term for the original human state of having no non-assigned meanings and values. It is neither positive nor negative. However, once this neutral state of meaninglessness and valuelessness is perceived, it can be interpreted either negatively or positively.³⁰

Interpreted negatively, or "à la Petersburg" (GS, V, §247, p. 289), nihilism is the need to believe in unbelief. When confronted with the total lack of dogmatic meanings and values that is nihilism, some despair: "there may actually be puritanical fanatics of conscience who prefer even a certain nothing to an uncertain something to lie down on — and die. But this is nihilism and the sign of a despairing, mortally weary soul" (BGE, I, §10, p. 206) — This clinging to nothingness or to "a nightshade wisdom, which always sighs: all is vain" (Z, III, Evils, §2, p. 302), is negative nihilism. This is the 'nihilism' that Nietzsche disparages and hopes to overcome. The negative interpretation of nihilism is enhanced by and enhances "Christian pity," which is "the *practice* of nihilism" (A, §7, p. 573). It is the despairing interpretation of our inescapable stance as the sole makers of all our meanings and values, in which nothing is meaningful or valuable.

³⁰ Just as perspectives can vary idiosyncratically, the same fact may be interpreted differently by people of different dispositions. "I believe that the nature of the after-effect of knowledge is determined by a man's *temperament*" (HATH, I, §34, p. 30).

Here precisely is what has become a fatality for Europe—together with the fear of man we have also lost our love of him, our reverence for him, our hope for him, even the will to him. The sight of man now makes us weary—what is nihilism today if not *that?* (GM, I, §12, p. 480)—

Negative nihilism is the debilitating loss of any meaning and value for the self and for humanity. It is the despairing '*trampolino raso*'³¹ of all meanings and values, due to the self-annihilation of ascetic meanings and values as ultimate guides for reality. This loss occurs gradually through the self-defeat of religion and subsequently of its offspring, dogmatic metaphysics and science (GS, II, §107).³²The search for immutable truths leads to revealing their impossibility. After the death of the monotheistic divinity, some, if not most, seek comfort anew in the certainty or search for truth offered by dogmatic metaphysics or science.

Nietzsche claims that even when it is transfigured by the loss of popular religious belief, asceticism remains powerful, as it continues to rely on the widespread belief in the absolute value or divinity of truth. Thus, after the general disavowal of the Christian God, the ascetic ideal finds an ally in science. In 1887, Nietzsche writes: "This pair, science and the ascetic ideal, both rest on the same foundation— I have already indicated it: in the same overestimation of truth (more exactly: on the same belief that truth is inestimable and cannot be criticized)" (GM, III, §25, p. 589). However, when pushed to its extreme, this no-longer-religious will to absolute truth "must end by drawing its *most striking inference*, its inference *against* itself" (GM, III, §27, p. 597).

That is, asceticism leads to the questioning of the absolute truth of absolute truth, which can lead

³¹ My way to indicate a flexible *tabula rasa*.

³² As Ken Gemes proposes, in "We Remain of Necessity Strangers to Ourselves", *The Key Message of Nietzsche's Genealogy* (2006), Nietzsche hopes to encourage post-nihilistic creation by showing where the modern ideals of truth, objectivity and science are continuations of the ascetic ideal, which, due to its ends, is condemnable.

to sceptical metaphysics and its positive acceptance of natural neutral nihilism, or reopen the door previously closed by the ascetic ideal "to any kind of suicidal nihilism" (GM, III, §28, p. 598).

For some, realizing that nihilism is our fundamental state may be a paralyzing or suicidal endeavour, in that when confronted with the irrelevance of absolute meanings and values, or reality understood nihilistically, a believer may prefer to uphold absolute certainties, even ones that actually try to actively destroy humanity or reality.³³ However, nihilism need not lead to paralysis, suicide or a return to dogmatism.

Conversely, Nietzsche claims that nihilism can have a positive or beneficial interpretation. It can also be interpreted positively as the '*trampolino raso*'³⁴ from which one originally creates and thus can always recreate one's meanings and values individually and communally. As the acceptance of the lack of non-interpretative meaning and value, positive nihilism allows for the total re-evaluation, re-valuation and re-creation of all meanings and values. Nietzsche promises: "the highest art in saying Yes to life, tragedy, will be reborn when humanity has weathered the consciousness of the hardest but most necessary wars *without suffering from it*" (EH, BT, §4, p. 730). If these "necessary wars" are wars of meanings and values, in which Nietzsche hopes for as many standards as possible and fights for the camp of total re-evaluation with the standard that appears in life, self-affirming vitality,³⁵ then nihilism can be the optimistic acceptance of the lack of non-interpretative meanings and values. Nietzsche wars against all supporters of the "faith:

³³ Still today, one can imagine that were a group of (religious) fanatics able to obtain enough nuclear or biochemical weapons, life as we know it could be ended in the spirit of bringing about some transition to an ideal realm.

³⁴ My term for a flexible *tabula rasa*.

³⁵ Paul F. Glenn (2004) proposes that Nietzsche's epistemology is political and moral and that the greatest political arena, according to Nietzsche, is that of creating values and meanings.

'All is empty, all is the same, all has been" (Z, II, Soothsayer, p. 245)! He fights against negative nihilism, for positive nihilism permits the total re-evaluation, re-valuation and re-creation of all meanings and values. Positive nihilism highlights the creative will that is the essence of human-kind. Nietzsche subscribes to this "hopeful" nihilism, given that nihilism comes from "the most terrible, most questionable, and perhaps the most hopeful of all spectacles" (GM, III, §27, p. 597). Nihilism is the most terrifying yet exciting knowledge. Although it is a painful and terrifying realization that the world lacks non-human meanings and values, one can transcend or transform this pain into "a new happiness":

Only great pain is the ultimate liberator of the spirit, being the teacher of *the great suspicion* that turns every U into an X, a real, genuine X, that is the letter before the penultimate one. ... Whether we learn to pit our pride, our scorn, our will power against it, equaling the American Indian who, however tortured, repays his torturer with the malice of his tongue; or whether we withdraw from pain into the Oriental Nothing — called Nirvana — into mute, rigid, deaf resignation, self-forgetting, self-extinction: out of such long and dangerous exercises of self-mastery one emerges as a different person, with a few more question marks — above all with the *will* henceforth to question further, more deeply, severely, harshly, evilly and quietly than one had questioned heretofore. The trust in life is gone: life itself has become a *problem*. Yet one should not jump to the conclusion that this necessarily makes one gloomy. Even love of life is still possible, only one loves differently (GS, P, §3, pp. 36-37).

Nietzsche claims that great pain teaches us that the value of life is unknown; one can fight against this metaphysical position or one can succumb to it. In either case, one goes further than the pain of simply realizing this meaninglessness. At best, though, one can overcome it and love life anew. Nietzsche proposes that accepting the lack of non-assigned meanings and values as one's springboard for the creation of new ones leads, for instance, to opposites seen as different gradations. By the joyful affirmation of the meaninglessness and valuelessness of reality, one goes beyond

exclusionary differences, such as evil and good, to the non-exclusionary variants, good and bad.³⁶ Thus, the ascetic ideal only appears to be averse to life (GM, III, §13). It is life-preserving; although it preserves degenerating, life-denying life.

Positively interpreted, nihilism favours unbelief and willingness, the signs of “sovereignty and strength” (GS, V, §347, p. 289). Attaining redemption from the “disgust with all existence” (Z, III, Convalescent, §1, p. 331), or overcoming the nausea of negative nihilism, is the positive interpretation of nihilism. As humanity slips “into nothingness,” Nietzsche criticizes our preference for the unintelligible over the unknown. He asks, might this not be “the straightest route to — the *old* ideal?” He goes on to describe this ideal, from which all science dissuades us, as humanity’s “former respect for [itself], as if this had been nothing but a piece of bizarre conceit” (GM, III, §25, pp. 591-592). The positive nihilistic belief is so dear to Nietzsche that he promises that: “the highest art in saying Yes to life, tragedy, will be reborn when humanity has weathered the consciousness of the hardest but most necessary wars *without suffering from it*” (EH, BT, §4, p. 730). Wars over meanings and values embrace all of life's variations. “Men of conviction are not worthy of the least consideration in fundamental questions of value and disvalue. ... The believer is not free to have any conscience at all for questions of 'true' and 'untrue': to have integrity on *this* point would at once destroy him” (A, §54, pp. 638-639). All true belief is false: it begs the question by presupposing the standard for the truth it seeks. Faith allows for

³⁶ In the *First Essay* of *On the Genealogy of Morals, A Polemic*, Nietzsche claims that the morality that upholds 'good' and 'bad' as its main concepts does not seek the elimination of bad by good but its domination; whereas the morality that upholds 'evil' and 'good' seeks to eliminate evil and replace it with good. A philosophy that accepts lies or “false judgements” as fundamental for life places itself “beyond good and evil” (BGE, I, §4, p. 202). Thus, understanding truths as necessary lies is a key illustration of opposites reinterpreted as gradations of difference.

some willing and thus for some pleasure; whereas where one wills the most, one believes the least. Faith, notably the faith in opposites, arises where the will to command is weakest. "Presuming that everything man 'knows' does not merely fail to satisfy his desire but rather contradicts them and produces a sense of horror, what a divine way out to have the right to seek the responsibility for this not in 'desire' but in 'knowledge'" (GM, III, §25, p. 592). In the conflict between ourselves and our knowledge, the fault lies in our knowledge.

For Nietzsche, then, nihilism is a single neutral concept with at least two possible interpretations, one positive and one negative. In a similar manner, atheism is neutral and has two interpretations. Nietzsche writes of "unconditional honest atheism" as the inner terminal phase of abstinence-atheism. From the weariness of all values and meanings that embrace the unquestioned nature of truth, that is, those that still have the will to truth, one may pass on to the weariness of truth itself and to the eventual perishing of morality (GM, III, §27). It may not suit everyone, but positive nihilism should overcome negative nihilism. The latter hinders the former yet allows for it to take root and flourish; for, although the morality of pity seduces one to the negative interpretation of *nihilism*, the examination of its *value* can also lead to the *gay science* and a new cheerfulness (GM, P, §5-7). Nihilism is more than merely its negative interpretation, more than the belief that the world as it is ought not to be and the world that ought to be is not. It expresses the belief "*that the value of life cannot be estimated,*" not that life is valueless; which, if not also its most popular, is its negative interpretation. Hence, I disagree with Legros's camp that nihilism is only a negative concept and it is simply to be overcome.

Comparing Nietzsche's texts with each of the above interpretive directions furthers my reading that nihilism has a threefold meaning: nihilism is humanity's natural neutral state of not

having non-humanly assigned meanings and values. Its realization can be interpreted positively or negatively. Depending on the term's occurrence, 'nihilism' serves to show the neutral as well as the negative and positive stances that humanity's rediscovery of metaphysical scepticism breeds, that is, the rediscovery of our necessary condition as a species of creators of all our meanings and values. Thus, although I agree with Haar that nihilism describes the infinity of possible meanings and values with which humanity is inescapably possibly faced at every moment, I propose that it is the neutral state of having no non-assigned meanings and values; it is people that subsequently interpret it positively or negatively. The total loss of belief that is nihilism can be either freeing or frightful. When interpreted positively, nihilism endlessly allows for the complete free exploration of multiple perspectives: "Whatever I create and however much I love it — soon I must oppose it and my love; thus my will wills it ... verily, my will to power walks also on the heels of your will to truth" (Z, II, Self-overcoming, p. 227). Interpreted negatively, nihilism generates the "faith: 'All is empty, all is the same, all has been'" (Z, II, Soothsayer, p. 245)! Given the inescapability of nihilism, Nietzsche hopes that its positive interpretation will overcome the negative one³⁷.

In sum, nihilism is itself natural, neutral and inescapable, although human beings mostly need to turn away from it, at least partially, through their creations of and belief in meanings and values of any kind, but up to now, especially ascetic ones. Given that individuals are limited by and rely solely upon the perspectives that they generate as wills to power to comprehend themselves and the world, any reality independent of those perspectives, even if it exists, is inaccessible. No world that is other, better, beyond or against life is accessible to the living, nor is any

³⁷ In *Nietzsche's Conscience, Six Character Studies from the Genealogy* (1998), Ridley uses Nietzsche's characters to show that their creator aimed to make moral ideals non-harmful by transforming the relationship between morality and the ideal or divine, as any negation of reality in favour of an ideal is an embryo of (negative) nihilism.

non-perspectival position available; we should therefore not posit any, especially without regard for its tendency towards negative nihilism. The origins and limits of perspectives are the qualifiable wills to power, which are composed of various expressions of the unqualified will to power, that hold them. In combination with Nietzsche's barometer for their evaluation, self-affirming vigorous life, his perspectivism imitates and encourages exuberant confident life and positive nihilism rather than asceticism and negative nihilism. Hence, Nietzsche encourages sensitivity to the impacts of perspectives upon the individual's, society's, humanity's and life's enhancements including ones that occur through suffering. Thus, he offers a vehement critique of traditional dogmatic metaphysics because of their disregard for becoming's actuality in favour of the imaginary existence of fixed beings, which inevitably fosters negative nihilism despite conjointly retarding it, as these systems are the progenies of the ascetic ideal. In lieu of this, Nietzsche aims at fostering positive nihilism and thus replaces traditional metaphysics' dogmatic ontologies with his own interpretative, adaptable, scaffolded one of the will to power, to which I now turn.

1.3 The Will to Power

Nietzsche's 'will to power' is the next foundational concept that I must explore before proceeding to his perspectivism in the second chapter. In this subsection, I shall present and evaluate the three main currents of interpretation of the 'will to power.' Some Nietzscheans propose that the 'will to power' is a purely negative and destructive, as it serves the philosopher's denial of

metaphysics³⁸. Some claim that it is merely an anthropological or psychological thesis, not also an ontological one. The will to power is Nietzsche's description of human motivation or volition. Still, some claim that the will to power is a psychological thesis that also stands for Nietzsche's new (pre-) ontological units; it replaces all the traditional ontologies it refutes. Since Nietzsche claims that most of the emptiness and crudeness with which he is charged are merely misunderstandings or reversals of his positions: "some truth stood on its head" (EH, Books, §1 p. 717), here, again, the interpretational stream that can best account for the most textual tensions will be employed, if not further developed.

In 1884, Nietzsche claims that the 'will to power' is a better, if not the best, interpretation, description or rendition of life: "Only where there is life is there also will: not will to life but — thus I teach you — will to power" (Z, II, Self, p. 227); in 1886: "life itself is *will to power*" (BGE, I, §13, p. 211), "life simply *is* will to power" (BGE, IX, §259, p. 393); in 1887: "the will to power which is the will of life" (GS, V, §349, p. 292); in 1888: "Life itself is to my mind the instinct for growth, for durability, for an accumulation of forces, for *power*: where the will to power is lacking there is decline" (A, §6, p. 572). When associating the will to power and life, Nietzsche's choice of language is not merely metaphorical; he describes their relationship using very concrete concepts, such as growth and durability. I refer members of the first circle of interpretation, in which the will to power only destroys traditional metaphysics, to my earlier argument that Nietzsche is best understood as a twofold metaphysical sceptic. He is a Sceptic about

³⁸ Notably, according to Ofelia Schutte's *Beyond Nihilism: Nietzsche Without Masks* (1984), Nietzsche only becomes coherent, if his will to power is a mere metaphor, not a psychological, scientific, metaphysical or any other kind of theory. Schutte considers the will to power to be Nietzsche's metaphor for the nature of reality that aims at erasing the limits between the self and the world (p. 93).

reality's independent existence, and in accordance with this, a Sceptic about the accuracy of perspectives in representing it. For, if Nietzsche doubts the existence of an independent reality, then as a consequence, he also doubts that human perspectives capture it wholly and accurately. If one does not know if reality exists independently of one's perspectives, then one cannot claim to know if one's perspective are accurate or inaccurate depictions of that reality. Nietzsche denies the possibility of guaranteeing the existence of an independent world, but he sees the necessity of positing one. Nietzsche is not committed to perspective-independent realities, except for as useful posited likelihoods. One such posit is the will to power. Therefore, given the metaphysical role played by the will to power, this first camp of interpreters can be set aside. I propose instead that the will to power should be understood as Nietzsche's new pragmatic sceptical metaphysical posit, for he aims to destroy traditional dogmatic metaphysics in order to better erect his own sceptical metaphysics. The question thus becomes: if the will to power is a sceptical metaphysical posit, rather than a merely critical metaphor, is it an anthropological or an ontological concept?

As the first of three proponents representative of the group in which the will to power is a solely psychological concept, Schrift, in *Nietzsche and the Question of Interpretation* (1990), claims that 'will to power' is the philosopher's construal of the process as well as the results of the ever-ongoing human activity of interpretation: "Nietzsche further strengthens his claim to the universal scope of interpretative activity by acknowledging 'will to power' as an interpretation *and* as a name for the interpretive process" (p. 184). 'Will to power' designates the interpretation and the activity that brought it forth. It is not an ontological entity, but a psychological depiction of the interpretations that compose human reality and of their development. Schrift contends, with the Heideggerian and deconstructionist interpretations especially in mind: "Psychology as

the doctrine of the structure and development of will to power does not seek the Being of beings. It seeks, rather, to discover whether existing manifestations of will to power have arisen from sources which are life-enhancing or life-negating" (1990, p. 55). Will to power deals not with life's ultimate components, but with humanity's affirmation and negation of life. Nonetheless, Nietzsche's evaluative distinction between the enhancement and diminishment of life is not a reaffirmation of "binary opposition," as "there is only will to power" (Schrift, 1990, p. 193). Will to power is a single gradated interpretation, from life-affirmation to life-negation. Schrift claims, in "Nietzsche, Deleuze, and the Genealogical Critique of Psychoanalysis, Between Church and State" (2006), that in Nietzsche's concept of 'will to power,' willing and dominance are of equal importance. Nietzsche's emphasis, claims Schrift, is on "the process of moving toward one's goal rather than the endpoint of absolutely attaining it" (1990, p. 192). Will to power thus expresses by no means a fixed state, but rather it expresses the continuum in degrees of actively creating and imposing interpretations.

As the next representative of this interpretative direction, Bernard Reginster proposes, in "Psychology of Christian Morality" (2013), that the 'will to power' is a solely psychological concept, in that it is the non-reducible independent essence of all human motivation. It must be such, he claims, if Nietzsche is to account coherently for *ressentiment* as a response to frustration at one's impotence in the face of suffering, which is only in some cases natural and normal, and for vitality for its own sake, understood as activity unadulterated by the pursuit of any specific aim other than the expansion of energy (Reginster, 2013, pp. 707-709). The 'will to power,' he proposes, is Nietzsche's conception of "the drive for *effective agency*, that is to say, the capacity to govern one's self and shape one's environment in accordance with one's will. ... The desire for

power understood as effective agency will therefore count as satisfied only if the agent has an *experience* of effective agency" (2013, p. 706). The 'will to power' is Nietzsche's conception of humanity's distinct desire to act effectively and to feel it. The 'will to power' expresses the desire to feel the satisfaction of overcoming resistance to one's feeling power or agency, which is our fundamental and distinctive characteristic.

Finally, Jacob Golomb writes, in "Will to Power: Does It Lead to the 'Coldest of All Cold Monsters'?" (2013), that 'will to power' can only be a psychological, anthropomorphic concept, not also a metaphysical one: "first, because he limits willing to 'intellectual beings' only, and second, because he renders the concept of 'substance' as an advantageous fiction (GS 111)" (2013, p. 530). That is, 'will to power' depicts a specific form of the realized incessant human desire for or will to autonomy. Accordingly, will to power is only entirely deciphered if its power component is understood as "*a sublimated force*. The *Naturtrieb* is simply the primordial, brute force; only its sublimated cultural manifestations are endowed with effective and actual power" (Golomb, 2013, p. 527). This leads to understanding will to power as a social or socially sanctioned force. Golomb writes: "The transition from *Kraft* to *Macht* is thus a transition from the potentiality of force to its actualization. Blind '*Kraftquellen*' (*HAH II: 226; KSA 2: 481-2*) are transmuted and become '*Mächtig*' (powerful) through a concrete expression in a specific culture and historical context" (*Ibid.*). Force does not immediately equal power; it must first be contextually socially actualized. Power relates uniquely to a sublimated force, which is a brute force that is directed by socially subdued yet instinctual drives. As such, power is both destructive and creative as well as opposed to the entirely suppressive *Gewalt* (violence) wielded by the priests.

Alongside these interpreters, I propose that it is true that Nietzsche uses the concept to describe all human motivations or psychology. In 1880, he writes that “the love of power, is the demon of mankind” (DD, IV, §262, p. 248). When this demon is satisfied, regardless of any other desires being met or lacking, one is largely happy; yet without its satisfaction, one cannot be happy at all. The following year, he adds:

Whether benefiting or hurting others involves sacrifices for us does not affect the ultimate value of our actions. Even if we offer our lives, as martyrs do for their church, this is a sacrifice that is offered for *our* desire for power or for the purpose of preserving our feeling of power (GS, I, §13, p. 87).

All human actions, even self-sacrifice, are motivated by a desire to maintain or augment one's feeling of power. In his following book, he writes of “every people” having “their will to power” (Z, I, Goals, p. 170). Thus, the 'will to power' is Nietzsche's ultimate psychological concept. However, Nietzsche extends the will to power to “life and the nature of all the living”: “Where I found the living, there I found will to power” (Z, II, Self-Overcoming, p. 226). Besides describing human volition, the 'will to power' also describes and accounts for all volition and action in the world. In 1886, Nietzsche proposes the metaphysical hypothesis that not only our minds but also reality as a whole could be entirely captured by his notion of the 'will to power': “Suppose, finally, we succeeded in explaining our entire instinctive life as the development and ramification of *one* basic form of the will — namely, of the will to power, as *my* proposition has it ..., then one would have gained the right to determine *all* efficient force univocally as — *will to power*” (BGE, II, §36, p. 238). Thus, it is also true that the concept holds a further ontological meaning.

With the determinist theory of force of the 18th-century physicist, Boscovich, as help, Nietzsche claims that the concepts of 'matter' and 'substance' as is the case with “the soul” need to

be replaced with dynamic terms rather than completely eliminated (BGE, I, §12, p. 210). In accordance with his twofold metaphysical scepticism, Nietzsche proposes the 'will to power' as a pragmatically posited interpretation both of "a *pre-form* of life" and of all its "ramifications and developments". Given that the will to power accounts for all human desires and motivations, Nietzsche proposes that all causality is best understood as the will to power. "In the 'in-itself' there is nothing of 'causal connections,' of 'necessity,' or of 'psychological unfreedom'; there the effect does *not* follow the cause, there is no rule of 'law.' ... The 'unfree will' is mythology; in real life it is only a matter of *strong* and *weak* wills" (BGE, I, §21, p. 219). Life is best understood as entirely a matter of different types of wills and of different strengths of will.

The first representative of the last current of interpretation, Strong, states that the 'will to power' is a psychological as well as "pre-ontological" concept. It is psychological in that individuals must consciously see at least themselves as a temporal subject, a unit made of multiple and varying forms of identity, as a will to power. Thus, the 'will to power' depicts particular individuals. When related to human beings, the 'will to power' is a psychological temporal concept. Strong claims that it represents each individual as a will that can resolve its issues with the past and not simply reaffirm or eliminate it. "The will to power operates in such a manner that the same forms get repeated, in a compelling cycle" (Strong, 2000, p. 235). It is difficult to resolve one's issues with the past, to not merely repeat past mistakes. In addition, claims Strong, the 'will to power' is a "pre-ontological" concept:

It is the movement itself, and thus has neither being, nor becoming. It can only be understood in terms of its 'wither.' Nietzsche is saying that if one looks at a people, in fact at organisms and matter in general, their most basic characteristic is the attempt to incorporate into themselves and define all that they meet. This is their will to power, which must therefore be a matter of constantly giving form, or, more precisely,

of giving one's own particular form to that which is encountered. All the forms a thing acquires constitute its *pathos*, its will to power (2000, p. 234).

Strong claims that the 'will to power' is "pre-ontological" because it is the giving of the various forms of life as well as their ensemble before their separation into lifeforms. Strong proposes that the will to power is the Apollonian form giving to the primordial Dionysian chaos. It is Nietzsche's description of the movement that bears life or of the totality of infinite possibilities, of which only some differentiate and actualize or appear and create reality overall. It thus applies to life as a whole as well as to human beings, in particular, to their psychology and morality.

The second representative, Nehamas, suggests that the 'will to power' applies to all things; it describes material and mental realities most accurately: "The will to power is an activity that consists in expanding a particular sphere of influence, physical or mental, as far as it can possibly go" (1985, p. 80). That is, the concept can concretely account for mechanistic causation as well as describe human beings and their psychology, which is a more complex form of willing than mere causal desire.

Willing is an activity that tends to perpetuate itself, and this tendency to the perpetuation of activity, which, as we shall see, may sometimes result in the actual destruction of the subject that manifests it, is what Nietzsche tries to describe by the obscure and often misleading term 'the will to power' (Nehamas, 1985, p. 79).

Nehamas claims that the 'will to power' describes one's seeking to expand one's influential activity, even at the risk of one's death. The 'will to power' is not an illustration of choosing, but rather one of the incessant combative willing of every drive against every other and of each of their outcomes.

The final representative of a dual interpretation of the 'will to power,' Haar, presents the 'will to power' as "something totally different from the psychological relationship between the

will as subjective and power as objective" (1996, p. 6). The will to power depicts all components of the world and the dynamics of their inner forces. Haar claims that Nietzsche develops this concept to highlight the complex process of hierarchizing drives and instincts, which is simplified and disguised by the fiction of a single willing subject. Haar further argues that the will to power is independent of and larger than human consciousness. It shows every movement between forces, all of which make up existence, but only some of which instigate consciousness. The 'will to power' thus applies to all possible impulses, beings and attributes. Yet, it is still more than these possibilities; it is the direction of each one's forces: "at the very heart of the Will to Power, two types of force, two types of life: the *active* force and the *reactive* force, the *ascending* life and the *decadent* life" (Haar, 1996, p. 8). The will to power is the indeterminate and reflexive chaos that is all possibilities of interacting forces, conscious and not, as well as its actualization into one of at least two possible masks, its resolution into one of its types.

I agree with the proponents of this last interpretational camp that the 'will to power' applies both to specific realities, like individuals as well as societies and moralities, and to undetermined existence before its resolution into some of its unlimited possibilities. I accordingly propose that Nietzsche's 'will to power' is best understood as a scaffolded concept: the will to power is posited in some contexts as the universal, unqualified, ontological substratum, and in others cases, as each qualifiable reality, becoming and being, that said ontological substrata create. In *Nietzsche* (1965), Gilles Deleuze explains how Nietzsche's 'will to power' is both the

arena where the active and reactive forces³⁹ fight for dominance, which establishes meaning, and the internal willing component of each force. I propose that in some contexts, the 'will to power' is unqualified, which is to say that it cannot be qualified, and in others, it is qualifiable and qualified. The unqualified will power generates all qualified wills to power⁴⁰. In this manner, the 'will to power' has a conceptual division similar to the traditional one between 'Being' and 'beings'; unqualified Being is somewhat resolved into qualified beings. I shall henceforth employ my distinction between the unqualified and the qualified uses of the 'will to power,' as Nietzsche uses that

³⁹ Deleuze claims that Nietzsche's will to power can be broken down into exclusionary opposites: active and reactive forces, and that Nietzsche hopes for the re-reversal of the forces. Two claims that I argue Nietzsche's texts contradict; the forces are not exclusionary, and any mere return to the past is not feasible. However, I do agree with Deleuze that Nietzsche saw violence as foreign to this future reversal. Nevertheless, Deleuze's claim that the *Übermensch* eliminates all reactive forces in favour of active ones, in *Nietzsche et la philosophie* (1962), seems a misrepresentation:

Dans l'homme qui veut périr le négatif annonçait le surhumain, mais seule l'affirmation produit ce que le négatif annonce. Pas d'autre puissance que d'affirmer, pas d'autre qualité, pas d'autre élément: la négation toute entière est convertie dans sa substance, transmutée dans sa qualité, rien ne subsiste de sa propre puissance ou de son autonomie. ... Les forces réactives sont niées, toutes les forces deviennent actives (p. 202).

Rather, Nietzsche advocates the ability to temporarily take every perspective, including reactive ones; for each services life somehow.

⁴⁰ Nietzsche rarely uses the will to power as an individuated concept, that is, as a noun that could be pluralized; still, he does at least twice. In 1886, he claims that within a ruling class there is channelled strife; when it turns without its group of peers "it will have to be [der leibhafte Wille zur Macht] an incarnate will to power ... because it is *living* and [weil Leben eben Wille zur Macht *ist*] because life simply *is* will to power" (BGE, IX, §259, p. 393). I propose that were there an encounter between multiple aristocratic groups, it ought to follow that there would be an encounter between multiple incarnate wills to power. In his following book, the following year, Nietzsche writes that between the origin and current utility of something there has occurred many transformations, many reinterpretations. Each time "purposes and utilities are only *signs* that [ein Wille our Macht] a will to power has become master of something less powerful and imposed upon it the character of a function; ... in all events [*Macht-Willens*] a *will to power* is operating" (GM, II, §12, pp. 513-514). Each new use in a thing's transformations is the work of a stronger will to power overcoming a weaker one, or of the unqualified will to power overcoming itself in its divergent qualified forms.

same concept to describe both ontological and anthropological cases with and without attributing them qualities. As Schutte writes: "In the case of the will-to-power metaphor this means that not only is nature like us but that we are like nature" (1984, p. 95). Thus, the 'will to power' expresses the continuity between humans as well as that between humans and the rest of existence, although I claim that it is more than a mere metaphor that is destructive of all metaphysics.

In §349⁴¹ of *Book V* of his 1887's *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche claims that only distressed life understands self-preservation as the fundamental drive of life: "in nature it is not conditions of distress that are *dominant* but overflow and squandering, even to the point of absurdity" (GS, V, §349, p. 292). Life is generally exuberant, if not over-exuberant. Life is only exceptionally concerned with existence and preservation primarily. Life is concerned with feeling, expressing and augmenting its power. Struggles over power are over the extension of oneself and are the fundamental drive of life "in accordance with the will to power which is the will to life" (*Ibid*). All living is conceptualized as a striving for power. In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra, A Book for All and None*, where Nietzsche first introduces the term "*Wille zur Macht*," he writes: "life itself confided this secret to me: 'Behold,' it said, 'I am *that which must always overcome itself*. ... life sacrifices itself — for power. ... Only where there is life is there also will: not will to life but — thus I teach you — will to power" (Z, II, Self, p. 227). Life is driven forward by its desire for self-overcoming, for power in its various expressions, if not thereby also to self-destruction. The will of life is the will to power without qualification, without any characteristics. It is neither good nor bad nor evil nor strong nor weak; it just is. This reading is congruent with Nietzsche's

⁴¹ "Der Kampf ums Dasein ist nur eine *Ausnahme*, eine zeitweilige Restriktion des Lebenswillens; der große und kleine Kampf dreht sich allenthalben ums Übergewicht, um Wachstum und Ausbreitung, um Macht, gemäß dem Willen zur Macht, der eben der Wille des Lebens ist."

twofold metaphysical scepticism: for, if one does not know what life is independently of human perspectives, then one cannot deem it to be good or otherwise.

In his subsequent book, from 1886, *Beyond Good and Evil, Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, Nietzsche suggests employing the will to power to understand

the so-called mechanistic (or 'material') world ... as a more primitive form of the world of affects in which everything still lies contained in a powerful unity before it undergoes ramifications and developments in the organic process (and, as is only fair, also becomes tenderer and weaker)— as a kind of instinctive life in which all organic functions are still synthetically intertwined along with self-regulation, assimilation, nourishment, excretion, and metabolism— as a *pre-form* of life (BGE, II, §36, pp. 237-238).

Thus, the 'will to power' describes life before it speciates into its forms, given that only causality of the will is recognized. In this most ontologically fundamental and unqualified sense, the 'will to power' is "a *pre-form* of life." It is that undifferentiated unit from which all life is particularized. Nietzsche proposes that this unqualified use of the 'will to power' is a better description of what is meant by life before it becomes drives, passions, instincts, forces, affects, events and beings. This unqualified use of the 'will to power' is Nietzsche's foundational concept for the state of life before human perspectives experience and interpret it as individuated lifeforms, as various encounters with being and becoming.

Nietzsche also enlarges this conceptualization of the 'will to power': "The world viewed from inside, the world defined and determined according to its 'intelligible character' — it would be 'will to power' and nothing else" (BGE, II, §36, p. 238). The application of the unqualified will to power is extended from life and the living to the world, which also includes the non-living. Besides being life's fundamental drive, the 'will to power' covers the dynamic, multidirectional, multifaceted forms of striving that are experienced by life and all its various forms. In 1888,

Nietzsche equates the good and the terrible in reality with affects, desire and the will to power:

"In the great economy of the whole, the terrible aspects of reality (in affects, in desire, in the will to power) are to an incalculable degree more necessary than that form of petty happiness which people call 'goodness'" (EH, *Destiny*, §4, p. 785). Reality becomes terrible and wonderful because it strives for the power to be and especially for the power to be more.

This unqualified use of 'will to power' is as the unique building block for every becoming and being that forms life, reality and the world. The unqualified will to power is the "pre-form of life" from which life becomes; it is the drive that becomes all of life's qualifiable drives. It is thus the generic drive from which all other drives stem. The unqualified will to power is the drive behind or that individuates into all other qualified drives. It follows that all individuated drives are fundamentally the same in that every drive, regardless of its actual aim, wants more power. Each one wants to overcome itself. In this manner, each distinct drive differently expresses the same unqualified will to power. In *On Self-Overcoming*, in *Part Two of Thus Spoke Zarathustra, A Book for All and None*, Nietzsche writes: "Where I found the living, there I found will to power; and even in the will of those who serve I found the will to be master. ... Indeed, you call it a will to procreate or a drive to an end, to something higher, rather, more manifold: but all this is one" (pp. 226-227). Various directed and qualified drives are all one in that they all somehow express the unqualified will to power.

Every drive can be understood as a qualifiable variation of the unqualified will to power, because every drive both originates in and to some degree excites the unqualified will to power. To wit, Nietzsche writes, in 1887, that even "by prescribing 'love of the neighbor,' the ascetic priest prescribes fundamentally an excitement of the strongest, most life-affirming drive, even if

in the most cautious doses—namely, of the *will to power*" (GM, III, §18, p. 571). Here he claims that even a drive that seems completely contrary to the will to power stimulates it to some degree. He constructs his unqualified use of the 'will to power' to univocally represent all of life's drives, desires, passions, affects and instincts. For each one, human or not, is active in the same way: it wishes for more of itself, for more power to become, be or do what it becomes, is or does. All living is willing and all willing is willing more power. Every striving is a more or less disguised venture or will for more of its preferred form of power. Any will to an end is thus the desire not merely to attain that end, but it is also the universal desire to overpower not-attaining it. Every specific drive is a particular will aimed at a specific end and a generic will to overpower not-willing. Similarly, Nietzsche proposes: "life itself is *will to power*; self-preservation is only one of the indirect and most frequent *results*" (BGE, I, §13, p. 211). This means that although life seeks its preservation, it seeks it only in light of and as an optional means to its enhancement. Nietzsche is resolute: when life is pigeonholed as adaptation, reactivity, passivity or self-preservation, then "the essence of life, its will to power, is ignored" (GM, II, §12, p. 515). Thus, whether in order to thrive or even just to survive, all living things must overpower parts of their environment and themselves. It follows that both of these drives, preservation and enhancement, are equally natural useful variations of the unqualified will to power that is life, the world and reality, although unequally valued.

In 1886, Nietzsche writes that all life can be understood as the 'will to power': "Suppose, finally, we succeeded in explaining our entire instinctive life as the development and ramification of *one* basic form of the will — namely, of the will to power, as *my* proposition has it . . . , then one would have gained the right [*das Recht*] to determine *all* efficient force univocally as — *will*

to power" (BGE, II, §36, p. 238). From its streamlined description of all human desires, the 'will to power' gains "the right" to apply generically to all desires and forces. Nietzsche's is a better description of all efficient forces, human and otherwise, because of its inherent dynamism. By his choice of a dynamic image, 'will to power,' he emphasizes movement. His conceptualization is a consequence, first, of his emphasis on the inescapability for human beings to create. "The will is a creator" (Z, II, Redemption, p. 253). We constantly create meanings through our estimations. "To esteem is to create: hear this, you creators" (Z, I, Goals, p. 171)! The will esteems and creates meaning by imposing meanings and values upon reality. "Only man placed values in things to preserve himself — he alone created a meaning for things, a human meaning. Therefore he calls himself 'man,' which means: the esteemer (sic). To esteem is to create" (*Ibid.*). Nietzsche consciously applies his unqualified ontology to life, the world, reality and human desires without concealing their ongoing dynamism, which is due to the created nature of all human meanings and values. Second, the dynamism of Nietzsche's central ontological concept heralds from his devotion to becoming over being. As Schrift writes succinctly: "Nietzsche offers will to power and the world of becoming as an alternative to the world of Being" (1990, p. 62). The pre-life, that is, the struggle for existence that everything must undertake to initially become, is obscured in traditional ontologies of Being and beings or substances. Hence, the unqualified will for more power better represents human desires, life, the world, reality and that from which they all become.

In *Part Two of Thus Spoke Zarathustra, A Book for All and None*, Nietzsche writes: "life sacrifices itself — for power. ... There is much that life esteems more highly than life itself; but out of the esteeming itself speaks the will to power" (Self, pp. 227-228). In order for the 'will to

power' to both "speak" of the various things that life esteems "more highly than itself," and be the will of life: "only where there is life is there also will: not will to life but — thus I teach you — will to power" (*Ibid.*, p. 227), it must apply to opposites as well as everything in between. That is, it must be neutral, generic, unqualified. The unqualified will to power is the all encompassing primordial urge for more, from which all life becomes and is; that is to say, it depicts life's overpowering of not-becoming and not-existing. Unqualified, the will to power is Nietzsche's hypothesized conceptualization of life's coming into becoming and existence.

Thus, the unqualified 'will to power' is Nietzsche's most fundamental ontological concept. As an undifferentiated unit, 'pre-life,' the will to power is life overpowering its not-becoming, not-existing, not-being, since the will to power is a self-overcoming. The pre-life or unit from which life emerges and becomes is understood as lacking any qualities or characteristics. Life before distinctions, "a pre-form of life," is the will to power without qualification, 'the unqualified will to power.' Thus, I propose use of the term 'the unqualified will to power' for Nietzsche's pragmatic, dynamic, ontological conception of life when taken as a whole, that is, before it becomes its individuated components. 'The unqualified will to power' is Nietzsche's suggested portrait of life, the world and reality both before they become and beyond or aside from their interactions with human perspectives. However, in addition, Nietzsche deploys the same concept to distinguish events and entities from one another. This is what I claim is Nietzsche's second meaning for the 'will to power' and its qualifiable use.

Consistently with Nietzsche's twofold metaphysical scepticism, the unqualified will to power, his sole ontological building block, directs itself in various manners to create the different

qualifiable components of life, the world and reality. That is, the same unqualified will to power is exhibited very differently. In 1887, he writes:

For fundamentally it is the same active force that is at work on a grandeur scale in those artists of violence and organizers who build states, and that here, internally, on a smaller and pettier scale, directed backward, in the "labyrinth of the breast," to use Goethe's expression, creates for itself a bad conscience and builds negative ideals—namely, the *instinct for freedom* (in my language: the will to power) (GM, II, §18, p. 523).

Although "it is the same active force" in both these different people, in each the will to power is expressed and thus qualified differently. Each has a differently expressed or directed expression of the unqualified will to power: in the former it is turned outward, in the latter, inward. Also, each is qualified as acting on a different scale: grand or petty. Similarly, two books earlier, Nietzsche claims that the will to truth is a qualified form of the unqualified will to power: the "will to the thinkability(sic.) of all beings: this *I* call your will. ... That is your whole will, you who are wisest: a will to power — when you speak of good and evil too, and of valuations" (Z, II, Self-Overcoming, p. 225). The qualifiable will to power describes and characterizes all entities and events as particular variations on the unqualified will to power, as flexible yet temporarily stabilized coalitions of variously antagonistic expressions of the unqualified will to power: "for our organism is an oligarchy" (GM, II, §1, p. 494). Thus, in 1886, Nietzsche suggests replacing the Christian notion of the unique immortal soul with the concept of the soul as a "mortal" "social structure of the drives and affects," the "soul as subjective multiplicity" (BGE, I, §12, p. 210).

Moreover, that fall, he suggests relating the conception of the soul and the spirit to that of the body. "We philosophers are not free to divide body from soul as people do; we are even less free to divide soul from spirit" (GS, P, §3, p. 35). Nietzsche claims that the body is composed of multiple antagonizing components, and at any moment, its dominant one wills and acts for the

whole through its created instrument, the spirit. The spirit is a function of and an instrument for the body:

The body is a great reason, a plurality with one sense, a war and a peace, a herd and a shepherd. ... Instruments and toys are sense and spirit: behind them still lies the self. ... Behind your thoughts and feelings, my brother, there stands a mighty ruler, an unknown sage — whose name is self. In your body he dwells; he is your body. ... The creative body created the spirit as a hand for its will" (Z, I, Despisers, pp. 146-147).

The self is the body's expression of its wisdom and it is in control of the human being. The self makes the body feel pleasure or pain, and therefore, it makes the ego think about prolonging or ending that feeling. Bela Egyed writes in "Nietzsche's Anti-Democratic Liberalism" (2007): "the drives constituting a self are not discrete, homogeneous, multiplicities like atoms, but continuous, heterogeneous, multiplicities like the organs of a living body" (p. 112). A qualified will to power is thus composed of a *facia*⁴²-like network of the unqualified will to power expressed as different drives. These drives are each an expression of the unqualified will to power, but each is directed differently and acts on a different scale.

Nietzsche accounts for the variations in emerging realities by considering each entity or event as a specific type of qualifiable will to power that is formed by its particular component expressions of the unqualified will to power. Each specific type of will to power is formed by its particular coalition of composing expressions of unqualified will to power or its affects, drives or instincts. That is, every individualized qualifiable will to power is a temporarily stabilized alliance of its drives, affects or instincts, or of its component expressions of the unqualified will to power. Every aspect of life: actual, possible, imagined, created, individual, comprehensive, past, present, future, organic, non-organic, etc., is a qualifiable will to power, because each one is an

⁴² *Facia* is a fibrous connective tissue that envelops organs and muscles.

endless quest for more of its own dominant form of the unqualified will to power. Hence, "even in the will of those who serve I found the will to be master" (Z, II, Self-Overcoming, p. 226). The will to servitude is a qualifiable expression of the unqualified will to power. Thus, when qualified, the 'will to power' resembles the concept of 'being' or 'substance,' though Nietzsche claims that it applies better to individuated things, including unconscious drives and imaginary entities.

Being an inherently relational term, the 'will to power,' he esteems that his is a better interpretation for traditional relational ontological elements, like opposition, functionality, causality: "purposes and utilities are only *signs* that a will to power has become master of something less powerful and imposed upon it the character of a function" (GM, II, §12, p. 513). All relations express the imposition of one qualifiable will to power upon another. The aim of all volition is always more power; to will is invariably to will more power, more ability, more capability, more influence. Power is relational and active; that is, it is expressed through limitless relations, including domination, self-transformation and self-destruction, and it conceives of struggle as a stimulant as well as as a threat to which it must respond. Thus, given that willing and power both involve the imposition of something on another, this relational desire is easily and best expressed in relations. Every qualifiable reality emerges from the combination of, from the relations between, the various expressions of the unqualified will to power. In 1882, Nietzsche claims that knowledge is the resulting calm and just contract that emerges from the relations or the struggles between our antagonistic desires to "laugh, lament and detest" (GS, IV, §333, p. 261). Even logic is a product of the body's inner relations. "The course of logical ideas and inferences in our brain today corresponds to a process and a struggle among impulses that are, taken singly, very illogical

and unjust" (GS, III, §111, p. 172). The contest between the individual's different illogical drives brings forth its reasoning.

The qualifiable term the 'will to power' applies to specific entities and events, including individuals, societies and moralities: "in all events a *will to power* is operating" (GM, II, §12, p. 514). The 'will to power' is individualized; it qualifies individual entities and events. Life is the general unqualified will to power; any of its specific embodiments is therefore also the will to power, but in this instance, a qualifiable will to power. Throughout his later works, Nietzsche describes societies, values, moralities and individuals as differently qualified wills to power. He writes of a society: "if it is a living and not a dying body ... it will have to be an incarnate will to power ... because life simply *is* will to power" (BGE, IX, §259, p. 393). A society is an incarnate qualified will to power. Also, societies' members have a collective will to power: "No people could live without first esteeming ... A tablet of the good hangs over every people. Behold, it is the tablet of their overcomings (sic); behold, it is the voice of their will to power" (Z, I, Goals, p. 170). Each people has its own collective will to power; although many values exist, every time: "out of the esteeming itself speaks the will to power" (Z, II, Self-Overcoming, p. 228). Different estimations correspond to different incarnate wills to power, for, individually and collectively, the qualities of one's will to power influence one's choice of values. "Your will and your valuations you have placed on the river of becoming; and what the people believe to be good and evil, that betrays to me an ancient will to power. ... the will to power—the unexhausted(sic) procreative will of life" (Z, II, Self-Overcoming, pp. 225-226). This means that underneath the various qualifiable wills to power that coexist and generate various valuations, there lies only the one "ancient" unqualified will to power, life.

Furthermore, the power willed in the 'will to power' is more than mere outright physical or psychological domination. Schutte proposes that exploitative domination is actually power's weakest expression. The logic of such domination excludes all other interpretations, including Schutte's own that the 'will to power' is a metaphor, an interpretation that focuses on the process itself as the goal and which offers an alternate to traditional causal explanations (1984, pp. 101-102). "Decadence itself interprets the will to power as a will to rule" (Schutte, 1984, p. 98). She proposes rather that Nietzsche has two non-mutually exclusive meanings for the 'power' in his 'will to power': as domination and as recurring energy (1984, p. 76).⁴³ As the latter, power is "vitality for its own sake [...] understood as activity unadulterated by the pursuit of any specific aim other than the expansion of energy" (Reginster, 2013, pp. 707-709). Power is not exclusively a domineering, violent force: "We benefit and show benevolence to those who are already dependent on us in some way ... we want to increase their power because in that way we increase ours, or we want to show them how advantageous it is to be in our power" (GS, I, §13, p. 86). The 'power' in 'will to power' stands for all its forms: linguistic, physical, social, spiritual, intellectual, artistic, emotional. "Philosophy is this tyrannical drive itself, the most spiritual will to power, to the 'creation of the world,' to the *causa prima*" (BGE, I, §9, p. 206). Thus, the power willed can be brute physical or psychological domination; however, it can also be (self-) determination and (self-) creation. The latter mostly occur, not by (self-) conservation, but through the domination

⁴³ Schutte deplors that Nietzsche only excludes power as domination from the world and not also from within human relations and psychology (1984, p. 103). Nevertheless, I claim that there are a few exceptions in his writings, where this uncoupling is possible in Nietzsche's framework, if despite Nietzsche (this will be explored in more depth later, notably when discussing egoism and altruism).

of one part of the self over the others and not necessarily also the domination of something or someone other.

All will to power thus includes a form of domination, but not all forms of domination are of others or detrimental. Sometimes domination is merely imagined: "Striving for distinction is the striving for domination over the next man, though it be a very indirect domination and only felt or even dreamed" (DD, II, §113, p. 68). The desire to outshine one's competitors is a form of domination over them. Power thus even motivates helping others: "Certainly the state in which we hurt others is rarely as agreeable, in an unadulterated way, as that in which we benefit others; it is a sign that we are still lacking power, or it shows a sense of frustration in the face of this poverty" (GS, I, §13, p. 87). Helping others is dominating them, albeit beneficially⁴⁴. Power, in all its multifariousness, is the exclusive insatiable motivation behind every becoming, whether being, thought or action, beneficial or detrimental. It follows that the issues of which power is willed and how now arise.

The answers to these questions depend on the each will to power's qualities and correlated type, which are determined by its dominant or commanding affect: "To our strongest drive, the tyrant in us, not only our reason bows but also our conscience" (BGE, IV, §158, p. 281). Under the guidance of one's strongest drive, one might use one's power unreasonably or unconscionably or neither. Every arrangement of a will to power's components, each of which is its own form of the unqualified will to power searching for more of itself, creates a different event or entity, a specific type of qualified will to power. Each type of will to power depends on the fluctuating

⁴⁴ See also the earlier HATH, II, §54.

combination of its composing expressions of the unqualified will to power; such that a will to power's identity and value can differ with changes in its internal arrangement. Thus, each will to power is identified and qualified by each specific combination of its composing drives and affects. There are at least three ways of viewing the "two 'wills to power' in conflict" (WP, II, §401, p. 217) : a will to power gets its respective qualifications as either strong or weak, healthy or sick and active or reactive from either having or lacking an internal unity of purpose, affirming or denying its suffering and reality and acting independently and spontaneously or reactively.

An active will to power is one that is quick and spontaneous in most action and that directs its activity largely outside of itself. Inversely, a reactive will to power acts generally only once provoked and then mostly negatively and indirectly. It (re-)directs its reactions mostly inwards.

The active and reactive also differ by their scale of their actions. In 1887, Nietzsche writes:

For fundamentally it is the same active force that is at work on a grandeur scale in those artists of violence and organizers who build states, and that here, internally, on a smaller and pettier scale, directed backward, in the "labyrinth of the breast," to use Goethe's expression, creates for itself a bad conscience and builds negative ideals—namely, the *instinct for freedom* (in my language: the will to power) (GM, II, §18, p. 523).

By being mostly active, one can shape one's environment as one sees fit; one is powerful enough to affect others. By being mostly reactive, one has difficulty creating on one's own and thus is dependent; for, to be reactive, there must already be an action to which one can react, if only in one's mind. Although every will to power is either active or reactive at any given time, every will to power encompasses both active and reactive qualities.

A healthy will to power is one that seeks to enhance exuberant, expanding, vigorous self-affirming life; a sick one seeks little more than declining life's stagnation and conservation. In

1888, Nietzsche writes: "Wherever the will to power declines in any form, there is invariably also a physiological retrogression, decadence" (A, §17, p. 583). Nietzsche professes his health: "My proof for this, among other things, that I have always instinctively chosen the *right* means against wretched states; while the decadent typically chooses means that are disadvantageous for him" (EH, Wise §2, p. 680). Thus, a healthy will to power faces and overcomes its illnesses and sufferings; a sick one merely acknowledges and bears them with the help of its imagination and intellect. Nietzsche also contrasts "sickness and will to power" as the two components of "those gruesome hybrids" "whom people call founders of religions" (EH, P, §4, p. 675). Thus, as with the first qualifications, these are relative and overlapping attributes: "As *summa summarum*, I was healthy; as an angle, as a speciality, I was a decadent" (EH, Wise §2, p. 680). So, again, he coherently moves beyond an exclusionary binary.

A strong will to power maintains its composing affects in an oriented structure or internal hierarchy long enough to achieve its dominant drive's aims. A weak will to power seeks instead to organize its affects from without, and even then, with difficulty. A strong will to power can control its reactions to perceiving various stimuli. "Learning to *see*, as I understand it, is almost what, unphilosophically speaking, is called a strong will: the essential feature is precisely *not* to 'will' — to *be able* to suspend decision" (TI, Germans, §6, p. 511). A weak one cannot impose discipline and moderation upon itself: "the weakness of the will — or, to speak more definitely, the inability *not* to respond to a stimulus — is itself merely another form of degeneration" (TI, Morality, §2, p. 487). Once more, Nietzsche warns: "it should be kept in mind that 'strong' and 'weak' are relative concepts" (GS, III, §118, p. 176). They too exist in every will to power and can dominate at one time or another.

Thus, if a will to power, overall, uniformly and without forethought aims for and serves as a foremost means to the expansion and celebration of self-affirming, vigorous or luxuriant life, which only in certain cases implies its own conservation, then that will to power is active, healthy and strong. Such an individual, Nietzsche calls (arguably consciously vexingly⁴⁵) a 'master.' Conversely, a will to power that serves mainly as a means to dwindling life's conservation and preservation, and which consciously seeks its aims outside of itself, is reactive, sick and weak. This type of individual, Nietzsche calls a 'slave.'

Nietzsche creates and employs the three duos of different qualities, as well as their various combinations into the types, to underscore the complexity of the qualifiable will to power that is each aspect that makes up life as the unqualified will to power. For instance, he writes in 1886:

There are *master morality* and *slave morality* — I add immediately that in all the higher and more mixed cultures there also appear attempts at mediation between these two moralities, and yet more often the interpretation and mutual understanding of both, and at times they occur directly alongside each other — even in the same human being, within a *single* soul (BGE, IX, §260, p. 394).

Each modern individual harbours the traits of both master and slave, and each entity and event can be any type of will to power: "Wandering through the many subtler and coarser moralities which have so far been prevalent on earth, or still are prevalent, I found that certain features recurred regularly together and were closely associated — until finally I discovered two basic types and one basic difference" (*Ibid.*); that is: "*master morality* and *slave morality*-" Each of the types

⁴⁵ In *Le buisson ardent et les lumières de la raison, L'invention de la philosophie de la religion, Tome 1, Héritages et héritiers du XIXe siècle*, Jean Greisch (2002) argues very insightfully that as Kant before him Nietzsche aimed at a critique of humanity, of its core values and of reason. The 'strong' and the 'weak' serve to show Nietzsche's critique of the value of our values. Nietzsche understands his "No-saying/-doing" or dynamiting work as best done with such vexing terms (for me, personally, they were quite unsettling and therefore effective "fishhooks").

offers its benefits to humanity, and although the slave-type offers less vitality than the master-type, it is a more interesting and stable type of will to power. Nietzsche's descriptions of the types and of their respective moralities stress not only their specific dangers, but also their varying value and benefits. Nietzsche does not seek the elimination of the types but rather their transformation; for, he insists that the monopoly over all types that is desired by the priests and the slaves will slowly but surely lead to (democratic) suicidal nihilism.

Frithjof Bergmann, in "Nietzsche and Analytic Ethics" (1994), describes the master and the slave as each other's antithesis in their gifts from nature; the former has an abundance where the latter has a shortage. In *Nietzsche's Ethics and his War on 'Morality'* (1999), Simon May claims that master and slave are Nietzsche's archetypes; for they describe ways of beings, not strictly individuals. Since Egedal claims that Nietzsche is an anti-essentialist, he writes: "the distinction between types must have a certain degree of 'fluidity'" (2007, p. 109). That the types can coexist in an individual, with one being predominant at any given time, shows this fluidity. The three hybrid types of qualifiable will to power, the two unfavourable combinations of the qualities of the masters with those of the slaves and the favourable one, are also an illustration of this fluidity. Although usually also healthy and active, a strong will to power may either naturally be or by habituation become unhealthy and reactive. To wit, in *On the Genealogy of Morals, A Polemic*, Nietzsche elaborates upon the priests and the tamed beasts of prey. The former illustrate that some sickly and reactive wills to power are naturally strong; the latter, that some strong wills to power can be made sickly and reactive.

The first unfavourable hybrid type, which Nietzsche calls (Christian) shepherds or priests, are distinctive in that they are naturally strong types of reactive and sickly will to power. A will to power with this configuration, he writes:

must be sick himself, he must be profoundly related to the sick—how else would they understand each other?—but he must also be strong, master of himself even more than of others, with his will to power intact, so as to be both trusted and feared by the sick, so as to be their support, resistance, prop, compulsion, taskmaster, tyrant, and god (GM, III, §15, pp. 561-562).

Thus, being strong wills to power, the priests use their own perspectives to create interpretations of and values for reality. However, being (reactive and) sickly, they can only create life-negating ascetic ones. "The slave revolt in morality begins when *ressentiment* itself becomes creative and gives birth to values: the *ressentiment* of natures that are denied the true reaction, that of deeds, and compensate themselves with an imaginary revenge. ... This inversion of the value-positing eye - ... - is the essence of *ressentiment*" (GM, I, §10, pp. 472-473). The priests create asceticism by misrepresenting then reversing the perspectives, interpretations and values of the masters. (I shall return to this in more detail shortly.)

Moreover, these priests are responsible for the second unfortunate hybrid type of will to power: the tamed birds of prey. Once the priests are in power, they habituate the strong, healthy and active wills to power to weakness, sickness and reactivity via the myth of everyone's absolute and equal free will. The priests "in fact maintain no belief more ardently than the belief that *the strong man is free* to be weak and the bird of prey to be a lamb—for thus they gain the right to make the bird of prey *accountable* for being a bird of prey" (GM, I, §13, p. 481). If one believes that one is free to be how one is, then one also believes that one is responsible for being that way or another. Belief in the subject as an entity distinct from its actions leads to belief in completely

free and thereby responsible will. For if one is able and free to act otherwise, one is responsible for one's actions. "It is this belief in choice that engenders hatred, revengefulness, deceitfulness, all the degrading our imagination undergoes, while we are far less censorious toward an animal because we regard it as unaccountable" (HATH, II, §99, p. 53). The priests teach that it is entirely a choice for the subject to act as a master or as a slave. By their novelty and subsequently their popularity, the priestly interpretations and values, over time, ensnare even the masters. "The will of the weak to represent *some* form of superiority, their instinct for devious paths to tyranny over the healthy — where can it not be discovered, this will to power of the weakest" (GM, III, §14, p. 559)! Eventually, despite their superiority being only imagined and projected, the shepherds gain enough seductive power over the masters to transform them, to make them ascetic, ill and slavish, and thus to actually dominate them.

Initially, the priests gain their political power from their society's indebtedness toward their divinities⁴⁶. The priests seduce the knightly aristocrats not only by making punishment and suffering festive, but by also controlling the health of and care for the body. The priests translate the originally bodily or health distinction between pure and impure to one's station in life and from one's station to oneself (GM, I, §6). The strength, health and activity of the masters are threatened and eventually repressed by the emergence and growth of the priestly type of will to power and of their ascetic, or inverted, deepened and hypnotic, modes of living, evaluating and valuing. Although they are victorious, the priests are never superior to the masters vis-à-vis Nietzsche's common standard: self-affirming vitality. Nietzsche sees life as favouring vitality, and

⁴⁶ This is the case for both pagan and Christian priests; "pagans are all those who say Yes to life, for whom 'god' is the word for the great Yes to all things" (A, §55, p. 641). All priests rule others by establishing truths and laws, just like Plato did without strictly being a priest.

correspondingly, he adopts it as his overarching normative standard. That is, it replaces the Good. The life-affirming elements of life are qualitatively superior to, although as necessary as, the life-denying ones, despite any other inferiority, such as in number. Each member of the pair is equally but distinctively essential to and valuable for life. For each in its own manner serves life.

In 1887, Nietzsche writes: "the case is therefore the opposite of what those who reverence [the ascetic] ideal believe: life wrestles in it and through it with death and *against* death; the ascetic ideal is an artifice for the *preservation* of life" (GM, III, §13, p. 556). Life seeks its preservation through the ascetic ideal, not self-affirming vital life. Exuberant, self-affirming, creative life is best intensified and expanded both overall and individually by an active, strong and healthy will to power, by a freely fluctuating although stable hierarchy of affects that actively affirms all aspects of existence, including suffering, by a master. Nevertheless, the priests have preserved and improved humanity, on the one hand since "only here did the human soul in a higher sense acquire *depth* and become *evil* —" priests made the human being a more "*interesting animal*" (GM, I §6, p. 469). On the other hand, with their help, humanity gained existential and socio-political stability: "the ascetic ideal was in every sense the *'faute de mieux' par excellence* so far. In it ... the door was closed to any kind of suicidal nihilism" (GM, III, §28, p. 598). The ascetic ideal persists because it helps the reactive, sickly and weak or slavish wills to power to temporarily avoid the worst interpretation of nihilism.

1.4 The *Übermensch*

The final hybrid type of will to power is the *Übermensch*. As Nietzsche's ideal type, it has garnered various interpretations from being an aspirational metaphor⁴⁷ to being a recommended actualization.⁴⁸ In 1874, Nietzsche first uses the adjective 'superhuman' (*übermenschlich*) to make explicit the terrifying majesty that a truly just man must approximate and not in fact possess: "the man with the feeling and the strength for justice ... Were he a cold demon of knowledge, he would cast round him the icy atmosphere of an awful, superhuman majesty, that we should fear, not revere. But he is a man" (UAH, §6, p. 113). The term stands for an ideal here. The collective noun 'superhumanity' (*Übermenschlichkeit*) is the next occurrence: "[a virtue, here unselfishness (*uneigennützig*) once practiced by the whole community, as a *collection* of good and respected things] stands henceforth as a unique virtue, as a being in itself, which it had not previously been, and exercises the rights and power of a consecrated superhumanity" (WS, §190, p. 236). Here, in 1880, it stands for the authority of moral selflessness, which Nietzsche deems poorly named, once it is a single collective virtue in light of its visible social impacts. The following year, 1881, when discussing the stubborn belief of "the institution of marriage" in "lasting, lifelong love" or one's "fiery devotion of a moment" turned into "eternal fidelity," he also writes of "a new and *superhuman* [ein neuer übermenschlicher] conception which elevates mankind" but which is born alongside "a great deal of hypocrisy and falsehood" (DD, I, §27, p. 34). In this passage, Nietzsche

⁴⁷ As Schutte expresses: "God as absolute and thing-in-itself has been a metaphysical truth, while the *Übermensch*, Zarathustra's principal teaching about humanity, is a metaphorical truth about the possibility of human fulfillment" (1984, p. 92). Thus, the *Übermensch* is an aspiration for humanity, not an actual goal.

⁴⁸ See Randall Havas (2013), for example. Havas understand the *Übermensch* as Nietzsche's ideal and suggested way of life, where one maintains a committed relationship to time and thus to one's agency as well as to others in one's community.

uses the adjective 'superhuman' to show the advantageous effect of this transformation, its benefit, rather than its disadvantage. For turning a moment into eternity requires an unbreakable will.

Nietzsche's first description of an individual as an *Übermensch* occurs in the next year. It is as an ideal invented to eventually allow individuals to develop and defend their egoism and sovereignty: "The invention of gods, heroes, and overmen of all kinds, ... was the inestimable preliminary exercise for the justification of the egoism and sovereignty of the individual" (GS, III, §143, pp. 191-192). The *Übermensch* is a human fiction that is useful to fortifying one's egoism and sovereignty by exemplifying what is possible. Over the following three years, Nietzsche writes of the *Übermensch* as the overcoming of humanity, as that which Zarathustra teaches the people, as "the meaning of the earth," (Z, P, §3, p. 124), as the end of "the rainbow and bridges" that begin "where the state ends," (Z, I, Idol, p. 163), as the one whose beauty came to Zarathustra as "a shadow" rendering gods meaningless (Z, II, Isles, p. 200), as "Zarathustra's word of the great noon," (Z III, Tablets, §3, p. 310), as Zarathustra's "first and only concern -" to whom the "masters of today ... these small people... are the ... greatest danger" (Z, IV, Higher, §3, p. 399). The *Übermensch* is an ideal future goal or aim for humanity, especially its higher men. It is the type that Zarathustra foresees, which he is personally trying to develop and for which he is trying to find peers to encourage and help to do the same. The last published description of the *Übermensch* is in 1888 as a word designating "a type of supreme achievement ... that in the mouth of Zarathustra, the annihilator of morality, becomes a very pensive word" (EH, Books, §1, p.717), as a concept "become the greatest reality" in Zarathustra, who "experiences himself as the *supreme type of all beings*" (EH, Z, §6, p. 761), and whose type is "superhuman precisely in its relation to the *good*" (EH, Destiny, §5, p. 787). The *Übermensch* is associated to Zarathustra's

elevation into a hoped-for type of human being, a supreme type that surpasses all the other types that have existed so far.

The *Übermensch* is the realization of humanity's potential greatness. "The *Übermensch* is a metaphor for what it would mean to be a human being who is no longer fragmented by the forces of dualism and the condition of alienation from the earth" (Schutte, 1984, p. 92). However, the *Übermensch* is more than a metaphor; Nietzsche hopes that it will one day be achieved as a type. "You that are lonely today, you that are withdrawing, you shall one day be the people: out of you, who have chosen yourselves, there shall grow a chosen people — and out of them, the [*Übermensch*]" (Z, I, Gift-Giving, §2, p. 189). Although its realization is in a far indeterminate future, he advocates its gradual actualization as well as considers himself a great contributor to it. In 1888, Nietzsche writes: "above all, a *counterideal* was lacking — *until Zarathustra*" (EH, GM, p. 769). Until that one of his books, the ascetic ideal had been alone in giving value and meaning to human suffering and existence; enter the *Übermensch*.

The principal ascetic idea is one of another ideal world. Asceticism is a disease that plagues most religions and modern sciences, as it is an expression of one's dissatisfaction with reality. It is "a suggestion of decadence, a symptom of the *decline of life*" (TI, Reason, §6, p. 484). Asceticism's promised better world is an imaginary compensation for earthly ills. It is a mental narcotic designed to help one make sense of and endure one's sufferings. Nonetheless, notwithstanding that its origin is the ascetic priest, the decadent hybrid type of will to power that has dominated humanity for over two millennia, asceticism serves humanity in a most essential way: it offers meaning and value to life, especially to suffering. For humanity: "any explanation is better than none" (TI, Four, §5, p. 497). By offering life and suffering meaning, the ascetic ideal

closes the door to the paralyzing and suicidal effects of the negative interpretation of nihilism, which is humanity's natural neutral fundamental state, as was determined earlier. It eliminates the most terrible effects of negative nihilism. This explains why Nietzsche claims that asceticism's service to life outweighs the terribleness of the meanings and values it offers human beings: it "is an expression of the basic fact of the human will, its *horror vacui: it needs a goal* — and it will rather will *nothingness* than *not* will" (GM, III, §1, p. 533). Yet, given that asceticism's meanings and values protect and foster the self-denying degenerating forms of life rather than promote the expansion through contest of the self-affirming effervescent ones, which Nietzsche sees as the ubiquitous standard of humanity and life, he claims that they need to be replaced with meanings and values that enhance self-affirming exuberant life.

Nietzsche proposes that his entire lifework is precisely a catalyst for such change, which is very slow, gradual and at times firmly regressive. In 1888, he writes that the 1872 "*The Birth of Tragedy* was my first revaluation of all values" (TI, Ancients, §5, p. 563). By his own admission, Nietzsche's entire philosophy aims to change the ascetic norms or standards of evaluation. In 1882, he asks himself and answers: "In what do you believe? — In this, that the weights of all things must be determined anew" (GS, III, §269, p. 219). All life-denying perspectives, which are Nietzsche's main philosophical targets, come from life and serve it after their own fashion, but being deficient and ill, they quickly turn on reality in favour of the ideal, divine, true world, that is to say, in favour of nothingness. These perspectives deny that inescapably their origin is in and their service is to life. Nietzsche offsets them by conceiving of life, or more accurately of death, as a twofold unit in which the decaying fosters that which grows and the growing fosters that which decays. "Let us beware of saying that death is opposed to life. The living is merely a type

of what is dead, and a very rare type" (GS, III, §109, p. 168). All perspectives, even those considered harmful for other forms of life, serve some forms of life, if only stagnant dying one. They are in this manner all of equal use and value.

“Evil’ is an integral part of the world and its preservation, if not also its enhancement. Nietzsche is not merely endorsing fatalism but also the liberation and redemption of the world, "tout en sachant ce qu'il comporte d'horreurs et de négatif” (Valadier, 1998, p. 114). In 1882, he writes that even “the most harmful man may really be the most useful when it comes to the preservation of the species” (GS, I, §1, p. 73). This illustrates the tolerance that accepting life as both the living and the dying inculcates. Traditionally absolute opposites become extreme variations and complimentary forms of the unqualified will to power. Thus, they are equally necessary for life, living or dying, and differently necessary and valuable for particulars and self-affirming vitality. On the contrary, one demeans life's multiplicity in favour of its simplicity, writes Nietzsche in 1887, as "one misunderstood the noble skepticism, that *luxury* of skepticism and tolerance which every triumphant, self-assured power permits itself" (GS, V, §358, p. 311). A self-assured individual is tolerant of others because it does not fear being under their power. Being sceptical, it knows it can create its own meanings and values. The next year, he writes that: "'Man must become better and more evil' — thus *I* teach. The greatest evil is necessary for the [*Übermensch*'s] best" (Z, IV, Higher, §5, p. 400). The *Übermensch* embraces all of life's facets by varying its perspectives. It is the will to power that interprets and disposes of its metaphors to suit any arising self-interest. By the joyful affirmation of nihilism and thus of all elements of reality, inclu-

ding evil and suffering, one can go beyond exclusionary differences to their non-exclusionary variants, such as from evil and good to good and bad.⁴⁹

Because life generates only perspectives that sustain or enhance one of its forms, living or dying, even dogmatic otherworldly posits, which denigrate or deny the reality that they originally depend on as well as serve, still serve life. "It must be a necessity of the first-order that again and again promotes the prosperity of this *life-inimical* species — it must be in the *interest of life itself* that such a self-contradictory type does not die out" (GM, III, §11, p. 553). Nietzsche surmises that life has a purpose for the life-denying sensuality-denying perspectives that are all forms of "the faith in a *metaphysical* value, the absolute value of *truth*" (GM, III, §24, p. 587), that is, all forms of the denial of reality, all forms of asceticism. Decadent degenerating forms are stable, resilient and essential to life, nevertheless life is generally merciless towards them: "Life — that is: continually shedding something that wants to die" (GS, I, §26, p. 100). In an imitation of this, Nietzsche suggests the shared standard of exuberant self-affirming life. All perspectives serve and originate in life, in one of its forms, living or dying, and accordingly, each is equally valuable for its preservation. However, they are unequally valuable for its enhancement. Humanity needs meanings and values that remember that their origin and purpose are in and in service to life, because these counter the dangers of asceticism's intentional forgetting that all perspectives somehow serve life.

An exemplification of these dangers is found in Nietzsche's account of the ascetic priests' negative interpretation of nihilism and its devastating effects, which begin with their corruption of noble ancestral divinities into a God: "despotism with its triumph over the independent nobility

⁴⁹ Cameron (2002) proposes that *On the Genealogy of Morals, A Polemic* was intended to show the possibility of the *Übermenschen*, as they come from nihilism while disallowing its return.

always prepares the way for some kind of monotheism" (GM, III, §20, p. 526). Originally devised of by the physically and politically dominant masterly wills to power, divinities were creditor ancestral spirits, which conferred actual powers of protection and punishment. Belief in them ensured social cohesion, especially with the subordinate slavish wills to power. The ancestor-creditors of those societies that succeeded in maintaining and amplifying themselves accordingly grew in strength, in debts and in debtors; while those of the unsuccessful societies shrivelled in all three until they perished. In 1887, he writes:

Even as mankind inherited the concepts 'good and bad' from the tribal nobility (along with its basic psychological propensity to set up orders of rank), it also inherited, along with the tribal and family divinities, the burden of still unpaid debts and of the desire to be relieved of them (GM, II, §20, p. 526).

By the time a large successful society was secure and at peace, its noble ancestral forces were quasi-omnipotent and it was insolvent to its debtors: its ancestral divinities. With the rise in power of large stable societies and their ancestor-gods, there came a rise in the presence and power of priests. Thus, by the time the priestly oligarchy overtakes the knightly one, the ancestral gods are unified: "in the end the ancestor must necessarily be transfigured into a *god*" (GM, II, §19, p. 525). The divine's fictitious nature and human origin are in this manner forgotten, even denied, and thus bad conscience is established: the believer "apprehends in 'God' the ultimate antithesis of his own ineluctable animal instincts; he reinterprets these animal instincts themselves as a form of guilt before God" (GM, II, §22, p. 528). The invention of a single ascetic God demonizes human beings for their basic qualities. The ascetic ideal "placed all suffering under the perspective of *guilt*" (GM, III, §28, p. 598). This guilt before God is mounting and inescapable insofar as the guilty party "must understand his suffering as a *punishment*" (GM, III, §20, p. 576). Yet, given that these so-called evil instincts are natural and occur partially uncontrollably, under the as-

cetic priests' influence, guilt and punishment become constant and unavoidable. One suffers because one is guilty of evil instincts, and because one is guilty, one should suffer as punishment. The vicious circle of guilt and suffering is therefore established.

With the new type of human being that is explicated in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra, A Book for All and None*, Nietzsche conceptualizes suffering as a necessary and helpful part of existence. For instance, when he writes: "I, Zarathustra, the advocate of life, the advocate of suffering, the advocate of the circle; I summon you, my most abysmal thought! ... My abyss speaks, I have turned my ultimate depth inside out into the light" (Z, III, Convalescent, §1, p. 328). That opposites are understood as degrees means that not all suffering is cruel and to be avoided. Suffering can be useful to and even necessary for testing and enhancing one's discipline and development:

Examine the lives of the best and most fruitful people and peoples and ask yourselves whether a tree that is supposed to grow to a proud height can dispense with bad weather and storms; whether misfortune and external resistance, some kinds of hatred, jealousy, stubbornness, mistrust, harness, avarice, and violence do not belong among the favourable conditions without which any great growth even of virtue is scarcely possible. The poison of which weaker natures perish strengthens the strong— nor do they call it poison (GS, I, §19, pp. 91-92).

Similarly, just as any athlete sincere to better their performance, with the help of the appropriate trainer, may feel like their coach's trainings are at times cruel because they cause them great suffering, they do not give them up. Suffering is a necessary struggle that athletes accept, even seek, in order to assess and augment their performance. Were this mere cruelty, rather than the exercise of demanding discipline, perhaps under its guise, the activities would lessen, even destroy, but not increase the targeted skills. In 1888, Nietzsche famously states that non-lethal struggle should serve to make one stronger (TI, Maxims, §8). One year earlier, he writes of "the ideal of a human, superhuman well-being and benevolence that will often appear *inhuman*" (GS, V, §382, p. 347)

— By willing upon both itself and others wellness, which must include suffering and strife; the *Übermensch* appears inhuman, cruel (TI, P, p. 465; EH, Destiny, §4).

In 1881, Nietzsche claims that nobles are less cruel than their subordinates. Foremost, as they are unintentionally so: “The evil of the strong harms others without giving thought to it— it *has* to discharge itself; the evil of the weak *wants* to harm others and to see the signs of suffering it has caused” (DD, IV, §371, p. 169). The cruelty of a masterly will to power is instinctual and not reflected upon as it is with a slavish will to power. Further, as Valadier proposes:

Le plus de puissance n'équivaut donc pas à plus de cruauté ou de subordination, mais très exactement à l'inverse. Nous tenons là un excellent principe d'interprétation de la 'volonté de puissance', puisque celui qui est réellement puissant n'éprouve pas le besoin de sentir et de faire sentir sa puissance sur autrui, sachant jouir de sa puissance en elle-même (p. 64).

Thus, the nobles are also less cruel, as the most powerful wills to power prefer to experience their power themselves rather than to have others experience it. In 1888, Nietzsche writes: “The most spiritual men, as the *strongest*, find their happiness where others would find their destruction: in the labyrinth, in hardness against themselves and others, in experiments; their joy is self-conquest; asceticism becomes in them nature, need, and instinct. Difficult tasks are a privilege to them” (A, §57, p. 645). To enjoy one's power is not necessarily to exert it upon others as cruelty; although each type of will to power has its own experiences of the same reality as Nietzsche writes a year earlier: “The three great slogans of the ascetic ideal are familiar: poverty, humility, chastity. Now take a close look at the lives of all the great, fruitful, inventive spirits: you will always encounter all three to a certain degree. *Not*, it goes without saying, as though these constituted their 'virtues'” (GM, III, §8, p. 544). There are two conflicting interpretations of these same slogans.

The positive interpretation of struggle and suffering requires the correlated noble abilities of self-discipline and self-responsibility. "As one climbs *higher*, life becomes ever harder; the coldness increases, responsibility increases" (A, §57, p. 646). It requires that, on the one hand, one be disciplined enough to command oneself to endure the pain so as to reap its benefits and, on the other hand, that one be responsible enough to obey that command. In 1878, he writes: "That in which men and women of the nobility excel others and which gives them an undoubted right to be rated higher consists in two arts ever more enhanced through inheritance: the art of commanding and the art of proud obedience," although the latter "will no longer grow in our present cultural climate" (HATH, VIII, §440, p. 162). Modernity lacks the self-responsibility that is required for the proud obedience that is best when inherited. That is: "many *can* command themselves, but much is still lacking before they also obey themselves" (Z, III, Tablets, §4, p. 311). This ability to obey oneself is the same one that is required to make and keep a sovereign promise and, accordingly, to be a sovereign individual (I shall return to this in more detail in the third chapter. For now suffice it to say that) Nietzsche places his ideal of the *Übermensch* "beyond the pinnacle of human kind" that is the sovereign individual (Acampora, 2006b, p. 156). That is to say that the *Übermensch* is the ultimate sovereign individual: the promises that contain its freedom are sanctioned. They are entered into freely and responsibly, and given these promises, the *Übermensch's* values and meanings are created from its instincts in concert with its social conscience. To keep a sanctioned promise as well as to recreate one's values and meanings require that one command as well as obey oneself. Nietzsche deplores that such responsible sovereignty is still mostly unrealized and remains an ideal as is the type of individual or will to power that can fully realize it: the *Übermensch*.

Since the masterly type of will to power is gone, transformed into a hybrid by the ascetic priests, as Nietzsche writes in 1887:

Let us stick to the facts: the people have won - or 'the slaves' or 'the mob' or 'the herd' or whatever you like to call them ... 'The masters' have been disposed of; the morality of the common man has won. One may conceive of this victory as at the same time a blood-poisoning (it has mixed the races together) (GM, I, §9, pp. 471-472).

His foreseen *Übermenschen* must be so constituted as to account for this fundamental and irreversible change in the masters' nature. Thus, Nietzsche proposes a renewal of ancient nobility, not its return: "a *new nobility* is needed to be the adversary of all rabble and of all that is despotic and to write anew upon new tablets the word 'noble' " (Z, III, Tablets, §11, p. 315). In 1888, he writes: "I too speak of a 'return to nature,' although it is really not a going back but an *ascent* — up into the high, free, even terrible nature and naturalness where great tasks are something one plays with, one *may* play with" (TI, Skirmishes, §48, p. 552). A simple return of the old masters in the future is disallowed. The return to ancient forms of nobility is not possible, as the masters initially had such a limited conscience, a "low degree of internalization" (Ridley, 1998, p. 131). A renewal of ancient higher culture and politics also coheres better with Nietzsche's love of actual life: "I want to learn more and more to see as beautiful what is necessary in things; then I shall be one of those who makes things beautiful" (GS, IV, §276, p. 223), that is, with his *amor fati*.

The *Übermensch* is tolerant by its reunification of traditionally dogmatic and exclusionary opposites into the extreme gradations of a single kind, and it is great by being wholly committed to all of reality as it is. "My formula for greatness in a human being is *amor fati*: that one wants nothing to be different, not forward, not backward, not in all eternity" (EH, Clever, §10, p. 714). Nothing accordingly includes oneself. To not want to be different, one must love who one is be-

coming, who one has become, and to become who one is, one requires "the masterpiece of the art of self-preservation — of *selfishness*" (EH, Clever, §9, p. 709). It is thus in one's self-interest to love one's lot in life, lumps and luck. Faith in life as it is, was and shall be is freeing.

Such a spirit who has *become free* stands amid the cosmos with a joyous and trusting fatalism, in the *faith* that only the particular is loathsome, and that all is redeemed and affirmed in the whole - *he does not negate any more*. Such a faith, however, is the highest of all possible faiths: I have baptized it with the name of *Dionysus* (TI, Skirmishes, §49, p. 554).

This Dionysian faith is *amor fati*. The acceptance of one's joys is also the acceptances of one's pains: "Have you ever said Yes to a single joy? O my friends, then you said Yes too to *all* woe. All things are entangles, ensnared, enamoured; ... all joy wants — eternity" (Z, IV, Drunken, p. 435). To wish that all returns as it is, was and will be is the ultimate or Dionysian affirmation of life. Thus, *amor fati*, the Dionysian, the *Übermensch* and the eternal recurrence are all intimately related.

This intimacy between the latter two is further illustrated by Zarathustra's wise animal companions both declaring to him: "behold, *you are the teacher of the eternal recurrence*" (Z, III, Convalescent, p. 332), despite his own declarations that his teachings are of the *Übermensch*. Nietzsche associates Zarathustra's teaching of the eternal recurrence, of "the unconditional and infinitely repeated circular course of all things" (EH, BT, §3, pp. 729-730) - with Heraclitus'. This rapprochement is congruent with Nietzsche seeing radical gradations where traditionally one sees exclusionary opposites as he writes notably regarding the conception of morality: "whoever must be a creator in good and evil, verily, he must first be an annihilator and break values. Thus the highest evil belongs to the highest goodness: but this is creative" (Z, II, Overcoming, p. 228). The

eternal circularity of all things dissolves the dogmatic incompatibility of opposites: "I teach you the friend and his overflowing heart. ... And as the world rolled apart for him, it rolls together again in circles for him, as the becoming of the good through evil, as the becoming of purpose out of accident" (Z, I, Neighbor, p. 174). This dissolution of exclusionary opposites by the eternal recurrence is not a new dogmatic metaphysical truth but a perspectival one. As such, its truth relates to the nature of humanity's relations to a posited independent reality, not to the nature of said reality, and thus, it is consciously an interpretation and therefore claims to be better than its competition.

The eternal recurrence is Nietzsche's suggested test for the self-affirming vitality of one's actions. In 1882, he asks: "The question in each and every thing, 'Do you desire this once more and innumerable times more?' would lie upon your actions as the greatest weight. Or how well disposed would you have to become to yourself and to life *to crave nothing more fervently* than this ultimate eternal confirmation and seal" (GS, IV, §341, p. 274)? The eternal recurrence of all requires that one completely affirm oneself and life. It plays the role of a thought experiment that guides action. The eternal recurrence verifies one's affirmation of life: "Was *that* life? Well then! Once more" (Z, III, Vision, §1, p. 269)! It is an "ethical hypothesis" that relates one's choices to one's own and life's flourishing (Daigle, 2006, p. 10). Thus, the 'eternal recurrence' is a key concept for the transition from higher being to *Übermensch*, which means as Egedy proposes, in "The Advantages and Disadvantages of Nietzsche's Philosophy for Life" (2013): "the 'Overman' rather than the 'higher men.' The distinction, as I see it, is between those human types who have incorporated the teaching of Eternal Return, and the one who enacts it" (p. 74). To merely grasp the test is not the same as to live according to it. An honest enactment of the test of the eternal

recurrence is characteristic of the *Übermensch*. One is ready for the highest creation when one can give this affirmation to all of life, the good, the bad and the ugly. Being willing to enact the eternal recurrence shows that one is no longer only like a camel that is burdened by its past, or like a lion, able to say 'I will,' one has also become a child, become one who: "is innocence and forgetting, a new beginning, a game, a self-propelled wheel, a first movement, a sacred 'Yes' "(Z, I, Metamorphoses, p. 139). This tripartite transformation of the soul and its guiding test are what Zarathustra strives to experience and teach his brothers, the higher men (Z, IV, Higher, §2).

After becoming a camel, when one carries into "the loneliest desert" the heaviest spiritual burdens, that is, those that come from the individual's constant ability and will to experience the most demanding or conflicting tasks, one denies all given meanings and values. That is, one "becomes a lion who would conquer his freedom and be master in his own desert" (Z, I, Metamorphoses, p. 138). This free mastery of the desert is positive nihilism, as it requires slaying "the great dragon" that is known as "'Thou shalt'." Thereby, one allows oneself the freedom to create one's own "'I will'"; for, finally become a child, "the spirit now wills his own will" (*Ibid.*, p. 139). Zarathustra, who speaks of this three part journey, only partly completes it. Until the last section (or perhaps the last two sections) of the *Fourth Part*, Zarathustra is not yet a child, or even a lion, but only still a camel. Hence the very last lines of the last part of the book state: "The lion came, my children are near, Zarathustra has ripened" (Z, IV, Sign, p. 438). The unwritten yet experienced Zarathustrian transformation will bring forth the child-like *Übermensch* out of an atheism

that is willed with the strength of a lion and that results from a burden of diverse experiences that is fit for a camel.⁵⁰

In his autobiographical *Ecce Homo, How One Becomes What One Is*, Nietzsche associates the type of human being that is exposed to his reader by Zarathustra, the *Übermensch*, to his “concept of the ‘Dionysian’ [there it] became a *supreme deed*” (EH, Z, §6, p. 760). The childlike *Übermensch*, who lives guided by the eternal recurrence, is “Dionysian”. Likewise, he writes of “the word ‘[*Übermensch*],’ as the designation of a type of supreme achievement, as opposed to ‘modern’ men, to ‘good’ men, to Christians and other nihilists” (EH, Books, §1 p. 717). Thus, being related to ‘the Dionysian’ and to ‘modern,’ ‘good,’ ‘Christian,’ ‘nihilistic’ men, concepts all consistently tackled since the beginning of Nietzsche's career, ‘the *Übermensch*’ should be found implicitly in all of his books, although it remained largely nameless or differently named, i.e. ‘the Dionysian,’ until *Thus Spoke Zarathustra, A Book for All and None*. Since “all becoming and growing — all that guarantees a future — involves pain,” pain is part of what “is meant by the word Dionysius” (TI, Ancients, §5, p. 562), the Dionysian embraces and experiences all facets of existence: “It is impossible for the Dionysian type not to understand any suggestion. ... He enters into any skin, into any affect: he constantly transforms himself” (TI, Skirmishes, §10, p. 520). The Dionysian type can understand every perspective it can live. Being childlike, it seeks to play, that is, to live and know as many different perspectives as possible. “Nietzsche emphasized that because nature is rife with conflict, pain, and ecstasy as well as harmony, balance, and order, human beings must unleash their rhapsodic Dionysian urges, not as a substitute but as a counter-

⁵⁰ In the third chapter, I will argue that, likewise, Nietzsche foresees that his future aristocracy will generate the new sceptical human type, the *Übermensch*, by experiencing and thus teaching positive nihilism, perspectivism and sanctioned promises.

weight to the Apollonian tendencies toward order and restraint" (Ratner-Rosenhagen, 2012, p. 131). Life is filled with urges and acts we disavow, yet Nietzsche wishes them pronounced holy anew! "Is there not in all life itself robbing and killing" (Z, III, Tablets, §10, p. 314)? This is (thankfully) not to say that violent or disavowed acts ought to be exclusive or dominant; only, that they ought not to be discarded as inhuman, as they as do belong to life and preserve it. The Dionysian does not recoil from life's hardness; it seeks to experience it. "Saying Yes to life even in its strangest and hardest problems, the will to life rejoicing over its own inexhaustibility even in the very sacrifice of its highest types — *that* is what I call Dionysian" (TI, Ancients, §5, p. 562). The Dionysian type even accepts that the sacrifices of itself and its type will be valuable to the enhancement of vital self-affirming life. This type accepts that the health, and given its importance, fate of humanity are more valuable and important than those of an individual (this is therefore also the same type as the collective individual as will be developed shortly).

In 1882, Nietzsche proposes that one's health is relative to one's physical constitution, which includes both one's body and one's soul: "Even the determination of what is healthy for your body depends on your goal, your horizon, your energies, your impulses, your errors, and above all on the ideals and phantasms of your soul" (GS, III, §120, p. 177). One year later, he claims that the soul is an extension of the body: "'Body am I, and soul' — thus speaks the child ... soul is only a word for something about the body" (Z, I, Despisers, p. 146). While the body acts, its instrument, the spirit or soul, thinks. Still, behind the senses of the body and the thoughts of the spirit, there is always the self: the part of the body that wills its preferred form of the unqualified will to power. "The creative self created respect and contempt; it created pleasure and pain. The creative body created the spirit as a hand for its will" (*Ibid.*, p. 147). One's self is thus ultima-

tely responsible for one's physiology, thoughts and feelings, that is, for whether one is angry at life or affirms it. An affirmative self corresponds to the masterly will to power in Nietzsche's typology of the will to power. Conversely, a self that is mainly angry with life is a slavish one. Nietzsche warns the ascetic latter: "despisers of the body! You are no bridge to the [Übermensch]" (*Ibid.*)! To despise the body is to have a creatively impotent self that is angry with the world and seeks its annihilation rather than its eternal affirmation and recurrence.

A healthy spirit originates in a body that is healthy with regard to its nutrition, climate, leisure and recovery methods: "eating and drinking well, O my brothers, is verily no vain art" (Z, III, Tablets §13, p. 316). The narrow bounds of each person's physical health depend on its spirit's self-creation and autonomy. In 1888, he writes: "Here, too, depending on the degree to which a spirit is *sui generis*, the limits of what is permitted to him, that is, profitable for him, are narrow, quite narrow" (EH, Clever, §3, p. 698). There are currently three types of sets of these limits: "In every healthy society there are three types which condition each other and gravitate differently physiologically; each has its own hygiene, its own field of work, its own sense of perfection and mastery" (A, §57, p. 645). However, in each case, health exhibits its greatness by its ability to make healthy anew; it therefore requires the intermediate state of being ill (EH, Wise, §2). Thus, and in conformity with his twofold metaphysical scepticism, health encompasses illness; health is not opposed to sickness, but rather, the latter is the former's strongest ally. A year beforehand, Nietzsche writes:

The great health. - ... Whoever has a soul that craves to have experienced the whole range of values and desiderata to date, and to have sailed around all the coasts of this ideal 'mediterranean'; whoever wants to know from the adventures of his own most authentic experience how a discoverer and conqueror of the ideal feels, and also an artist, a saint, a legislator, a sage, a scholar, a pious man, a soothsayer, and one who stands divinely apart in the old style — needs one thing above everything else: *the*

great health — that one does not merely have but also acquires continually, and must acquire because one gives it up again and again, and must give it up (GS, V, §382, p. 346).

In the above described experience-embracing soul, “the great health” that one must give up in order to acquire it anew is essential to its desire to experience all ideals and truths for itself. For what is beneficial to one from one perspective may be quite harmful to another or from another, and this is best understood when experienced. Yet, to discover and conquer ideals, a soul requires a “good conscience.”

Since all modern souls have been ill with bad conscience for two millennia, we are on the path to negative nihilism. Yet, thereby, we are also ready for our good conscience: "The good conscience has as a preliminary stage the bad conscience — the latter is not its opposite" (AOM, I, §90, p. 232). The soul's good conscience is its love of its body, for which it sees itself as "a word," "an instrument," "a little instrument and toy," "a hand for its will" (Z, I, *Despisers*, pp. 146-147). For the body does not require self-consciousness: "For we could think, feel, will, and remember, and we could also 'act' in every sense of that word, and yet none of all this would have to 'enter our consciousness' (as one says metaphorically)" (GS, V, §354, p. 297). Living does not require a soul, a "whole world of interior states" (HATH, IV, §100, p. 54); only sociability does. Rather than an estrangement from and a condemnation of the body, the soul is a creation of the body, intended to facilitate social living. With the *Übermensch*, the body and soul shall be given back "their 'soul,' a good conscience, the lofty right and privilege of existence" (EH, D, §1, p. 747). With the *Übermensch*: "the destiny of the soul changes" (*Ibid.*), for "man is a bridge and no end" (Z, III, *Tablets*, §3, p. 310). Our primary concern, both as individuals and as a society, ought to be the conditions of and for each individual's bodily health (EH, *Clever*, §10). For out of a hea-

thy body that overcomes illness, a healthy spirit, which is essential for sociability, can emerge.

"Life is a well of joy; but for those out of whom an upset stomach speaks, which is the father of melancholy, all wells are poisoned" (Z, III, Tablets, §16, p. 318). Bodily health can induce either joy or sorrow.

Since the masters are associated more closely with the body, acting and the instincts, whereas the slaves are associated more closely with the intellect, thinking and the soul, the *Übermensch* is the rarely achieved ideal of the ultimate body and most-comprehensive soul for two reasons. First, as the *Übermensch* is a will to power reliant upon reason as well as intuition: each serves a distinct but associated purpose. Reason is merely the means by which the dominant instinct arrives most successfully at its goals, while instincts or intuitions set those goals. Instincts provide limits to reason's domain and authority. They restrain it from harming life (GS, III, §110-111). Second, the *Übermensch* is this rare ideal, because it is active, in that it spontaneously starts from itself to independently assess and value the world as well as to act in it. Yet, it is reactive, in that this will to power must remain aware of its beliefs and habits and react to them to keep them flowing and brief; thereby reacting only in response to potential stagnation and mediocrity (GS, IV, §295). In 1878, Nietzsche writes that any "better future one wishes for mankind must necessarily be in some respects a worse future ... every season has its own particular charm and excellencies and excludes those of the other seasons" (HATH, IV, §239, pp. 114-115). Thus, the *Übermensch* cannot possess all the excellences of every other type. Having each opposing trait in the two above pairs, the *Übermensch* is the ideal will to power with an individualized masterly take on its mostly slavish inheritance. This will to power can at least partially encompass opposite traits, as opposites are merely the extreme variations of a gradation and as it both betters the soul,

which is up to the present a religious intensification of bad conscience (EH, C, §10), and the body, and harmonizes them. The *Übermensch* combines with good conscience the love of and care for the body of the masters with the vast intellectual soul of the slaves.

Returning to the proposition that by its acceptance that humanity's health and thus its fate are worth more than those of an individual, even Dionysian, the *Übermensch* is therefore also the same type as the collective individual. I refer to the passage about it, from 1878, which states:

It is the first sign that animal has become man when his actions no longer directed to the procurement of momentary wellbeing but to enduring wellbeing, that man has thus become attuned to *utility* and *purpose*: it is then that the free domination of reason first breaks forth. An even higher stage is attained when he acts according to the principle of *honour*; in accordance with this he orders himself with regard to others, submits to common sensibilities, and that raises him high above the phase in which he is diverted only by utility understood in a purely personal sense: he accords others respect and wants them to accord respect to him, that is to say: he conceives utility as being dependent on what he thinks of others and what they think of him. Finally, at the highest stage of morality, *hitherto*, he acts in accordance with *his own* standard with regard to men and things, he himself determines for himself and others what is honourable and useful; he has become the lawgiver of opinion, in accordance with an ever more highly evolving conception of usefulness and honourableness. Knowledge qualifies him to prefer the most useful, that is to say to general and enduring utility, to personal utility, general and enduring honour and recognition to momentary honour and recognition; he lives and acts as a collective individual (HATH, II, §94, p. 50).

This highest morality is the individualized culmination of accepting as being one and the same the initially personal understanding of utility and purpose and their subsequent social one through reciprocal regard and honour. In this morality, individuals determine for themselves and prefer what are the most general, enduring, useful and honourable actions. In this manner, each individual is their own lawgiver as Nietzsche proposes in 1882: "We however, *want to become those we are* — human beings who are new, unique, incomparable, who give themselves laws, who create themselves" (GS, IV, §335, p. 266). Knowledgeable, social, autonomous individuals give

themselves personal laws that are respectful of others. Carlsen Schmieder (2008) proposes that the *Übermensch* is the opposite of the mediocre; each *Übermensch* is its measure for all, yet without implying any diminished social productivity or progress.

The *Übermensch* possesses a noble egoism that allows for altruistic behaviours. It is an ideal that embraces and applies perspectivism as well as serves to justify egoism: "Egoism is the law of perspective applied to feelings: what is closest appears large and weighty and as one moves farther away size and weight decrease" (GS, III, §162, p. 199). It follows that by applying perspectivism to its feelings and judgements, which is the rejection of universal ones, the *Übermensch* is able to act altruistically from a passionate ego. Its altruistic acts are always a result of its noble egoism. In 1882, Nietzsche writes:

The invention of gods, heroes, and overmen ... was the inestimable preliminary exercise for the justification of the egoism and sovereignty of the individual: the freedom that one conceded to a god in his relation to other gods — one eventually also granted to oneself in relation to laws, customs, and neighbors (GS, III, §143, pp. 191-192).

Given that unlike gods and heroes, the *Übermensch* is wholly human, it is the ideal that serves as the correct example and justification of individual egoism and sovereignty, the two component of polytheistic freedom. This valuable egoism, alongside an *Übermensch*-justified sovereignty, is accorded to polytheistic gods and in time, claims Nietzsche, to oneself. "I" must still be sanctified as the older "you" once was, he claims via his Zarathustra, and for that reason, we flock to others either to find or to lose ourselves. The average modern or last man⁵¹ still overwhelmingly succumbs to misguided altruism, where one flees from one's self to others. Yet, there is a better form

⁵¹ In *Faithful to the Earth, Nietzsche and Whitehead on God and the Meaning of Human Life*, Thomas J. Howe (2003) explains that Nietzsche's *Übermensch* is the antithesis to his last man, who is the ultimate result of slave morality's desire to exterminate of evil, which fosters (negative) nihilism.

of self-love than the traditional love of the neighbour: the love of the future and of the farthest, the *Übermensch*, via one's friend. However, "then you would have to create your friend and his overflowing heart out of yourselves" (Z, I, Neighbor, p. 173). Thus, higher individuals must strive to become better selves, out of which they can create better friends and descendants. Whereas modern lower humans find their cause in selflessness, higher ones, who are journeying toward becoming but are not yet *Übermenschen*, find it in precisely in that future.

Likewise in 1882, Nietzsche writes: "when the proposition 'the species is everything, one is always none' has become part of humanity, and this ultimate liberation and irresponsibility has become accessible to all at all times. Perhaps laughter will then have formed an alliance with wisdom, perhaps only 'gay science' will then be left" (GS, I, §1, p. 74). Each person favouring their contributions to the maintenance and advancement of humanity as a species over their contributions to their own continuance and growth leads to our liberation from an irrational form of responsibility: the one that stems from the belief in an absolute free moral will. Before an individual can be autonomous, the species', its society's and life's wellbeing must all become inherent to the individual's own. Daigle proposes two types of "virtue politics," that is, "politics that would be concerned with the flourishing of individuals in a group" as instances of the will to power (2006, p. 11). In the first, the aim is the flourishing of the group's individual members; in the second, it is their flourishing as a group. Daigle argues that Nietzsche's *Übermensch* and virtue ethics could not lead to the second type "because it would imply that some individuals' flourishing would be discarded in favor of that of others" (2006, p. 14). However, as the collective individual prefers the most general, enduring, useful and honourable actions, I propose that for the *Übermensch*, a blend of the two types of virtue politics is required. The collective individual's

aim is the flourishing of the individuals as a group, which requires the flourishing of the group's individual members. This means that each member of the group needs to see their personal flourishing as being best promoted through the flourishing of the group. Only then can the individuals put their wellbeing aside for that of the species or group at times when these interests conflict.

In accordance with its acceptance of its infinitesimally small and subservient place in the species and life, this type seeks out contrasting perspectives in order to temporarily understand or try and assess them, not to necessarily wantonly destroy or adopt them all. Such is the individual that is constantly aware of itself as being composed of various expressions of the unqualified will to power and that thus accepts the transitory nature of each one's reign. "To 'give style' to one's character — a great and rare art! It is practiced by those who survey all the strength and weaknesses of their nature and then fit them into an artistic plane until every one of them appears as art and reason and even weaknesses delight the eye" (GS, IV, §290, p. 232). Thus, the *Übermensch* type finds the manner by which its weaknesses can also serve its goal. This illustrates in part the tolerance that embracing positive nihilism (which leads to adopting perspectivism) inculcates. The *Übermensch*, the highest freest type of will to power, feels: "such a pleasure and power of self-determination, such a *freedom* of the will that the spirit would take leave of all faith and every wish for certainty, being practiced in maintaining himself on insubstantial ropes and possibilities and dancing even near abysses. Such a spirit would be the *free spirit* par excellence" (GS, IV, §347, pp. 289-290). This type's ultimate freedom is in creating meanings and values for itself. It must thus already joyfully acknowledge the meaninglessness and valuelessness of reality. For, then, meanings and values are seen as metaphors and are for that reason malleable. The ability to choose freely, from and for oneself, matters infinitely more than the actual choice. Thus,

Nietzsche's ideal will to power is able to find all its needed dominance, obedience and resistance within itself and with, if available, its peers (BGE, II, §41).

Nietzsche laments that such social and autonomous citizens, or collective individuals, have only sporadically existed⁵² throughout history and so rarely simultaneously. They have yet to exist in considerable and stable numbers. In 1886, he writes: "Genius is perhaps not so rare after all — but the five hundred *hands* it requires to tyrannize the *kairos*, 'the right time,' seizing chance by its forelock" (BGE, IX, §274, p. 413) are. In his preceding book, he writes of lone individuals who have achieved "the highest stage of morality, *hitherto*," but who have yet to take over a large part of, let alone the entire species: "You that are lonely today, you that are withdrawing, you shall one day be the people: out of you, who have chosen yourselves, there shall grow a chosen people — and out of them, the [*Übermensch*]" (Z, I, Gift-Giving, §2, p. 189). Not unlike Nietzsche and his mouthpiece character Zarathustra, the *Übermensch* seeks its peers. That is, others who embrace a childlike perspectivism that engenders the noble tolerance of great health, who can promise in the socially stabilizing sovereign manner, who incorporate their communities' interests into their own self-interest, which permits them the egotistical altruism of a collective individual, who live an all-encompassing affirmation of life verified by the test of the eternal recurrence, and who in good conscience balance their masterly care for their body and its instincts with their slavish one for their intellect and reason.

With peers, the *Übermensch* could build their desired society: "come, my friends, that the silence may become more still blissful! For this is *our* height and our home: we live here too high and steep for all the unclean and their thirst" (Z, II, Rabble, p. 210/ EH, Wise, §8)! However,

⁵² Notably, he claims that Goethe is one: a "man of tolerance, not from weakness but from strength" (TI, Skirmishes, §49, p. 554).

since no or few peers exist, these individuals should seek to foster other *Übermenschen* in their descendants. "In your children you shall make up for being the children of your fathers: thus shall you redeem all that is past" (Z, III, Tablets, §12, p. 316). Even in 1888, Nietzsche still hopes for them, as he writes: "Some day institutions will be needed in which men live and teach as I conceive of living and teaching; it might even happen that a few chairs will then be set aside for the interpretation of *Zarathustra*" (EH, Books, §1, p. 715). He claims that once his ideal of the *Übermensch* arrives as a stable widespread type of will to power, his conceptualization both of teaching and of life, to which "pain is *not* considered an objection" (EH, Z, §1, p. 753), will be seriously considered and take hold.

An ideal is a form of control over oneself and others, because it shapes its believer deeply. Human beings develop their ideals by looking at their flaws: for, only by seeing our shortcomings are we free to posit that which we wish to reach (AOM, §86). We create our ideals to guide our self-improvement (BGE, IV, §133). However, ideals should never confine, degrade or subdue us. In 1879, he writes: "We should not let ourselves be tyrannized over by our fairest ability— that of elevating things into the ideal" (AOM, §345, p. 291). Ideals ought to remain flexible, or else they risk losing their alliance with scepticism in favour of one with dogmatism. All ideals are truths, metaphors made into idols (EH, TI, §1), and as such, they all require faith, but not all deserve it. For this reason, all "*idols*" need "*sounding out*" (TI, P, p. 465). Some ideals can be noxious, like dogmatic ones, and against these, notably the ascetic ideal, Nietzsche declares war (EH, UT, §1). Although "*the harmful ideal par excellence*," the ascetic ideal has reigned so long and thoroughly, because "*a counterideal was lacking — until Zarathustra*" (EH, GM, p. 769). As one of the self-

professed "argonauts of the ideal" with as their "new means" "the *great health*" (GS, V, §382, p. 346), Nietzsche offers humanity his replacement non-dogmatic ideal, the *Übermensch*.

Moreover, since creating an ideal or a goal is key to subsequently achieving it (Z, I, §5), but since attaining an ideal is also thereby surpassing it (BGE, IV, §73), in order to avoid or at least circumvent this, Nietzsche's ideal will to power must be constantly self-creative: a single, manifold, self-renewing ideal. This ideal can be individualized in as many ways as there are individuals, but as Daigle writes in "Nietzsche: Virtue Ethics . . . Virtue Politics?" (2006): "in the Nietzschean picture, some individuals will choose to be *Übermenschen*, and others will not" (p. 11). All individuals have the potential for a transfiguration into the *Übermensch* (Daigle, 2006, p. 9). Nietzsche leaves the *Übermensch*'s more specific characteristics open to each individual's particular case.

To illustrate: Zarathustra encounters many different types of higher men.⁵³ Higher men are companions to Zarathustra, although not the ones he awaits and seeks (Z, IV, Sign). The higher men are thus still "convalescents" (Z, IV, Ass, §3, p. 429). It is their pity-causing distress that was Zarathustra's last temptation before his soul's second transformation (Z, IV, The Sign). The higher men are only beginning their own journey to the *Übermensch*; a journey sparked by Zarathustra, in which they adopt "einen autoreflexiven, autokritischen Zustand, der ständig sich perpetuiert und nie sich selbst genügt" (Schmieder, 2008, p. 100) That is, a behaviour towards one's self, an auto-reflexive and auto-critical state, which one perpetuates as oneself is never enough. A state that is only possible after the death of the single divinity.

⁵³ The higher men are the old soothsayer, the two kings, the man conscientious in spirit, the old magician, the old pope, the ugliest man, the voluntary beggar and "the wanderer who called himself Zarathustra's shadow" (Z, IV, Daughters §1, p. 416).

The self-perpetuating, thus manifold but single goal of the *Übermensch* further resolves, since reason, self-awareness and social agreements are not what differentiate us from animals (DD, I, §26), the puzzle “that man is the *as yet undetermined animal*, the rare exception” (BGE, III, §62, p. 264). In 1878, Nietzsche writes: "All that distinguishes man from animals depends on this ability to dissipate intuitive metaphors into an abstract pattern, that is, to dissolve an image in a concept" (OTL, I, p. 258). Humans are distinctly conceptual animals. It is the particularity of human beings to create meanings and values for and from themselves. The human species is the only exception to the natural healthy norm of having a set or fixed common goal. Anew, in 1882, he writes that we are the only species able to constantly create its own metaphors for reality: “In polytheism the free-spiriting and many spiriting of man attained its first preliminary form — the strength to create for ourselves our own new eyes — and ever again new eyes that are even more our own: hence man alone among the animals has no eternal horizons and perspectives” (GS, III, §143, p. 192). Our advancement as a species is described as our embrace of the perspectivism that is experienced in the great health and that is permitted by positive nihilism, which allows for the creation of metaphors that are tested through and guided by the eternal recurrence.

The *Übermensch* is the ideal will to power; the one that constantly creates its meanings and values from love, or beyond the all-too-human good and evil, just as a child plays: creating, destroying and creating anew (Z, I, §10; BGE, IV, §94). This stance both requires and allows for the experiential exploration of many perspectives. In 1882, Nietzsche writes: “I love brief habits and consider them an inestimable means for getting to know *many* things and states, down to the

bottom of their sweetness and bitternesses" (GS, IV, §295, p. 236)⁵⁴. It also requires and allows for the exploration of conflicting perspectives: "Whatever I create and however much I love it — soon I must oppose it and my love; thus my will wills it" (Z, II, Self-Overcoming, p. 227); or, as he writes in 1878: "when the tablet of his soul is wholly written over with experiences, he will not hate and despise existence, but neither will he love it: he will hover above it, now with the eye of joy, now with that of sorrow" (HATH, IV, §287, p. 133). Self-discovery is a journey that is ongoing and difficult. "Man is hard to discover — hardest of all for himself: often the spirit lies about the soul" (Z, III, Gravity, §2, p. 306). Still, it is the exploration of multiple and contrasting perspectives that allows for these lies to be unearthed.

Given individuals' differing personal lies, each must undertake the task of and journey to the *Übermensch* for themselves: "'This is *my* way; where is yours?' — thus I answered those who asked me 'the way'. For the way — that does not exist" (Z, III, Spirit, p. 307). Having one's own taste is much more important to Nietzsche's ideal than the qualities of that taste are: "I honor the recalcitrant choosy tongues and stomachs, which have learned to say 'I' and 'yes' and 'no'" (Z, III, Spirit, p. 306). Hoping that humanity embraces only metaphors that are more beneficial to its flourishing and to that of self-affirming vigorous life, Nietzsche suggests concepts and theories that serve to bring forth ever higher beings until finally the *Übermensch* becomes a stable type. For instance, positive nihilism promises one's overcoming or redemption from the nausea or

⁵⁴ *Brief habits*. — ... I always believe that here is something that will give me lasting satisfaction — brief habits ... now it nourishes me at noon and in the evening and spreads a deep contentment all around itself and deep into me so that I desire nothing else, without having need for comparisons, contempt, or hatred. But one day its time is up; the good thing parts from me, not as something that has come to nauseate me but peacefully and sated with me as I am with it ... Even then something new is waiting at the door, along with my faith - this indestructible fool and sage! — that this new discovery will be just right, and that this will be the last time (GS, IV, §295, p. 237).

"disgust with all existence" (Z, III, Convalescent, §1, p. 331) that is negative nihilism. By one's joyful embrace of nihilism, one is afforded the recreation of all meanings and values. Positive nihilism can free one of one's burdensome past:

I taught them all *my* creating and striving, to create and carry together into One what in man is fragment and riddle and dreadful accidents; as creator, guesser of riddles, and redeemers of accidents, I taught them to work on the future and to redeem with their creation all that *has been*. To redeem what is past in man and to re-create all 'it was' until the will says, 'Thus I willed it! Thus I shall will it!' — (Z, III, Tablets §3, p. 310).

This recreation of one's past until one can will it, which occurs by embracing positive nihilism, is an exercise of the eternal recurrence.

Overall, the 'will to power' serves a dual purpose in Nietzsche's texts: it describes reality's actualization and that of the realities into which it actualizes. In the former, it is the unqualified overall drive for existence; in the latter, it is individualized drives that are qualifiable as being active or reactive, strong or weak, healthy or ill as well as the entities and events they create and which are classified as one of the types: master, slave, priest, slavish master or *Übermensch*, which is his ideal hoped-for will to power.

With Nietzsche's operational, sceptical, metaphysical concepts in place: a neutral state of lacking non-humanly assigned meanings and values that can be interpreted positively or negatively, 'nihilism,' and the 'will to power' understood as the ontological structure of reality and as all the events and entities it creates, my analysis of his perspectivism and its political implications as based on his texts and on their coherent ramifications where the texts are divergent or even silent is forthwith more feasible. In the pursuit of this, I turn to the next chapter concerning Nietzsche's perspectivism.

Chapter Two

Nietzsche's Perspectivism

The previous chapter examined Nietzsche's philosophical foundation, that is, his stance on metaphysics. Although conflicting passages permit interpreting him as a dogmatic metaphysician, Dogmatist or Academic, in order to account for both and for others that maintain a non-dogmatic metaphysical position, Nietzsche is best understood as a twofold metaphysical Sceptic. He doubts that humanity can have any certainty about its answers to its two main metaphysical queries: does the world exist independently of human perspectives and are perspectives accurate depictions of said external world? However, given that he acknowledges that all humans require some degree of metaphysical certainty to exist and thrive, Nietzsche pragmatically gives affirmative answers to both questions. To complete his sceptical metaphysical landscape, he offers 'nihilism' and 'the will to power' as replacement ontological concepts. Nihilism is our underlying or neutral condition, wherein we are the sole makers of all our meanings and values. Once seen, it can be interpreted positively or negatively. In the former, it allows for the infinite creation and evaluation of all meanings and values. In the latter, it terrifies and reignites dogmatic metaphysics or induces a suicidal paralysis. The will to power is the unqualified substratum whence all reality comes. This ontological building block, which emphasizes the dynamic and relational qualities he considers inherent to life, is a striving for existence, for more of itself. Yet, it is also each of life's qualifiable expressions. The will to power is both an overarching concept and a selective one, which is consistent with dispelling the belief in absolute dualism. The determination of Nietzsche's sceptical ontological and anthropological terms now allows me to proceed to that of their correspon-

ding general epistemology, perspectivism, before going on to explore its political implications in the last chapter.

2.1 Perspectivism Is a Theory of Knowledge

Perspectivism is Nietzsche's general epistemology, his theory of knowledge. Reality may exist independently of human beings, but it is definitely only experienced by us via our perspectives, which may or may not be accurate. In 1887, he writes:

This is the essence of phenomenalism and perspectivism as *I* understand them: Owing to the nature of *animal consciousness*. The world of which we can become conscious is only a surface- and sign-world, a world that is made common and meaner; whatever becomes conscious *becomes* by the same token shallow, thin, relatively stupid, general, sign, herd signal; all becoming conscious involves a great and through corruption, falsification, reduction to superficialities, and generalization (GS, V, §354, pp. 299-300).

Perspectivism is the modification of reality by human perspectives that allows for it to appear in them, that is, that allows for humans to be conscious of reality. Perspectives are groups of idiosyncratic physical or mental perceptions⁵⁵ of reality, ensembles of which form interpretations. Given Nietzsche's twofold metaphysical scepticism, perspectivism alone makes sense of human knowledge: "There is *only* a perspective seeing, *only* a perspective 'knowing'" (GM, III, §12, p. 555). Thus, we ought reasonably to rely upon the only means of access we have to the posited

⁵⁵ Ronald Lehrer, in "Perspectivism and Psychodynamic Psychotherapy" (1999), argues that perspectivism changes over time to resemble, without quite reaching, modern clinical definitions of perception. However, Hales and Welsch, in "Nietzsche, Perspectivism, and Mental Health" (1999), respond that Lehrer did not see Nietzsche's perspectivism as radical enough as well as omitted the bundle theory, and therefore missed that perspectivism is easily linked to the current clinical understandings of perception.

world; for, through perspectives and interpretations, we create, evaluate and value our created idea of reality.

In 1880, Nietzsche writes: "there are no means of exit or escape to the real world! We are like spiders in our own webs, and, whatever we may catch in them, it will only be something that our web is capable of catching" (DD, II, §117, p. 123). His general epistemology thus abandons the quest for correspondence⁵⁶ between the world and the human metaphors about it in order to describe the ongoing confrontations and agreements between those metaphors and prescribe the ones he deems best at enhancing self-affirming vitality. Nietzsche's non-dogmatic ontology is not a truth about the independent world, as demanded by his twofold sceptical stance on metaphysics. It is rather an interpretation of reality that is posited for its coherent usefulness in favouring self-affirming vivacious living. As was argued for in the first chapter, Nietzsche replaces all dogmatic ontological concepts, such as 'being' and 'substance,' with his suggested nested concept of the 'will to power.'⁵⁷ Nietzsche claims that his dynamic, relational, scaffolded, ontological concept has more explanatory power than traditional, static, dogmatic posits; for, the qualifiable will to power is invariably distinguished by its need to possess and ability to generate metaphors. As human beings, we are chiefly characterized by our inevitable creation or use of perspectives and interpretations. Already in 1873, he writes: "man builds out of the far more delicate material of

⁵⁶ There are three main types of truth theory: a traditional correspondence-based theory maintains that truth exists only as the correspondence between a statement and a fact; a coherency-based theory maintains that truth exists only as the consistency between statements; a pragmatic truth theory, that truth exist only in light of practical aims.

⁵⁷ It was shown in the first chapter that the 'will to power' is an inherently dynamic, relational, sceptical, ontological concept that applies both without qualification to life, the world and reality and to that from which they spring, and, with qualifications, to their individuated components. It is a posited temporary replacement for all the traditional dogmatic ontological concepts.

concepts which he has first to manufacture out of himself" (OTL, I, p. 259). Each individual is better understood as a qualifiable will to power that interprets through the perspectives it creates. Perspectivism as a general theory of knowledge is therefore fully in accordance with Nietzsche's view that human beings are essentially creators. "The drive to create metaphors, that fundamental drive of man which cannot be calculated away for a single moment because in the process man himself would be calculated away" (OTL, II, p. 262). Since it is vital for us to create interpretations from our inescapable perspectives, perspectivism expresses the web of relationships between the various created metaphors. Given that Nietzsche claims that all realities are the will to power in a qualified and unqualified manner. They are qualified wills to power or aggregations of various expressions of the unqualified will to power, in which each expression tries to force its particular metaphor for a physical stimulus upon the stimulus and its unit. Successful interpretations are repeated and shared and, over time, they eventually become unquestioned and unquestionable, and for this reason, true. Perspectivism describes the ongoing confrontations and agreements between the interpretations we create as wills to power. Perspectivism is therefore an ontologically derived theory of knowledge.

Perspectivism accounts for the destruction, creation, changes and interactions between solidified metaphors, perspectives and interpretations. As Strong explains in "Text and Pretexts, Reflections on Perspectivism" (1985): "Knowing consists in forming, in making the world, and in making known" (p. 175). Each will to power imposes itself upon the world through its creation of perspectives and interpretations and therefore knows it. Knowledge is created. In *Nietzsche et la métaphore* (1972), Kofman writes that given that it is unconscious, the creation of metaphors is an instinctual endeavour that wishes to rule: "L'activité métaphorique est qualifiée d'instinctive parce

qu'elle est inconsciente et que, comme tout instinct, elle vise à une domination unitaire du monde" (p. 43). Perspectivism tracks the results of instinctual and deliberate interactions between metaphors and their creators and holders. Strong writes: "Perspectivism thus cannot be understood as the perspective of *something*, for there can be no thing without perspective, which is not a perspective" (1985, p. 175). To be a living being, one must have horizons in which the world can be known: one's perspectives. There is no sensation and no knowledge for any will to power outside of or without the aid of its limited, changing perspectives and interpretations. However, since Strong unfortunately reads Nietzsche as a Dogmatist, he claims that Nietzsche endorse this belief not merely for pragmatic reasons. Yet, as perspectivism accounts for all epistemological behaviour, it is a pragmatic part of the world's sceptical ontological constitution.

Knowledge is always interpretation; thus, it is limited by the individual's senses. In his article, "Snakes, Skins and the Sphinx: Nietzsche's Ecdysis" (2006), Tom Tyler writes: "It is only humans who employ words and ideas in their representations, but all creatures, great and small, use their perceptive capacities to construct for themselves an understanding of the world" (p. 369). As a theory of knowledge, Nietzsche's perspectivism is not limited to human beings, which follows from his ontological 'will to power' not being restricted to human beings either. "There is an enduring element to Nietzsche's epistemology," Tyler argues, "but it is not to be found in his relationship to truth, and certainly not to Kant's truths . . . Rather, his evolving comments on epistemology share a vigorous rejection of the idea that knowledge is an exclusively human preserve" (2006, p. 379). Knowledge exists by creating an understanding of the world; an activity not exclusive to human beings: "if we could only perceive now as a bird, now as a worm, now as a plant" (OTL, I, p. 261). In 1873, Nietzsche acknowledges the inherent anthropocentrism of hu-

man perspectives: humanity "even finds it hard to admit to [itself] that the world perceived by an insect or a bird is completely different from that perceived by man" (OTL, I, pp. 259-260). Yet, this self-importance is not restricted to human beings either. Each species can only access and assess their own creations. He claims that "if we could communicate with a gnat we would hear that it swims through the air with the same solemnity and also feels as if the flying centre of this world were within it" (OTL, I, p. 253). Creating self-important species-specific perspectives is part of all natural behaviour, because it is the overarching natural action of every qualifiable will to power. The individual "generalizes all these impressions to form less colourful, cooler concepts ... All that distinguishes man from animals depends on this ability to dissipate intuitive metaphors into an abstract pattern, that is, to dissolve an image in a concept" (OTL, I, p. 258). This is not to say that human beings are the only wills to power capable of creating perspectives and interpretations of the world. "Supposing, that is, that not just man is the 'measure of things'" (BGE, I, §3, p. 201) — However, this does mean that all the others have non-conceptual perspectives that are unavailable to us.

Knowledge and truth descend from the primal social convention that is language: "the legislation of language supplies the first laws of truth" (OTL, I, p. 255). Language is a communal constructing, simplifying and solidifying of chosen personal metaphors into shared words and concepts. The metaphorical nature of language, and thereby of truth and knowledge, evacuates from the human grasp any non-anthropocentric perspectives as well as any non-perspectival ones. In 1873 Nietzsche writes: "We believe that we know something about the things themselves when we talk about trees, colours, snow and flowers, and yet we possess nothing but metaphors" (OTL, I, p. 256). Language rests solely upon a succession of metaphors: first from a bodily perception to

a mental image, then from that image to a word; that is, reality "appears first as a nerve stimulus, then as an image and finally as a sound" (Ibid.). Concepts are the result of habitually using the same image and sound for similar but non-identical stimuli. For example, each bear and river that one encounters, even despite its differences, is set into the single more generic category of 'bear' and 'river.' The different bears and rivers that one meets are expressed by a similar image and the same word thereby creating over time the larger concepts or generic categories 'bear' and 'river.' Concepts make it easier and faster for one to assess one's environment, if sometimes incorrectly.

In 1882, Nietzsche writes:

Those, for example, who did not know how to find often enough what is 'equal' as regards both nourishment and hostile animals — those in other words, who subsumed things too slowly and cautiously — were favoured with a lesser probability of survival than those who guessed immediately upon encountering similar instances that they must be equal (GS, III, §111, p. 171).

Being initially less exacting in certain categorizations was safer. Those who wished to navigate their surroundings more efficiently, if less prudently and with less accuracy, considered similar perceptions as identical, as different members of the same set, as diverse instantiations of a single concept.

In addition, being members of a gregarious species, all human beings initially instinctively assemble. In 1878, Nietzsche writes that: "since man, out of necessity as well as boredom, wants to live in a society or herd, he needs a peace settlement and he tries to make at least the most brutal *bellum omnium contra omnes* vanish from his world" (OTL, I, pp. 254-255). It is just a necessary natural inclination for humans to live communally. In 1882, he claims likewise that: "during the longest period of the human past nothing was more terrible than to feel that one stood by oneself. To be alone, to experience things by oneself, neither to obey nor to rule, to be an indi-

vidual—that was not a pleasure but a punishment; one was sentenced 'to individuality'" (GS, III, §117, p. 175). Even the most spontaneous and solitary individuals need and want to live in a community; they comprehend the sundry of advantages it offers, notably making safe solitary living possible. Thus, the individual's externally exhibited sense impressions, which are personal metaphors, because they need to be communicated, are homogenized into fixed common signs. "The emergence of our sense impressions into our own consciousness, the ability to fix them and, as it were, exhibit them externally, increased proportionately with the need to communicate them to *others* by means of signs" (GS, V, §354, p. 299). Personal metaphors are easily translated into common signs, for we naturally inject into reality: "time and space, that is relationships of succession and numbers. ... The unyielding persistence of these primal forms alone explains the possibility of subsequently building a conceptual edifice out of the metaphors themselves" (OTL, I, p. 261). We generally share the same structure for our metaphors and thus for our concepts. We mostly share the same image metaphors naturally; for instance, most of us see the words on this page as black writing upon a white background, or else "nobody would talk about such a regularity of nature, but would understand it only as a highly subjective construct" (*Ibid.*). Still, such regularity in general human perspectives does not mean that we share sound metaphors. No-one needs to independently create the same words to describe the same images.

Thus, although two individuals who have never met and who both live around bears and rivers would have a similar image for the animals and landscape, they might not share sounds for them. However, if those individuals choose to ward off or hunt bears and swim or fish together, they need to share single words for their individual perceptions of bears and rivers. Each must change or one must translate their individual expression for bears and rivers into the chosen

words 'bear' and 'river.' In this manner, "a sense of truth" is the "sense of being obliged to call one thing red, another cold, a third mute" (OTL I, pp. 257-258). Thus, the existence of truth depends upon societies and their chosen shared metaphors. Human beings are inherently social wills to power, who, from chosen partial perspectives, create shared interpretations of the world to uphold as true. "One is always wrong, but with two, truth begins.—*One* cannot prove his case, but two are irrefutable" (GS, III, §260, p. 218). Truth is a shared human creation. The individual's use of metaphors is redoubled in society, as the need to share personal metaphors through common words and concepts arises with the desire and need to communicate with another:

As the most endangered animal, he needed help and protection, he needed his peers, he had to learn to express his distress and to make himself understood; and for all of this he needed 'consciousness' first of all, he needed to 'know' himself what distressed him, he needed to 'know' how he felt, he needed to 'know' what he thought (GS, V, §354, p. 298).

Nietzsche claims that the need to communicate effectively with other individuals brings not only more awareness of one's metaphor-creating behaviour, but also that it restricts and solidifies one's metaphors into a set chosen by the community. Society is where we ought to "use the customary metaphors" (OTL, I, p. 257); that is, the series of metaphors or fictions that are essential to that society's development and enhancement. It is not possible to know anything beyond these useful created fictions or metaphors. Thus, they ought to be carefully determined.

Particular metaphors are chosen because they are held by the socially dominant wills to power. Perspectives are inescapable, partial and fundamental for the creation of language and knowledge, and each society is inextricably intertwined to the development of its language and knowledge. It follows that the creation of language and knowledge is not only an expression of the dominant expression of the unqualified will to power of the socially dominant wills to power:

"one should allow oneself to conceive the origins of language itself as an expression of power on the part of the rulers" (GM, I, §2, p. 462), but it is also a social necessity that impacts upon all lingual gregarious individuals: "Learning changes us" (BGE, VII, §231, p. 352). In other words, the terms by which one expresses reality in turn shape one's perspectives of reality. Hence, Nietzsche writes in 1886: "In man *creature* and *creator* are united" (BGE, VII, §225, p. 344). Knowledge and language are literally established by as well as establish power. This is the origin of language's power and importance. Language is the simplification of our unavoidable initially uniquely personal perspectives into common interpretations or communally employed words and concepts and subsequently their eventually forgotten solidification into truths. As a theory of knowledge or general epistemology, perspectivism describes the communal determination of the socially acceptable and unacceptable interpretations of the world. Thus, perspectivism is the only realistic theory of knowledge.

Although the self-knowledge of it is now known to be unnecessary (GS, V, §354), every will to power can still force upon a stimulus its own particular metaphors of it: "What is a word? The portrayal of a nerve stimulus in sounds ... A nerve stimulus first transformed into an image—the first metaphor! The image then reproduced in a sound—the second metaphor" (OTL, I, pp. 255-256)! Words are idiosyncratic metaphors: "every intuitive metaphor, being individual and without an equal, can avoid all classification" (OTL, I, p. 258). Words are subsequently purposely made vague in order to accommodate unequal occurrences, and thus they become concepts:

every word immediately becomes a concept precisely because it is not intended to serve as a reminder of the unique, entirely individualized primal experience to which it owes its existence, but because it has to fit at one and the same time countless more or less similar cases which, strictly speaking, are never equal or, in other words, are always unequal" (OTL, I, p. 256).

It follows that every will to power can theoretically create its own words and concepts. Especially if one is a solitary being without the need for consciousness and thereby language (GS, V, §354), or if each individual generates different perspectives from the same stimulus: "if one of us saw the same stimulus as red, another as blue, and a third even heard it as a sound; then nobody would talk about such a regularity of nature, but would understand it only as a highly subjective construct" (OTL, I, p. 261). However, not only is there "a regularity of nature," but further, such private languages would not allow for communication among individuals, which is necessary for quasi all human survival and entertainment.⁵⁸ Being gregarious, human beings need communal concepts and languages.

In 1873, Nietzsche claims that individuals make rational abstractions from their sudden personal intuitions to gain and maintain a community's trust:

By contrast with the liar, whom no one trusts, whom all ostracize, man proves for himself the honorableness, the familiarity, the usefulness of truth. As a 'rational' being, he now puts his actions under the rule of abstractions; he no longer lets himself be carried away by sudden impressions, by intuitions; he first universalizes these impressions into less colorful, cooler concepts, in order to hitch the wagon of his life and actions to them (OTL, I, p. 258).

Correctly employing concepts allow individuals to live and act rationally and truthfully. In 1882, Nietzsche proposes that in time, successful habitually shared concepts become unquestionable and true.

Over immense periods of time the intellect produced nothing but errors. A few of these proved to be useful and helped preserve the species: those who hit upon or in-

⁵⁸ "To the extent that the individual wants to maintain himself against other individuals, in the natural state of things he has used the intellect mostly for dissimulation alone; but since man, out of necessity as well as boredom, wants to live in a society or herd, he needs a peace settlement and he tries to make at least the most brutal *bellum omnium omnes* vanish from his world" (OTL, I, pp. 254-255).

herited these had better luck in their struggles for themselves and their progeny. ... Indeed, even in the realm of knowledge these propositions became the norm according to which 'true' and 'untrue' were determined (GS, III, §110, p. 169).

Differing wills to power and their respective personal metaphors challenge one another for better survival. The winners get to impose their interpretations upon the losers, and even if their views are not spontaneously accepted by others as desirable, in time, as they prove useful, they become unquestionable or true. "Thus the *strength* of knowledge does not depend its degree of truth but on its age, on the degree to which it has been incorporated, on its character as a condition of life" (GS, III, §110, p. 169). The knowledge of any truth is merely the adequate expression, not of external realities, but of the inner experiences and responses that are deemed socially correct or appropriate in a given situation (GS, II, §76).

Metaphors are chosen to be truths because they advance specific human purposes while forming a coherent whole. Truth must be pragmatic and coherence based, as only the coherency of statements and their outcomes can be verified by human beings, not the correspondence of their statements to the posited independent world. In 1873, Nietzsche writes of truth that it is: "[a] mobile army of metaphors, metonymies, anthropomorphisms, in short, a sum of human relations which have been poetically and rhetorically intensified, transferred, decorated and which, after lengthy use, seem firm, canonical and binding to a people" (OTL, I, p. 257). We cannot verify the correspondence of our statements to the world without us. Yet, this is not to say that Nietzsche denies that it is true that the sun rises in the East or that it is sunny outside. He can accept some correspondence truths, but strictly pragmatically, that is, for the purposes of scientific and daily affairs (GS, V, §355 & §373). The massive explanatory and predictive powers of correspondence-based truths in the sciences and everyday conceptualizations make their adoption pragmatic. Nine

years later, Nietzsche writes: "what could I say about essence except to name the attributes of its appearance" (GS, I, §54, p. 116). The world is as it appears. Thus, he can accept that it is truly sunny outside for the purposes of checking on a solar panel, but the independent existences of the solar panel, of the sun, of himself and of the world are still only posited. "From a purely utilitarian point of view, Nietzsche does accept a form of the correspondence theory of truth as long as one grants his particular account of the nature of the referent in empirical propositions" (Stack, 1981, p. 108). Some truths are humanity's fundamental or necessary metaphors. "What are man's truths ultimately? Merely his *irrefutable* errors" (GS, III, §265, p. 219). They are the errors that enable us to live: "the falsest judgements (which include the synthetic judgement *a priori*) are the most indispensable for us" (BGE, I, §4, p. 202). Even fundamental universal concepts, such as 'identity,' 'space' and 'time,' despite an unquestionable usefulness, might not correspond to any reality independently of humanity (GS, III, §112).

From truth being pragmatic and coherence-based, as required by Nietzsche's twofold metaphysical scepticism, it follows that Clark's reading that he upholds a 'minimal correspondence theory of truth,' where *noumena* are denied, but where truth can be affirmed of the sentences that obtain or correspond to the 'common sense' facts about the world, either is unable to render consistent many parts of Nietzsche's writings or is overstated. Lawrence J. Hatab's article, "How Does the Ascetic Ideal Function in Nietzsche's Genealogy?" (2008), reads Clark as claiming that Nietzsche affirms the truth of these facts, while Brian Leiter's work, "Perspectivism in Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals*" (1994), proposes that, unclearly but congruently with his texts, their mere usefulness is upheld. Hatab claims that Clark understands Nietzsche as wholeheartedly accepting the truth of the minimal correspondence theory of truth of common sense realism, and

he argues that Nietzsche merely accepts its usefulness in navigating the world. Conversely, Leiter proposes that Clark reads Nietzsche as upholding, not the truthfulness, but the usefulness of common sense realism, which involves some correspondence between language and the world: "our knowledge is always a knowledge of an interpreted world, not a world of naked facts" (1994, p. 350). In any case, I argue that Nietzsche claims that any correspondence theory of truth is doomed to fail from the start, even one that restricts itself to common-sense facts about the world, because it posits an unattainable goal. Human beings cannot verify the accuracy of their perspectives to the posited independent world, since they cannot escape them or access non-human ones. Thus, truths are and must be pragmatic and coherence based.

Furthermore, truths change with one's life, not one's reason (GS, IV, §307). New truths arise as new concepts are formed or as new purposes are chosen. Nietzsche thus only accepts common sense realism's use in light of the reliable navigation of the world and not its truthful correspondence to the external world, if it exists. "Innumerable beings who made inferences in a way different from ours perished; for all that, their ways might have been truer" (GS, III, §111, p. 171). Common sense realism is not philosophically true, but it is acceptable as true in everyday life and in the sciences. In 1873, he advances the proposition that: "Here lies the antagonism between the individual regions of science and philosophy. The latter wants, as art does, to bestow on life and action the greatest possible profundity and significance; in the former one seeks knowledge and nothing further — and does in fact acquire it" (HATH, I, §6, pp. 14-15). By setting the boundaries of knowledge through language, science and common sense realism are able to acquire truths and knowledge, unlike art and philosophy, which challenge language. In 1886, Nietzsche confirms his position on the interpretational nature of all sciences: "physics, too, is

only an interpretation and exegesis of the world (to suit us, if I may say so!) and *not* a world-explanation" (BGE, I, §14, p. 211). Such truths are vitally useful, notwithstanding that they are metaphysically invalid.

I propose that I have implicitly shown that I dispute Clark's (and Leiter's shared) stance that Nietzsche's philosophical positions after 1887 run counter those in his earlier works, making his mature stance one where he abandons his ontological agnosticism for common sense realism or a more traditional correspondence truth theory. Clark refers to the sixth stage of *Twilight of the Idols, Or How One Philosophizes with a Hammer's* "How the 'True World' Finally Became a Fable," which includes the consequence of the fifth stage's denial of the "true world," as proof that after *The Gay Science* (if not more accurately after *On the Genealogy of Morals, A Polemic* but including *Thus Spoke Zarathustra, A Book for All and None*) Nietzsche overcomes his earlier denial of truth for common-sense realism. Clark claims that mature Nietzsche proposes a more traditional common-sense correspondence theory of truth, given that there is only one world once the true and the apparent ones are sequentially abolished (1990, pp. 109-117). Sure, I concede that Nietzsche does write statements such as:

What is appearance for me now? Certainly not a dead mask that one could place on an unknown x or remove from it! Appearance is for me that which lives and is effective and goes so far in its self-mockery that it makes me feel that this is appearance and will-o'-the-wisp and a dance of spirits and nothing more — (GS, I, §54, p. 116).

In this passage, however, he leaves open the possibility of appearance as a self-mocking, living, acting mask that human beings cannot displace. To assume that appearance is erroneous is to be lured into the belief in "the essence of things." In 1886, Nietzsche questions the validity of the "essential opposition of 'true' and 'false'[,] Is it not sufficient to assume degrees of apparentness and, as it were, lighter and darker shadows and shades of appearance — different 'values,' to use

the language of painters?" In which case, human thinking may be "responsible for the falseness of the world —" that is, "whoever takes this world, along with space, time, form, movement, to be falsely *inferred*"; he asks: "what warrant would there be that [thinking] would not continue to do what it has always done" (BGE, I, §34, pp. 235-237)? The possibility of essence is never completely evacuated; it is merely rendered powerless by emphasizing its created nature.

In *Twilight of the Idols, Or How One Philosophizes with a Hammer's* previous passage, "'Reason' in Philosophy," §6, which Clark uses as supplemental proof for her position, Nietzsche writes that non-humanly perceived reality is "absolutely indemonstrable," not that it is non-existent. He claims further: "'appearance' in this case means reality once more, only by way of selection, reinforcement, and correction" (TI, Reason, §6, p. 484). I argue that if there is any selection or correction is occurring, then there is also a non-selected non-corrected reality from which the selection or correction obtains; although a non-selected non-corrected reality is without any meaning or use for human beings. Clark's (and Leiter's shared) interpretation omits that even in these later works, despite its radical unescapable uselessness for constructive human purposes, an independent world could still exist as unattainable possibility. For instance, in *The Gay Science's* 1887 *Book V*, Nietzsche contrasts "the way of this world" and the same but "by human standards" (§346, p. 286). Accordingly, there must be a world and its way that are not affected by human standards. The world lacks not necessity, but order and other such "aesthetic anthropomorphisms" (GS, III §109, p. 168). Later, in 1888, the last section of *Twilight of the Idols, Or How One Philosophizes with a Hammer's* "How the True World Finally Became a Fable" refers to *Thus Spoke Zarathustra, A Book for All and None*, where Nietzsche writes that once the spirit finally becomes a child, "he who had been lost to the world now conquers his own world" (I, Me-

tamorphosis, p. 139). It follows that if there are multiple children in the world, there are also multiple personally conquered worlds. Unless Nietzsche wishes to succumb to the dogmatic faith in one's absolutely superior vantage point, precisely one of the convictions that he aims vehemently to displace, he cannot endorse a single world as a fact (A, §8-9). Mature Nietzsche thus does not deny that the same reality may appear quite differently to different individuals or species.⁵⁹ Hence, as argued for in the first chapter, Nietzsche is best read as being and remaining⁶⁰ a two-fold metaphysical sceptic. As Beatrice Han-Pile proposes in "Transcendental Aspects, Naturalistic Elements and Ontological Commitments in Nietzsche's Thought" (2009)⁶¹, Nietzsche accepts common sense realism due to its efficacy, on the one hand, and due to his agnostic ontology, or what I have called in the first chapter 'twofold metaphysical scepticism,' on the other.

For similar reasons, I dispute Tyler's claim that Nietzsche's earlier Kantian epistemology was abandoned for his mature perspectivism. Tyler writes that: "there is a significant difference, however, between [Nietzsche's] youthful idealism and his mature perspectivism. The latter, in fact, constitutes a deliberate attempt to move away from Kant, and to provide an alternative to

⁵⁹ Although I also read Nietzsche as having a type of metaphysics, Martin Heidegger is incorrect that: "the position of the world according to the image of man and through man is the only true mode of any interpretation of the world" (1979, p. 80); Nietzsche merely claims that it is the only mode available to and accessible by human beings.

⁶⁰ There is some merit in Nehamas' position in "The Genealogy of the Genealogy: Interpretation in Nietzsche's *Second Untimely Meditation* and in *On the Genealogy of Morals*" (1994), that Nietzsche's perspectivism evolved between his early and middle periods into a position that accepts that not all interpretations, meanings or perspectives falsify the meaningless reality they capture, although all are inherently falsifications. However, I claim differently that Nietzsche unwaveringly acknowledges that neither the truth nor the falsity of interpretations can be non-humanly verified by humans, yet that human perspectives need not "betray the illusion and the unreality at some point" (OTL, I, p. 260).

⁶¹ Against Clark, Han-Pile also aptly argues that Nietzsche's agnostic ontology was not later abandoned, and against Leiter, that it is not void of transcendental elements.

those Königsbergian ways of seeing" (2006, p. 373). Tyler claims that while in *On Truth and Lies in an Extra-Moral Sense* Nietzsche presented 'appearance' and 'essence' in an essentially Kantian manner; that is, appearance is accessible and essence is not. Simultaneously, he moved away from the distinction between appearance and essence altogether, as it serves no use. "If we cannot, by definition, know anything about *noumena*, positing their existence is altogether pointless" (Tyler, 2006, p. 374). Tyler proposes that this change is Nietzsche's own progression from the third stage in *Twilight of the Idols, Or How One Philosophizes with a Hammer's* "How the True World Finally Became a Fable." Tyler proposes that in the 1880s, especially by *On the Genealogy of Morals, A Polemic*, Nietzsche abandons any right to even distinguish appearance and essence. Contrastingly, I propose that one can see instead a development and a clarification in Nietzsche's conceptual distance from Kant and all idealism (EH, HATH, §1).⁶² Already in 1873, he recognizes the practical uselessness of essences, as they are "incomprehensible and not at all desirable" (OTL, I, p. 256). In 1888, he still recognizes their logical possibility, as they are the reality from which appearance's "selection" and "correction" occurs (TI, Reason, §6, p. 484). His focus shifts from their use to their possibility. Tyler sees Nietzsche as "changing his skin" after 1873, as abandoning the very idea of "the thing-in-itself". I claim that rather than abandoning the idea, over time, Nietzsche no longer focuses on it, as it serves no use beyond being the logical counterpart to our partial perspectives.

Tyler's main premise is that early Nietzsche accepted more than the limited usefulness of Kant's *noumena/phenomena* distinction and the necessary intuitions of (the categories) time and

⁶² See Dana R. Villa's "Beyond Good and Evil: Arendt, Nietzsche, and the Aestheticization of Political Action" (1992) for Nietzsche's differences with Kant on the themes of judgment and arts.

space, given that these concepts function in the same manner in both philosophies (2006, p. 370). "For Kant's phenomenal world he substitutes linguistic description, but in both these cases what we know is of an entirely different order to the real objects of the material world" (Tyler, 2006, p. 371). In his early works, Nietzsche claims that such "primal forms" exist simply as humanity's best working hypotheses for nature's regularities or laws (OTL, I, p. 261). However, if there is no manner by which to verify their independent existence, then these hypotheses could just as well correspond to our perspectives than not. Early Nietzsche writes carefully: "even though we dare not say that [the human contrast between the individual and the species] does not correspond to [the essence of things], because that would be a dogmatic assertion and as such just as unprovable as its opposite" (OTL, I, p. 257). His question about truth was not about correct correspondence between statements and facts. It was about "an *aesthetic*" "transposition of the spheres" (OTL, I, p. 260). Words and concepts are constructed, but the stimuli from which they are built are not, even if they are unknown, or dreamt, Nietzsche adds, quoting Pascal (OTL, I, p. 254; II, p. 262). He reaffirms this position in 1886: "One should not wrongly reify 'cause' and 'effect,' ... one should use 'cause' and 'effect' only as pure concepts, that is to say, as conventional fictions for the purpose of designation and communication — *not* for explanation" (BGE, I, §21, p. 219). Thus, there is an unknown reality to designate and communicate, but it cannot be known or explained. Nietzsche also avoids affirming or denying traditional correspondence throughout his works due to other species, on the one hand, which Tyler seems to recognize: "There is an enduring element to Nietzsche's epistemology, but it is not to be found in his relationship to truth, and certainly not to Kant's truths. Rather, his evolving comments on epistemology share a vigorous rejection of the idea that knowledge is an exclusively human preserve" (2006, p. 379). On the other hand, he

avoids taking an absolute stance on the correspondence of perspectives to the independent world, because of the agonistic multiplicity of available human perspectives.

As Hales and Welschon argue, Nietzsche is against *de re*⁶³ knowledge of essences, not against any *de re* knowledge at all, given that essences are replaced by objects understood as bundles of quanta of power (2000, pp. 114-116). To their position, I only add that Nietzsche holds a humble or sceptical account of such *de re* knowledge. Knowledge must be sceptical because it cannot escape the limitations of its human creators; thus, omniscient perspectives are "completely unthinkable" (GM, III, §12, p. 555). Being out of human reach, traditional correspondence truth is therefore practically useless. Objectivity is newly conceptualized as being more complete the more partial perspectives are gathered. Hales and Welschon claim (specifically against both Clark and Nehamas) that Nietzsche's denial of a truth outside of any perspective does not necessarily lead him to deny the possibility of a truth shared by all perspectives. In fact, the coauthors argue that Nietzsche's denial of extra-perspectival truths cannot lead him to deny that there are truths that are shared by all perspectives (I shall return to this shortly), based on his claims about logic and reason (2000, pp. 33-36). For the "rejection of bivalence does not mean a rejection of logic—there are plenty of wholesome multivalent logics that remain" (Hales and Welschon, 2000, p. 52). Nietzsche offers his perspectivism as a replacement theory of knowledge for any dogmatic one that certifies that either the world has a sole, fixed and discoverable meaning or none. Instead, he acknowledges with his perspectivism that the world has infinite meanings. There are infinite possible perspectives and interpretations, given the fundamental inescapability of nihilism. There are countless both wills to power to interpret and to be interpreted and ways for them to interpret and

⁶³ *De re* knowledge is knowledge of a thing as true, in contrast with *de dicto* knowledge or knowledge of a sentence as true.

be interpreted at any moment. Perspectivism is "*Our new 'infinite.' ... it may include infinite interpretations*" (GS, V, §374, p. 336). Thus question now arises of perspectivism's relationship to relativism.

2.2 Perspectivism and Relativism

Nietzsche accepts that relativism is the best interpretation of meanings, values and truths with regard to the preservation of life, living or dying, and of humanity. Regarding the latter, he writes in 1882: "I always find them concerned with a single task, all of them and every one of them in particular: to do what is good for the preservation of the human race. ... Even the most harmful man may really be the most useful when it comes to the preservation of the species" (GS, I, §1, p. 73). By employing the norm of preserving humanity, perspectivism allows for relativism in the evaluation and valuation of all perspectives. They are all equally useful for and valuable to keeping human life. However, by employing the additional standard of expanding self-affirming vitality, Nietzsche's perspectivism goes beyond relativism. Every perspective is as valuable as the next for human survival, and every one can be true and valuable for a given will to power while being false or detrimental for another: "The poison of which weaker natures perish strengthens the strong— nor do they call it poison" (GS, I, §19, p. 92). Perspectives are thus evaluated and organized by their-holder's interests. "The theory of a hierarchy of perspectives places the emphasis not on 'truth' but on the consequences of a perspective on the knower" (Strong, 1985, p. 172). The qualifications of the perspective that emerges victorious from the alliance rather than unity formed by the plurality inherent to each individual depend on its consequences for that alliance.- To further explain the differences inherent to meaning in Nietzsche's perspectivism, Strong uses

Bakhtin's concept of "heteroglossia": "It means simply that at any given place or time the totality of the conditions that give an utterance meaning will ensure that it will necessarily have a meaning somewhat different at any other time and place" (1985, p. 174). Different conditions create differing meanings and values for different beings, and depending on the qualities of its will to power, each enriches or impoverishes the self-affirming exuberant expansion of its holder, society, humanity and life.

Thus, over his initially relativistic stance, Nietzsche uses his proposed overarching norm: self-affirming vitality, which is also his suggested shared standard of excellence for qualifying the will to power, and he favours evaluations and valuations that favour it. In 1882, he proposes that: "The falseness of a judgment is for us not necessarily an objection to a judgement; in this respect our new language may sound strangest. The question is to what extent it is life-promoting, life-preserving, species-preserving, perhaps even species-cultivating" (BGE, I, §4, p. 201). Although all perspectives equally preserve life and humanity, they do not equally enhance them. Thus, all perspectives and interpretations can be assessed in at least four ways. First, measured by their preservation of life and humanity, whereby all perspectives are equally valuable. Next, measured by those upholding it. Third, measured by their improvement of the species. Lastly, measured by their improvement of expanding self-affirming vitality, that is, the unqualified will to power as the essence of life. Because of the last three standards, Nietzsche escapes the relativism of the first, and he claims that his perspectival interpretation of knowledge is provisionally superior. In 1885, Nietzsche proposes that his perspectivism best represents life: "*perspective*, the basic condition of all life" (BGE, P, p. 193), and that like life itself, it promotes the elevation of self-affirming vital life over life's preservation.

Nietzsche's perspectivism expunges in two ways the denial of the inescapable possibility of other perspectives contrasting or antagonizing one's own. First, he claims that perspectivism is itself an interpretation. This necessarily allows for conflicting interpretations to exist. "Perspectival pluralism means that everything is perpetually in question, even perspectivism" (Hatab, 1995, p. 157). Yet, perspectivism's advocacy of the undeniable multiplicity of conflicting perspectives does not merely lead to relativism, that is, to their equal value. For, the shared measure for all perspectives is the enhancement of self-affirming exuberance in individuals, societies, humanity and life. Since a healthy and powerful expansion of its self-affirming forms is life's overall standard, and since Nietzsche wants to align human standards to life's: "Every individual may be scrutinized to see whether he represents the ascending or the descending line of life" (TI, Skirmishes, §33, p. 534). Second, the denials of competing interpretations are quelled, given that perspectivism redefines objectivity in such a manner that every contrasting perspective is essential to its formation of truth or knowledge. Without any human access to a non-perspectively objective perspective upon the world, if it exists as humans mostly intuit, then their personal perspectives and their derived common interpretations are all that humans have to access reality: "What is 'appearance' for me now? Certainly not the opposite of essence: what could I say about any essence except to name the attributes of its appearance" (GS, I, §54, p. 116)! All that can be said about reality originates in its appearances, that is, in the human perspectives of it. What we know of reality is limited to our perspectives. Thus, the more perspectives available, the more complete the knowledge obtained from them. Perspectivism accepts and promotes that ideas must be shed when one sheds one's skin or becomes different, since "you are always a different person" (GS, IV, §307, p. 246). One should always be trying new perspectives, including convictions

that deny that they are perspectives. Being "prisons," however, convictions should only be used as "a means" for a sovereign "great passion" to attain its goal (A, §54, p. 638). Beliefs may thus all be worthy of being temporarily tried, but only temporarily tried. Nietzsche proposes that only in light of his standards should they be more firmly adopted. Rather than deny the possibility of contrasting perspectives, the multiplication of such perspectives is the prerequisite to any proper knowledge of reality.

We sometimes promote truth through a twofold injustice, namely when, being unable to see both sides of a thing at the same time, we see and represent them one after the other, but in such a way that we always misjudge or deny the other side in the delusion that what we are seeing is the whole truth (AOM, §79, p. 230).

Thus, traditional objective truth is a social construct that requires that conflicting perspectives deny their dissimilarities and conform to the chosen ones. Contrastingly, Nietzsche's suggested conception of objective truth gathers all available perspectives, some of which will antagonize others. Perspectival objectivity must therefore include conflicts between perspectives rather than simply their harmony.

Perspectival truth includes shifting personal perspectives before any traditional conformist melding occurs, without denying that traditional objective truth is essential to sustaining society (GS, V, §354). As Hatab writes: "objectivity itself is a perspective that can have its place, as long as it does not presume to replace or displace other perspectives" (1995, p. 158). Traditional objectivity only serves certain social purposes. Notably, it has its place in science: "Here lies the antagonism between the individual regions of science and philosophy. The latter wants, as art does, to bestow on life and action the greatest possible profundity and significance; in the former one seeks knowledge and nothing further — and does in fact acquire it" (HATH, I, §6, pp. 14-15). Outside of science or daily living, no such knowledge can be acquired. Perspectival objectivity

encourages both the accumulation of an ever larger multiplicity of competing perspectives in the building of truth and our awareness of the social and scientific purposes of traditional objective truth, which allows us control of their effects upon society and its members. For instance, Nietzsche is (in)famously known for proclaiming, because of their beneficial personal and social effects, the truths of monotheism's divinity's perishing and of asceticism leading to humanity's willing nothing over not-willing or negative nihilism.

In a similar manner, Schrift's *Nietzsche and the Question of Interpretation* (1990) argues that Nietzsche holds a single mode for evaluating interpretations and perspectives that is based on their will to power and its ability or inability to creatively interpret reality:

There is an opposition at the heart of Nietzsche doctrine of perspectivism, but it is not the opposition between truth and perspective. Rather, Nietzsche strives to develop the opposition between the weak, decadent will to power's acceptance of the 'given' as true, and the strong, masterful will to power's interpretive creativity (p. 154).

The weak accept the truth of reality as given; the strong create and interpret it. As Schrift claims, Nietzsche qualifies every perspective as weak or strong based on his understanding that one's perspectives are combinations of one's physiological, instinctual and socio-historical conditions. One's interpretations are simultaneously informed by one's senses, values, norms and social situation. It is essential for our knowledge of reality to fabricate or falsify it in anthropocentric interpretations, but only the strong do so consciously. The weak accept the given interpretations as absolutely objective truths without question, but such truths are completely outside of the realm of human perspectives and knowledge. All facts and truths are always interpreted, if unwittingly.

For this reason, no perspective can be a universal truth. Even a perspective that is shared by seemingly all can still potentially honestly be false for some. A well known commonplace

illustration of this is colourblindness. The person who sees the sky in a colour other than blue has no control over their honest perspective that the sky is not blue. They can merely control their interpretation of it. They can communicate said other colour as 'blue.' In these cases the outlier is not lying about their perspectives of reality. A further example is Nietzsche's regard for madness as another form of judgement and logic; it is equally as partial and arbitrary. Its uniqueness is only that it is a largely unshared form of reasoning (GS, II, §76). Madness is not more illogical than sanity is, it is only more unpopular. Nietzsche moreover reminds us fondly of the intimate relationship between madness, truth and divinity in the Ancient world (GS, III, §152). Also, he claims that the widespread supposition that the most familiar is best known is the "error of errors," as "what is familiar is what we are used to; and what we are used to is most difficult to 'know'—that is to see as a problem; that is, to see as strange, as distant, as 'outside us'" (GS, V, §355, p. 301). Nietzsche disputes that one can properly discern that which is taken for granted, because being familiar, one believes that one already knows it well. Another illustration is Nietzsche's insistence against many if not most logicians and philosophers that: "reason is merely an instrument" (BGE, V, §191, p. 294). Logic is a commonplace, ever-useful, ever-enduring, wholly illogical yet necessary belief about reality (GS, III, §110). Reason merely exists to solely serve the instincts, despite our overestimation of it. Nietzsche denies the unwavering universal truth of logic in favour of celebrating its shared usefulness.

It is also for this reason that I consider Schrift to be departing from Nietzsche's texts and their implications when considering some truths to be shared by all: those statements "which are 'true' for all possible perspectives" (1990, p. 80). Here, Schrift highlights his use of the new Nietzschean perspectival conceptualization of truth rather than the traditional dogmatic one. He proposes accurately that Nietzsche uses the traditional concept of 'truth' to single out the errors

that are necessary for the entire species and that he uses his new concept of 'truth' to reopen the doors to joyful creative interpretations. I claim nevertheless that even truths that are necessary for the whole species may be false in earnest to some of its members. One may never encounter a person whose perspectives on reality differ that greatly from the mainstream ones, but Nietzsche's texts and their implications always allow for their possibility as well as for their participation in gathering perspectives for truth: "if one of us saw the same stimulus as red, another as blue, and a third even heard it as a sound; then nobody would talk about such a regularity of nature, but would understand it only as a highly subjective construct" (OTL, I, p. 261). Likewise, I find Hales and Welsch's claim that Nietzsche upholds "strong perspectivism," for "the laws of logic (and whatever else is bedrock for Nietzsche)" (2000, p. 32) no more sustainable than Schrift's. "Strong perspectivism" holds that some statements have the same truth-value in all perspective; "weak perspectivism," which applies to almost every claim, entails that most perspectives are true for some "bundles of power," while simultaneously false for at least one other bundle of power. The coauthors understand Nietzsche as coherently upholding strong and weak perspectivism in different cases. "Note that it is consistent with weak perspectivism that some statements have the same truth value in all perspectives" (Hales and Welsch, 2000, p 31). However, I claim that the attribution of strong perspectivism or truths 'for all' to Nietzsche is inconsistent with his texts and their implications. Although in practice we might not encounter another Cratylus and his radically opposed perspectives, their possibility ought not be denied. Thus I claim that Nietzsche accepts only weak perspectivism or truths for most, not truths for all, and that he does so without simply supporting relativism.

Perspectivism leads to yet past relativism in two manners. First, since life, or rather death, is two sided, partly living and partly dying, every perspective equally preserves one of those forms. "Let us beware of saying that death is opposed to life. The living is merely a type of what is dead, and a very rare type" (GS, III, §109, p. 168). Destructive claims serve life as dying; constructive ones, life as living. Every perspective is equal in its support of and thus value for the preservation of one part of the unit that is life. Still, although everything is equally valuable to the preservation of one form of life, in life as a whole, life as living takes precedence. "Life — that is: continually shedding something that wants to die" (GS, I, §26, p. 100). Nietzsche's perspectivism thus finds a normative escape from relativism in life itself and adopts it. Thus, everything is equally valuable for one kind of life, but the two kinds of life are not themselves equally valuable. Likewise, all perspectives are of equal value for the preservation of humanity. "I always find them concerned with a single task, all of them and every one of them in particular: to do what is good for the preservation of the human race. ... Even the most harmful man may really be the most useful when it comes to the preservation of the species" (GS, I, §1, p. 73). Thus, even evildoers preserve humanity, and it ought to be asked how a serial or child murderer preserves the species? Yet, Nietzsche might answer with something along the lines of 'she keeps its population healthy.' That is, she keeps its size manageable as well as incites the others, notably her potential victims, to become strong or smart enough to challenge and stop her. This answer may be unsatisfying or unappealing, but given the scope of this dissertation, it suffices to give it. In any case, perspectivism uses the same standard to determine the value of perspectives, given their relative value for the preservation of humanity. Better perspectives all favour self-affirming vitality.

It should be noted that although applying Nietzsche's perspectivism entails relativism, it is also neutral enough to still lead to and past relativism while supporting other norms of univocal evaluation or while being derived from other ontologies, although still ones where life is growth and decay and human beings are the sole providers of all their meanings and values (as will be set about again in the final chapter). Here, I simply propose that the reverse norm could be the case. That is, life could favour death (if effectively, then short-term), and in accordance with this, self-denying degenerating perspectives would be the standard for the good. It is essential however that meanings and values not be given to us and that life be inclusive of decadent forms. For, if meanings and values are given to us, then by being given, so is, if perhaps implicitly, the norm for their valuation and there is no relativism; and if life does not include decrepitness, then there is no relativism ensued by applying perspectivism and the perspectives that simply favour life will be valuable. Thus, rather than necessitate the favouring of becoming to engender relativism, all that is needed is seeing both human beings as creators of metaphors and life as two sided, living and dying, as that still allows for every humanly created perspective to be relative but also allows for an ontology of beings that exist independent of us, if we wish.

All perspectives are equally valuable for preserving humanity and life, but in varying contexts and for different wills to power, the same events or entities can have conflicting uses, meanings and values. Schacht claims, in *Nietzsche* (1983), that Nietzsche's conception of truth is three-tiered. Truth in the first-order is understood as the correspondence between a perspective and a coherent statement about it. Schacht calls the ability of these truths to be seen from many perspectives: "D-relativity" (1983, p. 61). Context is essential to the truth of a statement; any

change in context can be a change in the truth of a proposition.⁶⁴ In 1873, Nietzsche writes: "Much that is aggravation of life to a certain level of mankind serves a higher level as alleviation, because such men have become acquainted with sterner aggregations of life. The reverse likewise occurs" (HATH, V, §280, p. 131). "Perspectivism does not result in the relativism that holds that any view is as good as any other; it holds that one's own views are the best for oneself without implying that they need to be good for anyone else" (Nehamas, 1985, p. 72). The determination of meanings and values is relative to each will to power and its specific contexts. For, it is why and how one makes use of a thing that mark its meanings and value. In 1887, he writes: "The three great slogans of the ascetic ideal are familiar: poverty, humility, chastity. Now take a close look at the lives of all the great, fruitful, inventive spirits: you will always encounter all three to a certain degree. *Not*, it goes without saying, as though these constituted their 'virtues'" (GM, III, §8, p. 544) — One can be poor, humble and chaste, perhaps one even ought to be, if one doesn't thereby devalue oneself and reality or devitalize life. The problem is with ascetic valuations not behaviours."So the mere adoption of acetic procedures does not by itself amount to the apposition of the ascetic ideal as that ideal is understood by the slave" for they "needn't be associated with the evacuation of value from this to another world" (Ridley, 1998, pp. 59-60). Yet, rather than evaluate behaviours or values, Nietzsche evaluates their origins. To judge any perspective, he evaluates its originator will to power in as many of its unique contexts (biological, social, historical, temporal, etc.) as possible. Especially given that Nietzsche's affirmation of becoming and subjectlessness leads to his understanding of the arrangement of an individual's inner forces as an oligarchy as Acampora proposes (2006b, p. 153). Nietzsche's relationship to asceticism illustrates

⁶⁴ Janaway's *Beyond Selflessness, Reading Nietzsche's Genealogy* (2007) stresses that everything must be judged relative to its context.

how all perspectives are equally valued relative to the preservation of humanity and life, although they are unequally valued relative to the enhancement of the individual and self-affirming vitality.

All perspectives and interpretations are relative for preserving humanity and life, hence they must be evaluated univocally by their ability or inability to enhance self-affirming vitality. This is Schacht's second-order analysis of Nietzschean truth, which looks at the functions and the uses of specific D-relative truths. Second-order truth is understood as a necessity for social living and for inducing any action from previous experiences (the sciences). Schacht writes that even though a human perspective falsifies reality, it does not have to lie about it. In the best case, a perspective only simplifies reality so we can cope with it. For this reason, second-order truths describe reality, they do not explain it as science claims. In 1882, Nietzsche writes: "Our descriptions are better — we do not explain any more than our predecessors" (GS, III, §112, p. 172). Finally, Schacht proposes that Nietzsche's objective is third-order truth: "truth with a difference" (1983, p. 95). At this level, truth is aptness in characterizing reality linguistically, that is, from a human perspective. Nietzsche's anthropocentric ontological claims about perspectivism are here made clear as Schacht claims that all truths' values are individual- and species-specific.⁶⁵ Third-order truths embrace life and are at its service; they are not merely errors conditional to our species' existence. For, these truths also recognize ontological unities or things as "catch-alls" that are no more than simply useful to our species (Schacht, 1983, p. 141). Thus, third-order truths embrace Nietzsche's twofold metaphysical scepticism and its posits.

Similarly, in *A Nietzschean Defense of Democracy: An Experience in Postmodern Politics* (1995), Hatab proposes that Nietzsche's dynamic and radical perspectivism leads to relativism

⁶⁵ Being related to Nietzsche's ontological position, perspectivism emerges as falsification and relativism from Schacht's three-tiered analysis of truth.

ahead of bypassing it, because perspectivism or "perspectival pluralism" contains three types of truths. The first is that of becoming: "in the sense that conditions of becoming must be accepted as a baseline notion that renders all forms and structures contingent and groundless" (Hatab, 1995, p. 147). This first type of truth is what, based on twofold metaphysical scepticism, which I argued for in the first chapter, I call the 'neutral nihilism' that is the background of all perspectives. The second truth, which is based on the first, is that of the groundlessness of all dogmatic and positivistic theories of being. Reality is only grasped by us through our posits about it. These working hypotheses cannot be verified for objective truthfulness, proposes Hatab, and therefore they must be adopted because of some form of usefulness instead. This is Nietzsche's coherence-based pragmatic truth theory. With the third type of truth: "In various ways, Nietzsche provides avenues for discerning a modified, contingent, and pluralized array of *truths* that are neither completely unhinged nor fixed in uniformity and closure" (Hatab, 1995, p. 149). Hatab claims that these truths are illustrated in "art, perspectival interpretation, experimentalism, and criticism" (1995, p. 149-150). These truths are consciously perspectival, open-ended, flexible and temporary; or as Hatab advances the proposition in "How Does the Ascetic Ideal Function in Nietzsche's Genealogy?" (2008)⁶⁶: "Art operates as a primal metaphor for Nietzsche, because it is a presentation of meaning without the pretence of a fixed truth" (p. 117). Art evacuates absolute truth. These truths and meanings are relative to the qualified will to power generating or upholding them.

Nevertheless, perspectivism does not remain relativistic. "Nothing here would forbid Nietzsche from making judgements about perspectives that *he* thinks are deficient estimations of

⁶⁶ Here, Hatab also shows that Nietzsche's dynamic and radical perspectivism is coherent with truth, against Janaway's claim that such goals are inconsistent.

life" (Hatab, 1995, p. 153). His overarching standard of evaluation, which he suggests others should pragmatically endorse alongside him and which is life's universal norm too, is promoting self-affirming vitality. "In sum, then, Nietzsche's inclusive, global perspectivism together with the inter-perspectival correlation suggested by agonistic praxis allows him the following: 1) an end-run around the self-reference problem, 2) an inclusion of all perspectives, and 3) a commitment to his own perspective in opposition to others" (Hatab, 1995, p. 155). Perspectivism is not the mere inclusive incoherent relativism in which every perspective has the same value for the preservation of humanity and life; it uses the enhancement of self-affirming vitality as its universal barometer. Any perspective, regardless of its denial of self-affirming vitality, enhances a certain form of life, albeit perhaps a declining decadent one. That is: "Nietzsche can extol the value of life-denying perspectives because of their life-enhancing power. But he can challenge these perspectives as falling short of life affirmation" (Hatab, 2008, p. 110). Despite the authentic denial of life of some perspectives, they all serve to grow the interests and power of at least one individual as well as serve to preserve willing, humanity and life. Thus, even the most terrible or life devitalizing forms of life belong to and in it; they are not to be erased, except by being destitute of supporters and disappearing. In this manner, proposes Hatab: "Nietzsche can offer judgements of better and worse beliefs without a project of refutation or erasure" (1995, p. 155). Nietzsche both recognizes the infinity of possible perspectives and interpretations and suggests that enhancing self-affirming vitality is his standard for determining better and worse ones. Thus, every perspective has the same inherent value for the preservation of humanity and life, yet strictly those perspectives that embrace self-affirming vitality are otherwise valuable.

Dillon argues that Nietzsche's perspectivism is not relativism⁶⁷ since there is a difference between an "inauthentic" perspective and an "authentic" one, which is a lucid and honest one (2012, pp. 51-53). Thus, despite all being valuable to humanity's preservation, some perspectives are unclear and dishonest. They are less willful and powerful expressions of life as the unqualified will to power. They are therefore invariably less valuable and desirable overall. In this reading, differing relative evaluations of a given reality are allowed by asserting that each perspective is more or less useful and valuable in light of self-affirming vitality. Thus, there is only a baseline relativism. Every perspective is equally valuable to preserving life. Still, not every perspective can claim to foster self-affirming vitality in the individual, its society, the species and life. This is how Nietzsche coherently maintains a twofold metaphysical scepticism, a baseline relativism and a theory of truth.

Another challenge to reading Nietzsche's perspectivism as a nihilistic sceptical form of relativism is found in Leiter's "Perspectivism in Nietzsche's Genealogy of Morals" (1994). Taken by this interpreter as an empiricist and a naturalist, Nietzsche is presented as upholding a realistic practical perspectivism. Given that all knowledge is partial and interested, knowledge, like optics, wholly depends on perspectives. All perspectives have these four characteristics: each one is contextually particular and partial, each one can only be augmented or completed by others, each one can be distorted in various manners and each one is a member of an infinite domain (Leiter, 1994, pp. 343-346). Nietzsche's perspectivism, proposes Leiter, describes a theory of knowledge aiming to mesh interested, partial, inescapable, changing perspectives. Thus, it is not nihilistic, or

⁶⁷ This follows also from Nietzsche embracing a new realism that is "committed to the world" (Dillon, 2012, p. 26). Empirical evidence is grounds for evaluating the correctness of the metaphors that become concepts.

in my terms, it embraces positive nihilism. Doyle also defends perspectivism from relativism in *Nietzsche on Epistemology and Metaphysics, The World in View* (2009) by proposing that reality is “mind-independent but knowable” (2009, p. 53). The world exists independently of the human perspectives of it, and perspectivism is the corresponding restriction of that reality to reality-for-a-given-will-to-power. Thus, “Nietzsche’s appeal to appearance stipulates that our knowledge is perspectival and empirical but not that reality is radically divorced from us” (Doyle, 2009, p. 75). Doyle claims that perspectivism is Nietzsche's counterproposal to scepticism and dogmatism, that is, to our epistemological immodesty. “Thus reality, Nietzsche argues, is metaphysically independent of but epistemically accessible to human knowledge” (Doyle, 2009, p. 3). Truth is a proposition contextually justified by empirical experience, though it is simultaneously interested or specific to our instincts. Human perspectives are the limits of what is knowable. There is no objective or neutral norm towards which to strive. Humanity's necessary ability to fabricate is satisfied by simplifying reality into knowledge. Thus, the world is created not discovered.

Against Doyle's claim that perspectives do not correspond to what things are, if they could be seen without any perspective or from every perspective at once, I contend that Nietzsche is a twofold metaphysical sceptic (see the previous chapter) and he therefore wishes to refrain from deciding either way. He proposes the temporary interpretations of reality, of humanity and of the latter's access to the former that he thinks most compelling and useful: nihilism, the will to power and perspectivism.

How far the perspective character of existence extends or indeed whether existence has any other character than this; whether existence without interpretation, without 'sense', does not become 'nonsense'; whether, on the other hand, all existence is not essentially actively engaged in *interpretation*—that cannot be decided even by the most industrious and scrupulously conscientious analysis and self-examination of the

intellect; for in the course of this analysis the human intellect cannot avoid seeing itself in its own perspectives, and *only* in these (GS, V, §374, p. 336).

In this passage from 1887, Nietzsche claims that knowledge, even perspectivism, is always given and limited by human perspectives. The extra-perspectival, non-perspectival or omni-perspectival are humanly unknowable. Perspectivism respects the acknowledgement of every will to power's limited interdependent access to reality. It claims that all perspectives are equally valuable for the preservation of the species and of life. Yet, perspectivism escapes this relativism by declaring self-affirming vitality to be its universal standard as it is in life. Perspectivism never claims to be an absolute truth, only a coherent pragmatic one. Perspectivism is not false or true, as it is simply constructed; it is an interpretation.

To say that perspectivism is constructed is to say that all perspectives necessarily simplify, interpret and recreate reality, but not that they necessarily distort or falsify it. As Strong claims, perspectivism cannot be falsification for there is no true perspective to falsify: "Nietzsche's point here is that it is a mistake to look behind or underneath the world for its true sense. ... All we need to know and all we can know is present in the world as we encounter it" (1985, p. 169). In order to assess whether or not a perspective is a correct depiction of a given external reality, an accurate either non-perspectival, extra-perspectival or omni-perspectival stance from which to make this assessment is required. Yet, no such stance is available to humans, even if it does exist, which is equally unverifiable: "We cannot look around our own corner: it is a hopeless curiosity that wants to know what other kinds of intellects and perspectives there *might* be" (GS, V, §374, p. 336). Fourteen years before this passage, in 1873, Nietzsche also proposes that it is impossible to verify or deny if the world is perspectival or otherwise, as we are always stuck in our restricted perspectives. Our quest for absolute knowledge is hopeless: "nature knows no forms or concepts

and therefore no species either, but only an X which, for us, is inaccessible and undefinable” (OTL, I, p. 257). Nevertheless, human perspectives are not necessarily absolutely false, for being so false logically implies the opposite possibility of being absolutely true with which to oppose it. Falsification implies its opposite, validation, and with regard to perspectives, both are equally out of our grasp. Nietzsche claims that "the standard of *correct perception*" is "*non-existent*" (OTL, I, p. 260). Correctness and by implication falseness of correspondence are irrelevant to determining the perceptions of the world that are adequate for human beings. We cannot coherently assess our own perspectives from any other perspectives, as we have no access to any others. Perspectives are neither true nor false depictions of reality; they are freely created or invented interpretations of it. Their value lays in their usefulness. The value of truth is its use. This stance is unwavering, as it is reaffirmed from 1873 until 1888 (from *OTL I* to *GS*, §374 to *TI*, Reason; Fable, etc.).

Thus, Dillon is mostly right that Nietzsche's mature perspectivism, here after 1876, is not falsification, since the only reality available to humans is that which is apparent: “Appearances are reality perceived from within a perspective” (2011, p. 31). Appearances are perspectival and thus always the only reality for humans. Against Dillon's claim that perspectivism is only a later theory, however, I draw attention to Nietzsche's 1874 description of the respective importance of the unhistorical, the suprahistorical and the historical, which is additionally tripartite: critical, monumental and antiquarian (UAH, pp. 72 & 120). In different contexts and for different reasons, each of history's counterparts as well as each of the different types of history and their respective services for life are valued. Thus, already Nietzsche's early theory of history equally embraces all the different and differently historical perspectives equally for their unique service for life. Every

perspective is invariably a true appearance to someone or something that preserves life. None, not even historical ones, can be universally or absolutely true or false. Although unnamed, this is his perspectivism applied.

Every will to power generates its own unique and diverse metaphors of and for reality.- These perspectives and interpretations are evaluated and qualified both relatively, because each invariably has some value for the preservation humanity and life, and univocally, because each contributes differently to bettering, or at least to preserving, self-affirming vitality. In 1882, Nietzsche writes: "One holds that what is called good preserves the species, while what is called evil harms the species. In truth, however, the evil instincts are expedient, species-preserving, and indispensable to as high a degree as the good ones; their function is merely different" (GS, I, §4, p. 79). Each unique perspective is equally valuable for the preservation of humanity and life overall, if not also for its holder's own or for advancing self-affirming vitality. Or, as Tyler puts it:

Acknowledging the outlooks and values of different perspectives does not, for the mature Nietzsche, imply that all perspectives are of equal merit. ... Part of the journey toward eventual 'objectivity' is a matter of acknowledging that some interpretations are narrower than others, that it is better to overcome these interpretations, that this overcoming will allow us to elevate ourselves. Some perspectives are better than others (2006, pp. 376-377).

All perspectives are equally valuable and estimable for the survival of the humanity. Still, some perspectives are better at promoting exuberant self-affirming humanity and life; others are more narrow and better at preserving their stagnation.

Given its baseline relativism, perspectivism redefines objectivity as: "the *more* affects we allow to speak about one thing, the *more* eyes, different eyes, we can use to observe one thing, the more complete our 'concept' of this thing, our 'objectivity,' be (sic)" (GM, III, §12, p. 555).

Given that reality is accessed by the impositions of interpretations upon it, there is greater value for knowledge and life in continually fostering a plurality of interpretations. Things are only fully or objectively known when all perspectives upon them are gathered. If it is understood as being the correct correspondence between statements and facts, then objectivity is not consistent with Nietzsche's twofold metaphysical scepticism. Objectivity must be a social approximation that is necessary for humanity to survive and thrive. Being social, it is enhanced by augmenting the number of gathered perspectives. In 1887, Nietzsche writes that objectivity is to be "understood not as 'contemplation without interest' (which is a nonsensical absurdity), but as the ability *to control* one's Pro and Con and to dispose of them, so that one knows how to employ a *variety* of perspectives and affective interpretations in the service of knowledge" (*Ibid.*). To be objectively known, as each thing is itself multiple as a will to power, it must be seen in as many manners as are available, which is to say, from as many differing perspectives as possible. Like a puzzle's image is only fully seen once all its pieces fit together, perspectival objectivity or knowledge only emerges once multiple contrasting perspectives are gathered. Although, given that they are meant to coexist in *agon* and not in harmony, the puzzle's image is of an abstract painting.

Perspectivism is inherently relational; it does not allow for the existence of a solitary perspective, firstly as there is no solitary will to power and secondly, as a single will to power is composed of multiple drives each with their own perspectives. Both overall reality and particular realities are measured by the perspectives and interpretations they generate and those generated about them. All that is perceptible or knowable is only so because there is at least one perspective that is imposed upon it, having outdone its challengers. Non-eliminative contest, that is *agon*, is inherent to and important for life as the unqualified will to power and, thus, to the perspectives it

generates once individuated and qualified. "Affirmation, for Nietzsche, is anything but comfortable and pleasant; it means taking on the difficulty of *contending the Other without wanting to annul it*. ... every perspective is mixed with its Other, because a perspective needs its Other as an agonistic correlate, since opposition is part of a perspective's constitution" (Hatab, 2008, p. 110). There are always many contenders for every meaning or value, even perspectivism.

Perspectivism is itself a perspective, which necessarily allows for the possibility of conflicting views. Nietzsche hence consistently applies perspectivism to itself; as shown in this passage from 1886: "Supposing that this also is only interpretation — and you will be eager enough to make this objection? — well, so much the better" (BGE, I, §22, pp. 220-221). It is consciously free from the charges of self-defeating relativism that specifically stem from its self-referentiality. To be coherent, perspectivism must apply to itself. "The philosophical problem of self-reference that has been directed at Nietzsche's texts seems to be completely dissolved by such a remark, which refuses to see self-reference *as* a problem by expressing a preference for its conditions" (Hatab, 1995, p 151). That Nietzsche's perspectivism is itself merely a perspective supports its adoption as the new commonplace theory of human knowledge. For, absolute truth shall defeat itself by lacking such self-reference. It will discredit itself because it cannot apply to itself. The following year, he writes: "After Christian truthfulness has drawn one inference after another, it must end by drawing its *most striking inference*, its inference *against* itself; this will happen, however, when it poses the question '*what is the meaning of all will to truth?*'" (GM, III, §27, p. 597) Traditional truth will in time expose its own falseness⁶⁸.

⁶⁸ Regardless of the impossibility of any perspective or interpretation being independently false, Nietzsche calls some 'false' (GS, V, §354) when drawing attention to their reverence for absolute truth, which is inaccessible to us, even if it exists, or else to their failures, dangers and disadvantages for ascending individuals, humanity, societies or life.

Perspectives and interpretations are fictions that are created to be useful to individuals in navigating their surroundings. Over time, when they are successful and habitually shared, they become unquestioned and seem unquestionable and universally true. However, they are only true because they are useful. "Innumerable beings who made inferences in a way different from ours perished; for all that, their ways might have been truer. ... The beings that did not see so precisely had an advantage over those that saw everything 'in flux'" (GS, III, §111, p. 171). Only useful perspectives are reified into permanent truths and thus are considered certain. It might be true that reality is constantly changing, but this truth does not permit for human endeavours to flourish. Falsifying, or fictionalizing, simplifying and solidifying, an ever-changing reality of becoming into the slower paced one of being does. It is important because it facilitates human survival and striving, true or not. Strong argues that Nietzsche's perspectivism is to be viewed as redefining epistemology (hence, he argues against Nehamas about Nietzsche's adherence to the falsification thesis). Of statements and positions, it is not their accuracy in depicting the external world that is measured, which is impossible to gauge, but rather it is their ability to coherently serve a given purpose, which in turn can itself be evaluated.

Truth originates in language, which originates and develops in and because of social units. Nietzsche writes, in 1873, that: "since man, out of necessity as well as boredom, wants to live in a society or herd he needs a peace settlement ... This peace settlement entails something that looks like the first step towards attaining that mysterious drive for truth" (OTL, I, pp. 254-255). The more we need each other to survive and strive, the more we learn to communicate with each other. To be effective, communication requires the employ of an adopted portrayal of reality that serves a group's common purposes. In 1886, he writes that: "To understand one another, it is not

enough that one use the same words; one also has to use the same words for the same species of inner experiences; in the end one has to have one's experience in *common*" (BGE, IX, §268, p. 406). Therefore, sharing a language equates to sharing one's perspectives, interpretations, experiences and lifestyles. So, although personal unshared perspectives and interpretations only need to be as precise and regular as each individual requires for its own survival and expansion, given that we are environmentally vulnerable and easily bored, we both require and desire group living as well as its prerequisite establishment of a shared language and its incorporate concept of truth. "The obligation that society, in order to exist, imposes on us — the obligation to be truthful, i.e. to use the customary metaphors or, to put it in moral terms, the obligation to lie in accordance with a firm convention, to lie in droves in a style binding for all" (OTL, I, p. 256). Every truth is a lie: one that is shared. It is a lie insofar as it lies about being true. In contrast, traditional objective dogmatic truth is inevitably inaccessible, as it lies about being a lie.

Knowledge is merely asserting the correct conventional linguistic terms about a given perceptual event. In 1887, Nietzsche writes: "we 'know' (or believe or imagine) just as much as may be *useful* in the interests of the human herd, the species; and even what is here called 'utility' is ultimately also a mere belief, something imaginary, and perhaps precisely that most calamitous stupidity of which we shall perish some day" (GS, V, §354, p. 300). Even our understanding of what is useful to us is dependent upon truths or linguistic conventions. Hence we discard what we call 'evil' despite its potential usefulness, deplors Nietzsche: "it is with man as it is with the tree. The more he aspires to the height and light, the more strongly do his roots strive earthward, downward, into the dark, the deep — into evil" (Z, I, Tree, p. 154). Languages are no more than a matter of a group's leaders choosing particular metaphors to reify. Different leaders therefore lead

to creating different languages: "A juxtaposition of the different languages shows that what matters about words is never truth, never an adequate expression; otherwise there would not be so many languages" (OTL, I, p. 256). Thus, due to its fabricated nature, knowledge, even by virtue of its usefulness in groups' social striving, ought to by no means take precedence over life:

"There can be no doubt: life is the higher, the dominating force, for knowledge which annihilated life would have annihilated itself with it. Knowledge presupposes life and thus has in the preservation of life the same interest as any creature has in its own continued existence" (UAH, §10, p. 121). Of any variety of knowledge that claims it tries to destroy life, Nietzsche is especially heedful. Could it, if life includes its destructive decaying forms? Nonetheless, he proposes that vital self-affirming life ought to be the common standard for creating truths and values. Coherence-based pragmatic metaphysical and epistemological posits are one more manner in which "The skeptics [are] the only honourable type among the equivocal, quinquivocal (sic) tribe of philosophers" (EH, *Clever*, §3, p. 699)! As it follows from Nietzsche's twofold metaphysical scepticism, perspectivism is a better theory of human knowledge. Hence it is a more honest and useful interpretation, if not also truer, which is unverifiable, as it coherently highlights its dependence on idiosyncratically chosen created metaphors, whether perspectives, interpretations, meanings or values.

In sum, perspectivism is relativism because all perspectives equally preserve humanity or life. Every perspective is unique but equally useful and valuable for the preservation humanity or life. This relativism is surpassed, however, as life holds as its sole standard the advancement of self-affirming vitality. Some perspectives are valuable, as they are better at furthering exuberant fortitude, others are not, because they merely preserve stagnant dying life. Still, these antagonistic

views should all be collected as perspectival objectivity demands. Perspectival objectivity is seeing any thing from as many differing perspectives as possible. In order for any single reality or will to power to be objectively or fully known, as it is itself a unit of multiple forms of the unqualified will to power, it must be seen from as many differing views as possible. Yet, given that expanding confident life is dominant over declining life in nature, the proliferation of self-affirming vitality is the standard from which all shared evaluations and valuations of every perspective can emerge. This standard claims that all perspectives are not equally epistemically valuable and morally venerable. Each perspective is more or less useful and valuable in light of vigorous self-affirmation, and therefore differing evaluations of a given reality are disallowed. Perspectivism leads to yet past relativism by adopting life's own norm, self-affirming exuberance. Perspectivism values vigorous self-affirming life over its specific components, including knowledge and survival. It was thus shown that Nietzsche's perspectivism is an ontologically derived, constructed, not just relativistic theory of knowledge.

Finally, Nietzsche's perspectival general epistemology has successfully challenged the three dogmatic claims that he finds most harmful and dangerous: perspectives that lose sight of their origins as anthropocentric metaphors, those that forget that they cannot help but serve life and those that deny even the possibility of contrasting perspectives. Since perspectives are partial, life's servants and contestable, perspectivism refutes all the dogmatic positions that claim their infallibility and superiority over life and an exclusive access to truth. That is, perspectivism limits the scope of certainty to the realm of scientific and common sense knowledge, as language and truth are anthropocentric metaphors of coherence and convenience. Also, it conceptualizes life as both growth and decay, disallowing any perspective to undermine it. Finally, perspectivism en-

courages difference in views and discourages exclusion by its redefinition of objectivity as agnostic and inclusive. Thus, perspectivism, Nietzsche's sceptical general epistemology, triumphs over those three pernicious positions.

In conclusion, Nietzsche is conscious that metaphysics is needed to allow the world to appear to human beings. He is not an Academic. His claims to eliminate metaphysics are implicitly ones to actually replace it. At the loss of traditional dogmatic metaphysics and thus in the face of the victory of scepticism, in 1878, Nietzsche asks: "if there were no other, metaphysical world and all explanations of the only world known to us drawn from metaphysics were useless to us, in what light would we then regard men and things" (HATH, I, §21, p. 23)? Throughout his works, he proposes that the answer to this question is that we regard reality through the lenses of his non-dogmatic ontology of nihilism and the will to power as well as that of their combination into an epistemology, perspectivism. As I proposed in the first chapter, the will to power is a two-storied ontological construct: in its unqualified use, it describes undifferentiated ontological substrata, while in its qualifiable use, it is all the different realities that they construct, notably human beings and their perspectives. Any qualifiable will to power engages with the world through the perspectives and interpretations it creates or adopts, given the inescapability of neutral nihilism, that is, given that we are inevitably the sole creators of all our meanings and values.

This chapter looked at the combination of the levelled ontology of the will to power and neutral nihilism, from which perspectivism is derived. For, if each human being is a qualifiable individual will to power, entirely composed of different expressions of the unqualified will to power, and if all forms of the will to power inevitably create their own metaphors for reality, then human beings are essentially creators of many conflicting meanings and values, and, if due to the

inescapability of neutral nihilism, we are the only creators of all our meanings and values, then knowledge and truth depend entirely on our creations. Perspectivism is thus ontologically derived. It is also constructed; as every perspective is an imposition of a will to power upon the world and for this reason, a fiction. It is a fiction because it is impossible to verify or deny that the world is perspectival or otherwise, as we are always confined to our unprovable, partial and biased perspectives. Whatever is asserted as true is no more than a shared perspective elevated to an unquestioned common status. Yet, by claiming to be a perspective itself, perspectivism is a better perspective on human knowledge. Perspectivism is coherently perspectival: it does not claim to be an absolute truth. By admitting to its created nature is it more honest, truer. Sceptical truths, like perspectivism, are the ultimate goal of Nietzsche's vehement critiques of dogmatic metaphysics and their absolute truths, given our need for metaphysics. Perspectivism is relativism because all perspectives equally preserve humanity or life. However, also, it is not, as life holds as its sole norm more self-affirming vitality. More valuable perspectives are better at furthering exuberant fortitude. Perspectivism values vigorous self-affirming life over any of its specific components, including knowledge and mere survival.

Chapter Three

The Political Implications of Nietzsche's Perspectivism

In this dissertation's search for the political implications of Nietzsche's perspectivism, his suggested theory of knowledge, the first chapter had to begin by exploring his perspectives on metaphysics. Interpreters read Nietzsche as a dogmatic metaphysician, affirmative or negative, as his texts show both stances. To make sense of seemingly paradoxical claims, Nietzsche is best read as a twofold metaphysical sceptic. He remains unsure of the independent existence of the external world, yet he posits it as necessary for our survival and growth. Also, he remains unsure that perspectives are accurate replicas of the independent world, if it exists, yet he posits that they are, as this belief enables us to live and strive. As a consequence of his twofold metaphysical scepticism, Nietzsche creates temporary replacement ontological and anthropological concepts that better depict and enable living and striving: 'nihilism' and the 'will to power.' Nihilism is the human state of meaninglessness and valuelessness; it is neutral, natural and inescapable. The will to power is life's essential drive to exist and its various qualifiable forms of existence, including human beings; therefore, rather than merely the straightforward willing of brute power, the will to power covers all strivings and all forms of power, including the creation of meanings and values.

In the second chapter, consistently with my initial findings, I proposed that perspectivism is Nietzsche's sceptical replacement for all dogmatic general epistemologies. My exploration of his writings on perspectivism found it to be an ontologically derived, constructed, not entirely relativistic theory or interpretation of knowledge. That is to say, respectively, it accounts for the interactions between the perspectives that every will to power invariably creates or upholds; it is an admitted interpretation or overtly posited; it embraces the relativity of all perspectives for the

preservation of life and the species, but it moves beyond this relativism by valuing all meanings and values that expand vivacious self-affirming forms of individuals, humanity and life. Further, perspectivism was found to be superior to three dogmatic epistemological stances that Nietzsche considers harmful: those that lose sight of their origins as anthropocentric metaphors, those that forget that they inevitably serve life and those that deny even the existence of any antagonistic perspectives. These three stances are rejected, respectively, because one ought to be conscious of the partiality and biases of all perspectives; each perspective is informed by and informs personal and societal interpretations. Because, like life, one ought to foster vital, self-affirming, life-enhancing perspectives over decadent, self-denying, life-preserving ones, when possible, although both are equally forms of life. And because one must include all available perspectives to reach perspectival objectivity or knowledge.

In this chapter, I will explore the political ramifications of this perspectivism. I will do so not only by examining the claims directly presented in Nietzsche's works, but also by drawing out the appropriate implications of his perspectivism, which may or may not correspond to his claims. From one's conception of truth and knowledge, one's understanding of politics can be inferred. One's conceptualization of truth and knowledge is best embodied in a specific type of political system. For instance, if one claims that truth and knowledge are absolute, then there must be an absolute truth about the best manner of organizing one's society. However, if one claims that truth and knowledge are not, but rather that they are entirely created, the question of how one ought to organize living together has a less certain answer. The latter being the case for Nietzsche, I will find the appropriate political implications of his perspectivism before exploring whether or not they correspond to his own political claims. As a prelude, I define politics as the

organization of a society, from its constitution or guiding principles, to its specific laws, rights and responsibilities, which at least partially inform the behaviour and beliefs of its citizens. Thus, politics is the management of the power structures in a society for both individuals and groups.

3.1 Perspectivism's Political Implications

I begin by emphasizing that the implications for political organization that properly follow from the perspectivist position that Nietzsche develops may or may not correspond to his own political claims, which will be explored in the subsequent section of this chapter. I also reiterate my earlier propositions that Nietzsche's general theory of knowledge is based on metaphysical scepticism and yields a pragmatic, coherence-based theory of truth. It redefines 'objectivity' as the gathering of as many diverse competing perspectives as possible, and rejects exclusionary binary systems in favour of a dynamic relational conception of mutually exclusive opposites as radically differing gradations. With these points in mind, I ask what type of political organization follows from Nietzsche's theory of knowledge, regardless of whether or not it also corresponds to his own political claims? Because of their similar political implications: the lack of any substantial conception of a political good, the openness to a variety of political goods and favouring a multi ruler polity, the eight characteristics of perspectivism are gathered into these sets below, despite some overlaps between them.

First, perspectivism is a 1) pragmatic coherence-based theory of knowledge, which is 2) dynamic, 3) applies to itself without being self-defeating, 4) redefines objectivity to include the widest possible diversity of perspectives, and 5) conceptualizes binary differences as radical, non-exclusionary gradations. Thus, it leads to a procedural approach to politics.

1) Perspectival truths are pragmatic and coherence-based as proposed in the opening chapter, since Nietzsche's metaphysical scepticism does not allow him to make claims that are 'true' in the traditional sense. Perspectivism is derived from a sceptical ontology that recognizes the usefulness and consistency of his metaphysical posits, the 'will to power' and 'nihilism,' rather than their absolute truthfulness. Perspectival truth is pragmatic coherence, not correspondence.⁶⁹ Thus, consistent statements that are responsible for desirable outcomes are considered truthful. Still, in order to avoid the Heraclitean paralysis that Cratylus experienced, Nietzsche posits that both the external world exists and our perspectives accurately depict it, for such working theories best allow for us as a species and as individuals to survive and thrive. This twofold metaphysical scepticism is the reason that Stanguennec's (2005) proposition that the doctrine of eternal recurrence expresses Nietzsche's teachings on the structure of the world as well as his ethical maxim of overcoming oneself is too strong. I propose it expresses only the latter, although the point is communicated through the sceptical or pragmatic posit of the former. Nietzsche only asserts the ontological and epistemological claims that he deems most useful to self-affirming vital life. For instance, his claims from 1878 affirming the "*immortality*" of motion (HATH, IV, §208, p. 97)

⁶⁹ In a correspondence theory of truth, the truth of a statement can be verified by looking for and finding confirmation for it in the empirical world. The statement 'the cat is on the mat' is true, if and only if the observation of a cat on a mat can be made. In a purely coherence-based theory of truth, statements are true if and only if they fit with the rest of the statements that that language has already accepted as true. Only coherent statements are truthful. Finally, in a pragmatic theory of truth, statements are considered truthful when their outcomes are desirable. Nietzsche thus combines the latter two types of truth-theories, resulting in a pragmatic coherence-based theory of truth. Nietzsche cannot uphold any correspondence theory of truth, even a minimal one as Clark (1990) proposes, because he is a twofold metaphysical sceptic. He denies both that humans can know whether their perspectives on the external world correspond to that world as it exists independently of human perspectives and that we can know whether such a world exists at all, given the inescapability of our perspectives.

and determinism⁷⁰ are not held or presented as being dogmatically true.⁷¹ Nonetheless, positing them helps Nietzsche redefine responsibility, from the counterpart of a traditional acceptance of free will to that of a freely sanctioned promise, which also requires a free responsible will (as I will claim in the second part of this chapter).

It follows from Nietzsche's pragmatic coherence-based theory of truth, whether or not he agrees, that the political system correlated with an endorsement of perspectivism must also focus on the coherence and pragmatism of its organization. It must focus on the outcomes and internal consistency of its aims, rules, rights and responsibilities. It cannot base its constitution, rules, rights and responsibilities on a truth that is said to correspond to reality independent of human perspectives. Instead, its guiding principles must be coherent with one another and the subsequent rules, rights and responsibilities must cohere with one another, although, foremost, with the established constitution. This focus on coherence leaves some room for flexibility and creativity with regard to the specific constitution, laws and responsibilities that a society enacts. An allowance that is coherent with valuing nonconformity, which Nietzsche does. In a pragmatic coherence-based theory of perspectival truth, since objectivity so demands it, all possible perspectives must be collected. One is not required to change one's views and values to be attain truth;

⁷⁰ "We do not accuse nature of immorality when it sends us a thunderstorm and makes us wet: why do we call the harmful man immoral? Because in the latter case we assume a voluntarily commanding free will, in the former necessity. But this distinction is an error" (HATH, II, §102, p. 55).

⁷¹ Similarly, in the face of the probable victory of scepticism, Nietzsche asks: "if there were no other, metaphysical world and all explanations of the only world known to us drawn from metaphysics were useless to us, in what light would we then regard men and things" (HATH, I, §21, p. 23)? As his latent answer, which he slowly develops and completes throughout his subsequent books, Nietzsche offers his twofold metaphysical scepticism's ontological posits, (neutral) nihilism and the (scaffolded) will to power.

truth is established by the gathering of divergent perspectives. Moreover, by seeking to generate one's own perspectives and interpretations, one is simultaneously turning away from the possibility of conforming. The opinions of the masses are largely irrelevant to an autonomous individual. Thus, although in many respects Nietzsche's position seems the antithesis of a liberal one, his emphasis on the value of individual autonomy shares some common ground with liberal values.

For instance, notwithstanding their differences, both Nietzsche and John Stuart Mill praise the capacity for breaking with the crowd. In 1882, valuing the nonconformity that emerges from the autonomy "the many, the great majority" never seek, Nietzsche writes: "We however, *want to become those we are* — human beings who are new, unique, incomparable, who give themselves laws, who create themselves" (GS, IV, §335, p. 266). This passage praises noble or autonomous individuality. In his 1859 book, *On Liberty* (2001), Mill values nonconformity as the middle ground between a total lack of conformity, by which one risks "something worse than disparaging speeches" (p. 64), and one of individuality and thus of vitality, which further translates to the loss of all the possible improvements that could be discovered through encounters with a "variety of situations" (p. 67). Still, Mill's moral egalitarianism does not rule out a measure of elitism that includes judgements of higher and lower: "It does seem, however, that when the opinions of masses of merely average men are everywhere become or becoming the dominant power, the counterpoise and corrective to that tendency would be the more and more pronounced individuality of those who stand on the higher eminences of thought" (Mill, 2001, p. 62).⁷² Thus, Nietzsche

⁷² "No government by a democracy or a numerous aristocracy, either in its political acts or in the opinions, qualities, and tone of mind which it fosters, ever did or could rise above mediocrity, except in so far as the sovereign Many have let themselves be guided (which in their best times they always have done) by the counsels and influence of a more highly gifted and instructed One or Few" (*Ibid.*). That is, Mill claims that the best democracy must be monarchist or aristocratic.

and Mill both value nonconformity because it hinders the mediocritization that an inclusive democracy engenders and augments.

The concerns of mediocritization that nonconformity addresses are also attacked by the pragmatic aspect of a political system corresponding to Nietzsche's perspectivism — despite his own claims, which will be explored in the next section. The constitutional rigidity that is required for political stability is established by, yet can be broken for, pragmatic reasons. Only congruent guiding principles that lead to positive outcomes ought to be chosen for a society's constitution, which establishes its coherent norms of conformity, and only the prospect of better attaining or better positive outcomes ought to lead to modifying the chosen guiding principles and aims, avoiding the stagnation of mediocre decisions. Laws and responsibilities might change over time or in different circumstances for the same prospects, but only those that cohere with and support the constitution are acceptable. The constitution a society chooses ought to focus primarily on the outcomes to which its guiding principles might lead to ensure congruently positive ones. Thus, the substantive elements of a perspectivist polity are found in what is considered positive outcomes by and for that society. Their determination may entail much dissension, but an agreement is only needed about the guiding principles of a society. The question how a society's aims could be established following perspectivism will be addressed shortly as will the implications that properly follow from the perspectivist position that Nietzsche develops about what counts as positive outcomes. The more difficult areas of agreement arise, I expect, due to the flexibility of the specific rules, responsibilities and rights.

The open-endedness of truths in Nietzsche's perspectivism should disallow any political regime that claims to hold any definite and dogmatic truth, such as totalitarian ones. Rather, it

should support political systems that allow for constant experimentations with multiple truths. To determine the more controversial ones, perspectivism refers to life's universal standard of vital self-affirmation. Although each is equally a part of life as a whole, in life, living is favoured over dying. As will be explored shortly, perspectivism could nonetheless support another norm or none at all. As Hatab proposes, from Nietzsche's perspectivism, one can conclude that: "in politics truth is always in question (as it is not, say, in bridge-building). Consequently we should restrict reflections on democracy to procedural matters, in such a way that any 'baseline' conviction about philosophical questions would be a contestant *in*, rather than a presupposition *of*, political discourse" (1995, p. 85). If democracy is to allow for open political debate amongst all citizens, it must not contain an overarching conception of the good, as having one, notably Nietzsche's maybe, rules out many voices or forms of life. Democracy must respect the inescapable given fact of the irreducible plurality of all its individuals' full or partial religious or metaphysical views of reality. Democracy must focus on the procedures that are needed for the inclusion of all citizens' participation in political discourse and for managing their dissensions without stifling them. "Equality can be redescribed as an open, fair opportunity for all citizens to participate in political contention" (Hatab, 1995, p. 107). Thus, the only conception of equality that ought to be allowed by Nietzsche's perspectivism is the equality of individuals possessing certain capacities, i.e., language, thought, interests, etc., rather than any equality in these capacities: "A common capacity for language use, for example, still includes wide disparities of ability and effectiveness" (Hatab, 1995, p. 106). The claim is that we have equality of having capacities, not that there is equality in their distribution or use. Thus, this concept of equality is not substantive in a way that excludes any citizens; at most, it allows for their ranking.

Stemming from its acceptance of the multiple baseline convictions of its citizenry, as Hatab proposes, the solely procedural focus of all the political discourses and actions that arise in a Nietzschean "agonarchy," or democratic rule via *agon*, "mirror somewhat the traditional liberal notion that baseline convictions, especially in religion, should be left to individual deliberation and conscience. For liberals, what Rorty calls a 'final vocabulary' and Rawls calls a 'comprehensive doctrine' cannot be a criterion or telos of political life" (1995, p. 85). Thus, in a Nietzschean agonarchy, conflict and finitude are givens, and as such they shift the political focus to complete inclusive participation and agonistic dynamic procedures (1995, p. 81). It follows that the only possible common good in an agonarchy is the democratic procedures, attitudes and arrangements that promote and protect it (Hatab, 1995, p. 77). Democratic procedures are to be valued over the citizens' individual beliefs (Hatab, 1995, p. 68), for the reason that those procedures precisely allow for the plurality of individual beliefs.

I agree with Hatab that although Nietzsche did not advance this position, the procedural focus of a perspectival polity allows for it to cohere with and even enhance current democratic principles, notably the exclusion from politics of overarching conceptions of the good or of "comprehensive doctrines" as John Rawls coined "reasonable pluralism" (p. 3), in his *Justice as Fairness, A Restatement* (2001), a briefer and revised version of his famous *A Theory of Justice* (1971).⁷³ Reasonable pluralism recognizes as well as respects the fact that citizens hold various conflicting comprehensive doctrines. Accordingly, a political conception of justice can be the only subject of political debates and agreements. The political field is limited to discussions about

⁷³ In *Justice as Fairness, A Restatement* (2001), Rawls succinctly reiterates his theory of 'justice as fairness' from *A Theory of Justice* (1971) with minor modifications, such as its political specificity.

and agreements upon society's fundamental institutions and arrangements, or its "basic structure" (Rawls, 2001, p. 10). Since a society's conception of political justice is the framework that allows citizens to hold various social associations and comprehensive doctrines, in Rawls's "well-ordered-society," reasonable and rational citizens can hold divergent general conceptions of the good, so long as they also maintain the same political one (2001, p. 9). Likewise, perspectival political truths are open-ended; perspectival objectivity collects but does not harmonize them, which shifts the focus of political debates from the determination of shared ideas of the good to that of the management of political decisions and disagreements.

My differences with Hatab about Nietzsche's perspectivism leading to democracy will also offer an answer to Siemens's final question; since Siemens ends his article by raising the question of which political institutions are needed for this equality of power between individuals with shifting identities to take hold in current democracies. I support Hatab's proposition that a Nietzschean democracy must bypass or even reverse any widespread levelling-down by forgoing any equality of constitution, treatment and outcome, for these overarching substantive types of equality require the total equality of the free moral agent he disparages (1995, p. 108). However, I dispute his assessment that a Nietzschean, agonistic, procedural democracy is representative. In contrast with his position that Nietzsche's avowed preference for aristocracy is merely cultural, since his postmodern penchant or avowed "agonistic contextual finitism" (1995, p. 20) ought to have lead him to espouse an inclusive representative democracy free from all substantive equality, I propose that Nietzsche's perspectivism ought to lead him to espouse such a direct democracy, for two reasons.

First, I dispute a perspectival democracy being representative, since only an elitist direct democracy, in which all political decisions are made by all adult sovereign peers, knowledgeable about and impacted by these coercive decisions, is the appropriate internal political arrangement for an exclusive group of his preferred current type of will to power, the masters, who rule their overall society oligarchically.⁷⁴ Only by their reciprocal direct political participation can the masters both offer others their own and overcome each other's higher resistances.

The highest type of free man should be sought where the highest resistance is constantly overcome: five steps from tyranny, close to the trees hold of the danger of servitude. This is true politically too; ... one must need to be strong - otherwise one will never become strong. [Freedom is] something one has or does *not* have, something one *wants*, something one *conquers* (TI, Skirmishes, §38, pp. 542-543).

Masters need the *agon* that is provided by wrestling with other masters to become and thus be strong and free. They require the strengthening non-eliminative contest or *agon* of exclusive or elitist direct political participation. In any representative democracy, most citizens relinquish their right to direct participation on political issues to others. Thereby their participation in political *agon* is limited to the election cycles and rare referenda. With such limited opportunities for real political participation, this outlet for the masters' dominant political expression of the unqualified will to power is blocked for most citizens. Most do not exercise their strength politically, as they do not decide for themselves politically. It follows that they must either find an appropriate para-political channel for their dominant political expression of the unqualified will to power or it may redirect itself inwardly upon them. Thus, I propose against Hatab that perspectivist democracy is

⁷⁴ I also set myself apart from Christine Daigle (2006) who maintains that to discuss Nietzsche's virtue ethics and how they lead to virtue politics, or an all-inclusive democracy with equal opportunities for all citizens but not necessarily with equal outcomes for all, one must discard Nietzsche's aristocratic theories. I instead propose a reconciliation of Nietzsche's aristocratic claims with his perspectivism's democratic implicates. I claim that given his perspectivism, Nietzsche's aristocrats interact with one another through direct democracy.

and must be direct because representative democracy stifles the dominant political expressions of the unqualified will to power in most rather than strengthens one's resolve and ability to be free to participate directly in political discourse.

Second, I contest Hatab's claim that perspectival democracy is representative, given that representative democracy enhances mostly the "recognitional" types of respect; direct democracy, because of its demand for all its members' thorough participation, is the best political outlet for also enacting the "appraisive respects," which are central to applied political perspectivism having as much *agon* as possible. In his 2002 article, "Equality, Democracy, And Self-Respect: Reflections On Nietzsche's Agonal Perfectionism," Owen develops his conceptions of 'recognitional respect,' 'recognitional self-respect,' 'appraisive respect' and 'appraisive self-respect.' Recognitional self-respect means that one affirms oneself as a sovereign individual and takes that affirmation with all that it entails into account when deliberating on the correct course of action to take at any time. It implies recognitional respect, whereby one affirms every other person as a sovereign individual as well and deliberates on that basis. "To fail to recognise others as beings who can stand to themselves as sovereign individuals is to undermine the grounds of my own recognition self-respect, i.e., that I am, qua human being, a being who can stand to myself as a sovereign individual" (Owen, 2002, p. 116). The masterly individual sees itself reflected in its peers and respects them as itself for being masterly. Or with the elitist colouring removed, this entails seeing and thinking about oneself and others as equally able to be autonomous.

Appraisive self-respect and appraisive respect occur when one and when others act upon their recognized ability to be a sovereign individual. Thus, whereas: "In Nietzschean terms, struggles *over* the terms of democratic citizenship are struggles over what recognition-respect is

due to citizens as persons who can stand to themselves as sovereign individuals" (Owen, 2002, p. 128). I claim that the struggle over the two appraisive respects plays out in the extent of active democratic participation. In direct democracy, appraisive respects, which promote equality and individuality, are required and thus maximized. As Owen proposes, Nietzsche is contesting that most modern fully inclusive democracies' sole concern is for the recognitional respects, which tend to level everyone down equally into conformity and mediocrity.

Twofold kind of equality. — The thirst for equality can express itself either as a desire to draw everyone down to oneself (through diminishing them, spying on them, tripping them up) or to raise oneself and everyone else up (through recognizing their virtues, helping them, rejoicing in their success) (HATH, VI, §300, p. 136).

Thus, as Owen concludes, Nietzsche's critique of democracy, however harsh, is not necessarily a sign of an anti-democratic posture. I propose that equally raising everyone up occurs through the appraisive respects, which rather than merely recognizing one's ability for autonomy, demand that it be put to use. Nietzsche argues against democracy, but Owen adds that since Nietzsche's conception of *agon* is political, a better democracy is possible. I agree and propose that it is not a representative democracy as Hatab claims, which only requires recognitional respects, but rather that it is a direct one, which also practices appraisive respects.

In addition, and in a manner similar to Owen, Hatab proposes that the "democratic ethos" required to sustain the procedural representative democracy devoid of any concept of substantive equality that is most compatible with "agonistic pluralism" (1995, p. 160) or "vitalistic agonistic perspectivism" (1995, p. 153), whereby no one perspective can claim objective or absolute truth, relies on both "*dialogical respect*" and "*antagonistic respect*." The first is one's allowance for others' beliefs to influence one's own and the second is one's revoking of that allowance while still accepting others' continued ability to orally contend for political support (Hatab, 1995, p.

220). Yet, against Hatab's claim that representative democracies are the best expressions and defenders of these two types of respect, I argue that the non-representatives mostly relinquish the use of both by seldom participating directly in politics. They neither cultivate their beliefs, nor defend them, nor challenge them regularly, which may lead to the weakening, if not atrophying, of both their beliefs and these abilities. Conversely, direct democracies demand and develop both. Still, respectful agonistic discursiveness sustains a vitalistic, perspectival, procedural democracy.

In contrast, Herman W. Siemens argues, in "Reassessing Radical Democratic Theory in the Light of Nietzsche's Ontology of Conflict" (2013), against Owen's and Hatab's assertions that respect is the guard against the loss of equality and *agon* amongst peers. "Nietzsche's ontology of conflict/power and his concept of the agon" (p. 83), Siemens argues, imply rather that hatred and its offspring, not respect, are the motivations for and limits of *agon*. *Agon* is the contest of equal individuals. It is not an individual's stance as it is for the defenders of "agonistic respect," claims Siemens, because Nietzsche's ontology of the will to power is relational and thus not limited to the subject's perspective and because it is the instrumental value of enmity, regardless of its content, that the individual seeks (2013, p. 90). *Agon* is opposed to the will to power by its exclusion both from the "plane of the subjective self-awareness" and, being non-eliminative, from "injury and exploitation" (Siemens, 2013, p. 88). *Agon* is excluded from self-awareness, as the equality of peers may be assessed by the subject alone but not their equilibrium; since each party wants to dominate, not achieve equality. The result of their mutual equal efforts to dominate results in an equilibrium of hate. Such "*agonal hatred*" may only emerge among approximately equal powers, as it is an affirmation of one's object of resistance's similar power, yet thereby, also of one's own power through one's trying to overcome its resistance (Siemens, 2013, p. 92). For

this reason, it is non-eliminative; it avoids the brutality that would repulse, thus eliminating, most of its objects of resistance.

This "phenomenology of enmity" meshes with democratic equality, as the ontology of struggle/power allows for units to exist without any directing line.⁷⁵ Instead, individuals are units formed by their internal struggles and tempered by a corresponding external peer-based or social struggle: "the measure of (inner) antagonism needed for a living whole can only be maintained if that whole seeks (outer) antagonists against which to define and limit itself" (Siemens, 2013, p. 98). Hence, according to Siemens, Nietzsche's commitment to life-enhancement supports a theory of equality as a politics of enmity among equals, one which allows for personal multiplicity and social individuality, and conflict instead of equal rights in order to eliminate political conflict. This equality is of current interest, highlights this interpreter, given the collective identities of individuals in our agonistic pluralistic democracies.⁷⁶

I object to Siemens that hatred, jealousy or envy is the main but only initial motor of the equal treatment amongst noble masterly wills to power. Each wants to dominate, and the inability to do so stimulates in each a great expression of the unqualified will to power, notably as hate or envy. Masterly individuals, writes Nietzsche in 1887, are "men who are held so sternly in check *inter pares* by custom respect, usage, gratitude, and even more by mutual suspicion and jealousy"

⁷⁵ Siemens calls this one of Nietzsche's constructive alternatives, that of upholding organization over harmony (his others are power as diverse overcomings and an ontology of becoming over one of being).

⁷⁶ In "Nietzsche's Critique of Democracy (1870–1886)" (2009), Siemens claims that Nietzsche shifts his position on democracy, from upholding it as pluralistic to disparaging it as tyrannical. I do not entirely share this interpretation. Rather, I propose that Nietzsche's view of democracy is more complex, as his position on it depends on its form: he continually disparages fully inclusive democracy as tyrannical and decadent, while his hopes for an elitist direct democracy diminish and his outlook on its realization shifts to being more pessimistic.

(GM, I, §11, p. 476). However, expressing their mutual hatred is disadvantageous due to their similarities in power. Courteous restraint and respect or friendship is thus the outcome of habitually avoiding those disadvantages. The masters revere each other when they are facing one another as enemies and “such reverence is a bridge to love” (GM, I, §10, p. 475). So, although hatred is the beginning of the bond between masters, it turns into and ends in love, respect and friendship.

2) Perspectivism is dynamic because it claims that becoming has precedence over being. “The affirmation of ... *becoming*, along with a radical repudiation of the very concept *being* - all this is clearly more closely related to me than anything else thought to date” (EH, BT, §3, p. 729). Nietzsche understands becoming as being merely pragmatically falsified or solidified into being for our benefit.

Over immense periods of time the intellect produced nothing but errors. A few of these proved to be useful and helped preserve the species: those who hit upon or inherited these had better luck in their struggles for themselves and their progeny. Such erroneous articles of faith, which were continually inherited, until they became almost part of the basic endowment of the species, include the following: that there are enduring things; that there are equal things; that there are things, substances, bodies; that a thing is what it appears to be; that our will is free; that what is good for me is also good in itself (GS, III, §110, p. 167).

Thus, most of what is actually perceived as a becoming is best dealt with by human beings as a being. In 1888, he writes that: “What we *make* of their testimony, that alone introduces lies; for example, the lie of unity, the lie of thinghood, of substance, of permanence. ... Insofar as the senses show becoming, passing away, and change, they do not lie” (TI, Reason, §2, pp. 480-481). The constant simplification of perceived becoming into being is an error created by our species for survival and thriving. “Everywhere ‘being’ is projected by thought, pushed underneath, as the cause; the concept of being follows, and is a derivative of, the concept of ego” (TI, Reason, §5, p.

483). This coheres with Nietzsche's pragmatic coherence truth-theory, which is also his denial of non-pragmatic correspondence. Perspectivism embraces the fluidity and variety both of the individual and collective perspectives and of the objectivity these perspectives create once gathered. In 1886, he writes: "Somebody might come along who, with opposite intentions and modes of interpretation, could read out of the same 'nature,' and with regard to the same phenomena" an altogether different story or interpretation (BGE, I, §22, p. 220). Perspectivism does not yield any final truths, but rather it leads to truths that are to be continuously modified as circumstances and interpretations change.

Thus, a political system applying Nietzsche's perspectivism ought to be fluid or flexible in terms of its actual arrangement, from its leaders to its rules, rights and responsibilities, entailing less of a substantive and more of a procedural approach to and focus on a society's politics. That is, perspectivism encourages focus on the procedures that manage the good of a society rather than on the determination of the good. The inflexible elements of the system must be restricted as much as possible. However, since to be a political system, there must be some elements that are harder to modify at a society's whim, it ought to be a society's constitution or guiding principles and aims about living together, which can be as absent, neutral or perfectionist as that society sees fit as will be shown shortly. Once these are set, there ought to be flexibility about the various specific ways of attaining them. Hence, this is less of a substantive and more procedural approach to and focus on a society's politics.

3) Perspectivism applies to itself without being self-defeating. An absolutist theory of knowledge disproves itself when the examination of the absolute value or correctness of truth is undertaken. In fact, Nietzsche's theory of knowledge's logical coherence and validity are underli-

ned rather than undermined by its self-referentiality. He proposes in 1887: "if both truth and untruth constantly proved to be useful, which is the case" (GS, V, §344, p. 281), then there is much danger and uselessness in our unconditional faith in truth. Truth is no longer a neutral absolute. "Truth is not something which one person might have and another not have" (A, §52, p. 636). Truth is merely the socially accepted interpretation of a given reality. "[Truths are] a mobile army of metaphors, metonymies, anthropomorphisms, in short, a sum of human relations which have been poetically and rhetorically intensified, transferred, decorated and which, after lengthy use, seem firm, canonical and binding to a people" (OTL, I, p. 257). Truth is a perspective chosen among many others; in time, it can change, if a society changes its norms of what is acceptable. 'Objectivity' is redefined as the gathering of multiple divergent perspectives. To be objective is no longer to see a reality from a neutral perspective or non-subjective stance, as such positions are perpetually unavailable to human beings. To be objective is to see a reality in as many differing manners as possible.

Truth defined perspectively is itself no more than a perspective, and therefore, it does not eliminate the various other perspectives that challenge it. It merely gathers more support than them, and thereby it becomes a sceptical truth: it is temporarily unquestioned. In 1881, Nietzsche writes: "Truth in itself is no power at all ... Truth must either attract power to its side, or else side with power, for otherwise it will perish again and again" (DD, V, §535, p. 363). One kind of power truth can attract or side with is strength. Another is the support of the majority. Although neither strength nor the support of the majority establish the value or truth of a perspective, in order for one to be recognized and thus function as a truth, it must be supported by or imposed upon the majority. Some truths are not recognized by us as true, so they have no impact on us, and some

are and do, but they ought not (GS,V, §347). Thus, Nietzsche coherently presents his perspectivism as a perspective upon truth and knowledge that he hopes will garner enough support to displace all dogmatic contenders, which by their very nature aim to eliminate their competitors. Perspectivism is merely an interpretation of reality as we experience it, and its coherence and honesty should attract supporters to it rather than deter them. Perspectivism is a future or upcoming truth, because once the validity of absolute truth is questioned and examined, it will be defeated. “After Christian truthfulness has drawn one inference after another, it must end by drawing its *most striking inference*, its inference against itself; this will happen, however, when it poses the question ‘*what is the meaning of all will to truth?*’ ... the will to truth thus gains self-consciousness” (GM, III, §27, p. 597). This is how Nietzsche predicts perspectivism will gather more support than its dogmatic alternatives.

Likewise, a political system that takes its lead from Nietzsche's perspectivism, regardless of his suggestions, ought to embrace the existence of all competing political systems while still offering its society's members a better method for attaining that society's chosen goals. It must be able to present itself as the most attractive solution, thereby gaining more supporters and making its alternatives obsolete. This allows for the determination of a society's aims to be established by the majority. The elimination of any competing political regimes, even absolutist, authoritarian and totalitarian ones, must follow from their lack of supporters, whether lacking in strength or numbers. It must not simply arise beforehand from an ideological or substantive position. Thus, this allows for the unsettling possibility that anti-liberal regimes will not be unattractive to the rulers and will therefore be installed. Nevertheless, the correctness of any perspectival political system is to be socially and not ideologically determined. I hope that the collective aims a society

gives itself will discourage the mass appeal of violent, non-inclusive, oppressive regimes, although no such guarantees are offered by merely following Nietzsche's perspectivism.

4) Perspectival objectivity includes the widest possible diversity of perspectives and seeks their *agon*. As briefly noted in the preceding paragraphs, objectivity understood as neutrality or non-subjectivity is nonsensical, since it is beyond any human being's abilities to take up a non-partial, non-idiosyncratic, all-encompassing point of view. Any efforts to do so are inevitably done from a human, that is, a partial, idiosyncratic, limited perspective. "We behold all things through the human head and cannot cut off this head" (HATH, I, §9, p. 15). Individuals can never wholly shed their idiosyncrasies or free themselves from anthropocentrism and speciesism. Their perspectives, interpretations and even perceptions are inevitably shaped by their physical, mental, emotional, environmental, social, political, economic, historical and geographic characteristics. In addition, one cannot escape creating from and with the "primal forms": "these representations are produced in us and out of us by ourselves with the same necessity as a spider spins its web. ... For such an edifice is an imitation of the temporal, spatial and numerical relations on the foundation of metaphors" (OTL, I, p. 261). One cannot completely change these horizons of one's grasp of reality. At best, one can interpret reality from different ones, whether imagined or encountered. Perspectival objectivity is a position that human beings are capable of achieving without avoiding conflicts or devolving into actualized aporia. It requires that as many perspectives as possible be gathered, not that they harmonize. This gives rise to complex perspectively objective realities mirroring reality's perspectival complexity. Combining multiple partial perspectives allows one to see a reality wholly from multiple angles or aspects and thus "objectively." To see a reality from

as many different perspectives as possible is objective. The more and more diverse perspectives upon a reality that are gathered, the more objectively that reality is seen.

Even the dogmatic perspectives that do not consider truth perspectival, are essential to composing a perspectively objective interpretation of an entity or event. In 1887, Nietzsche writes: "the *more* affects we allow to speak about one thing, the *more* eyes, different eyes, we can use to observe one thing, the more complete our 'concept' of this thing, our 'objectivity,' be" (GM, III, §12, p. 555). Of the ascetic perspectives, he even writes:

because we seek knowledge, let us not be ungrateful to such resolute reversals of accustomed perspectives and valuations with which the spirit has, with apparent mischievousness and futility, raged against itself for so long: to see differently in this way for once, to want to see differently, is no small discipline and preparation for the intellect for its future 'objectivity' — the latter understood not as 'contemplation without interest' (which is a nonsensical absurdity), but as the ability to control one's to control one's Pro and Con and to dispose of them, so that one knows how to employ a variety of perspectives and affective interpretations in the service of knowledge (GM, III, §12, p. 555).

Thus, although the ascetic ideal is an "essentially dangerous form of human existence," Nietzsche insists that: "it is only fair to add that it was on [its] soil ... that man first became *an interesting animal*, the only here did the human soul in a higher sense acquire *depth* and become *evil* — and these are the two basic respects in which man has hitherto been superior to other beasts" (GM, I, §6, p. 469)! Asceticism prepares humanity for perspectivism and its own overcoming. Just as life requires degeneration and destruction, perspectival objectivity requires ascetic stances, but just as life favours creation and vitality, so does perspectivism.

Similarly, "*the great health*" includes much illness, for it is the craving and satisfying of the experiences of "how a discoverer and conqueror of the ideal feels, and also an artist, a saint, a legislator, a sage, a scholar, a pious man, a soothsayer, and one who stands divinely apart in the

old style" (GS, V, §382, p. 346), experiences which include undesirable forms. Nevertheless, in his *Thus Spoke Zarathustra, A Book for All and None*, most of these different individuals are able to begin their journey of self-overcoming into a higher type. Thus, although not every perspective should be adopted, each should be explored to discover its origins, uses and values and included in a complete or objective view of any reality. In 1882, Nietzsche describes "the passion of the search for knowledge" as the individual's wanting to possess "so many additional pairs of eyes and hands" (GS, III, §249, p. 215). For instance, assessing morality first requires discovering its genealogy or the unpacking of its origins and all its forms, including ascetic ones. In 1887, he writes that his lifework originates in his "*fundamental will* to knowledge, pointing imperiously into the depths, speaking more and more precisely, demanding greater and greater precision . . . For this alone is fitting for philosophers . . . We have no right to *isolated* acts of any kind: we may not make isolated errors or hit upon isolated truths" (GM, P, §2, p. 452). It follows that his perspectivism is fully inclusive of all perspectives, even those that argue against perspectivism. Perspectivism does not dictate an appropriate perspective overall; for, there are only appropriate perspectives in light of a specific shared standard, like enhancing self-affirming exuberance. In this manner, although Nietzsche's suggested standards and ideals are comprehensive theories, that is, his proposed common standard aims at creating and sustaining a new type of will to power, the *Übermensch*, his correlated perspectivism is not. If (or when as will be discussed) it is separated from the will to power, it could be a neutral political baseline useful in contemporary pluralistic democracies.

To live together, human beings require shared truths. These truths are chosen and adopted, so the question arises of who choose them. Nietzsche's perspectivism offers a descriptive answer:

a society's rulers, and a normative answer: life's standard of self-affirming vitality, which in order to become a shared norm must be embraced by many more individuals, if not by the majority. Still, perspectivism also allows for a perspective to be imposed on the majority rather than chosen by it, which is an unacceptable occurrence in liberal democracies. A harmless, even necessary, illustration of such an imposition is our inherited perceptions of the world. For example, initially, the few rulers determined which languages entire societies used. However, atrocious examples are the impositions of some set of beliefs in authoritarian, autocratic or totalitarian regimes; enough said. Although neither normative answer escapes the dangers of tyranny, either a tyranny of the few or one of the majority, unlike Nietzsche, who favours the tyranny of the few with few or no protections for the majority as will be shown in the next part of this chapter, Mill considers protections for the individual or minority against "the tyranny of the majority" (2001, p. 8), which has at its disposal more than political means to quell dissension. Mill proposes enshrining three absolute and irrevocable freedoms as "the appropriate region of human liberty": "liberty of conscience" including opinions, "thoughts and feelings," liberty of "tastes and pursuits" and liberty of association (2001, pp. 15-16). Rather than an imposition of a norm on the majority by the few, as is the case with Nietzsche's proposed aristocracy, I propose that the selection of a society's truths by the majority, with Mill's suggested safeguards against tyranny, better preserves perspectival objectivity while cohering with liberal democratic principles.

It follows that a political system consistently applying perspectivism should include the widest diversity of political ideas and interpretations available (regardless of Nietzsche's political conclusions). Given that objectivity is a gathering of multiple perspectives, the corresponding political system ought to be both discursive and participatory: discursive, by encouraging and al-

lowing ongoing discussions about itself and participatory, by fostering the ongoing participation of all its members. By discussing its guiding principles, rules, rights and responsibilities, the political system that follows from Nietzsche's perspectivism allows for the gathering of a multitude of political perspectives. Perspectival objectivity is dynamic, it is not a definite position; it can shift, as the perspectives that compose it can also change. In accordance with this, political discussions ought to be allowed to be ongoing, as its members' political ideas can and might shift. Also, since as many perspectives as possible must be gathered to reach perspectival objectivity, all citizens should be encouraged and allowed to participate in the aforementioned continuous political discussions. And although the participation of every member cannot be forced, it ought to be encouraged both by the fostering of a culture that regards political involvement positively and by some form of economic compensation for the time that political participation requires, for it cannot also be dedicated to remunerated work.

Consistently with the proper political application of Nietzsche's perspectivism, I propose, Mill argues for the inclusion of all opinions in the building of objective truth for four reasons. First, none of us is infallible and thereby neither are our opinions. "All silencing of discussion is an assumption of infallibility" (Mill, 2001, p. 19). Ongoing fully inclusive discussion is central to fully discovering the truth. Secondly, every opinion contributes to establishing the truth. Given that common truths are still mostly partial: "it is only by the collision of adverse opinions that the remainder of the truth has any chance of being supplied" (Mill, 2001, p. 50). Either an opinion offers its partial truth to the others, or its falsity by contrast strengthens the truth. Thirdly and fourthly, to be rationally and effectively held as true, even a true opinion needs to contest with untruth. "Complete liberty of contradicting and disproving our opinion is the very condition

which justifies us in assuming its truth for purposes of action; and on no other terms can a being with human faculties have any rational assurance of being right" (Mill, 2001, p. 21). It is by their confrontation with worst ones that opinions and arguments emerge as better and are then heartily and rationally endorsed.

5) Perspectivism conceptualizes binary differences as radical non-exclusionary gradations. It claims that opposites are merely the extremes of a single scale or gradation. In 1886, Nietzsche writes: "Indeed what forces us at all to suppose that there is an essential opposition of 'true' and false"? Is it not sufficient to assume degrees of apparentness and, as it were, lighter and darker shadows and shades of appearances" (BGE, II, §34, p. 236)? Mutually exclusive opposites, alongside the other absolute posits of traditional metaphysics, exist only insofar as they serve the priestly and the slavish need for firm belief, or "that impetuous *demand for certainty*" (GS, V, §347, p. 288). In doing away with the ascetic need for metaphysical firmness, perspectivism also does away with "*the faith in opposite values*" (BGE, I, §2, p. 200). Opposites are much like very dissimilar shades of a single colour; for instance: "'being conscious' is not in any decisive sense the *opposite* of what is instinctive" (BGE, I, §3, p. 201). Opposites do exist, but not as mutually exclusive.

It is possible for opposites to coexist, even in one unit, for two reasons. The exclusionary aspect of all opposites is evacuated, given that all available perspectives are essential to obtaining objectivity. In 1887, Nietzsche writes: "the *more* affects we allow to speak about one thing, the *more* eyes, different eyes, we can use to observe one thing, the more complete will our 'concept' of this thing, our 'objectivity,' be" (GM, III, §12, p. 555). The more numerous and diverse the gathered perspectives are, the more objective the truth they build is. Second, opposites are not

mutually exclusive, because the unqualified will to power is the only motor and foundation of all events and actions, no matter how seemingly different and antagonistic. Difference is merely a matter of varying expressions, degrees and contexts of the same unqualified will to power. For instance, the qualification of a reality as being either 'good' or 'not' is a matter of one's type of will to power. "The poison of which weaker natures perish strengthens the strong— nor do they call it poison" (GS, I, §19, p. 92). What is good for an individual might be bad or even evil for another, for the species or for life in general and vice-versa. The 'good' and 'bad' of the masters is inverted into 'evil' and 'good' by the priests for the slaves. In 1886, he writes: "According to slave morality, those who are 'evil' thus inspire fear; according to master morality it is precisely those who are 'good' that inspire, and wish to inspire, fear, while the 'bad' are felt to be contemptible" (BGE, IX, §260, p. 397). Nietzsche explores this idea at length in "'Good and Evil,' 'Good and Bad,'" the *First Essay of Genealogy of Morals*. Another example is that every individual will to power, especially in the modern age, is of a mixed nature and type (GM, I, §9). On the one hand, all modern individuals are somewhat slavish, as slavish morality has ruled for millennia. On the other hand, opposites can coexist even in a single unit because each individual is a will to power or a conglomerate of antagonistic expressions of the unqualified will to power, which is ruled by its dominant one: "every single one of [the basic drives of man] would like only too well to represent *itself* as the ultimate purpose of existence and the legitimate *master* of all the other drives. For every drive wants to be master" (BGE, I, §6, pp. 203-204). Thus, since each will to power is made up of different competing variations of the unqualified will to power, the possession of traditionally opposite traits is not an untenable stance, but it is rather the inescapable universal norm.

A final illustration of this universal norm is found in Nietzsche's conceptualization of 'egoism' and 'altruism,' for altruism (*Altruismus*) and egoism (*Egoismus*) are not irreconcilable. In fact, they are no more than differently directed expressions of self-interest, of the unqualified will to power: the former is done indirectly or after thought; the latter, directly or instinctively. For this reason, both serve a common goal, as each provides satisfaction to the acting expression of will to power. "Benefiting and hurting others are ways of exercising one's power upon them; that is all one desires in such cases" (GS, I, §13, p. 86). In both, one seeks to feel the exercise of one's power. "Magnanimity contains the same degree of egoism as does revenge, but egoism of a different quality" (GS, I, §49, p. 114). Altruism does not lack in self-interest; it simply serves that goal less obviously. "We benefit and show benevolence to those who are already dependent on us in some way ...; we want to increase their power because in that way we increase ours, or we want to show them how advantageous it is to be in our power" (GS, I, §13, p. 86). Every altruistic act serves to increase one's will to power and thus one's preferred type of power. 'Altruism' as it is traditionally understood is merely the recipient's or non-actor's perspective upon an egoistic act:

They called it *unselfish (uneigennützig)* — they had directed their sight far too steadily upon their own, subsequently harvested advantages to see anything more in their neighbour's conduct than that his condition had not been altered as much as their own in consequence of this: it had remained more or less the same, and so it seemed that he had not had his eye upon his own advantages (WS, §190, p. 235).

Altruism is highly egotistical but it is not visibly so. Since the advantages of this egotistic act are only publicly visible from and on the side of its recipient, it is called 'selfless.' Yet, altruism is nonetheless egotistical (GS, III, §119). Only once all the masterly expressions of the unqualified will to power are internalized is altruism further misshapen: from the non-actor's perspective upon an egotistic action into the sickly but prized desire to act against one's self-interest. In 1887,

Nietzsche writes: "Only the will to self-maltreatment provided the conditions for the *value* of the unegoistic (*Unegoistisch*)" (GM, II, §18, p. 524). Thus, through the extension of 'bad conscience,' altruism becomes morality (TI, Skirmishes, §35).

Egoism, by being instinctual, even to the point of irrationality, can be better and faster at attaining altruism's professed and observable goal of benefiting others. In 1882, he states: "those who are noble, magnanimous, and self-sacrificial do succumb to their instincts, and when they are at their best, their reason *pauses*" (GS, I, §3, p. 77). This noble egoism encourages altruistic behaviours that are motivated by instincts and feelings. This passionate egoism is what animals display when mating or parenting: the individual's enlarged self-interest, through its interest in its mate or offspring, outweighs its more immediate self-interest. A noble ego acts through noble egoism; that is, one by which altruistic ends are also easily met. In 1880, Nietzsche writes: "after deducting selfishness, from human beings at least, none of the four cardinal values will remain" (WS, §285, p. 273). This entails that there is self-interest in being courageous, honest or just. In 1888, he writes that egoism is only as valuable as is the individual whose displays it: "Self-interest is worth as much as the person who has it: it can be worth a great deal, and it can be unworthy and contemptible" (TI, Skirmishes, §33, p. 533). Accordingly, one who takes pleasure in helping others as a sign of one's strength is more honest, healthy and estimable than one who helps out of duty, envy or pity. In any case, without any egoism, no altruistic ends could be met.

This conceptualization of opposites precludes eliminating either one from life because we deem it unwelcome or untrue, but rather it fosters an aspect's self-elimination by lack of support. In other words, an element of life might disappear because it cannot garner enough support for itself and not because it is deemed 'evil' or 'bad.' Perspectivism allows for the so-called 'evil' and

'bad' aspects of life to be of some positive value, be called 'good': however, they must be seen or understood from another perspective, that of preserving humanity or life. Yet, regarding their enhancement, this openness to the positive value of all the elements in life is no longer applicable.

Any political system that takes its lead from Nietzsche's perspectivism should likewise be non-exclusionary. No individual, group or idea ought to be evacuated, unless it is eliminated by its lack of strong or numerous supporters. Therefore, this does not exclude tyrannical, absolutist, authoritarian or totalitarian perspectives and systems from being adopted and enacted. They must instead be set aside because they have little to no widespread or strong support. Also, this does not exclude political rankings or hierarchies, if they are widely or strongly supported. Thus, this allows for the support and implementation of political systems that are inherently oppose to and built to eliminate perspectivism, but this is a risk that perspectivism's axioms allow. Similarly, democracy could democratically implement or vote for a non-democratic system. Such liberty-embracing systems are willing to risk even self-annihilation, just like life as the will to power is.

Second, Nietzsche's perspectivism 6) leads to and passed relativism while claiming 7) that all statements and all knowledge are equally created, although they are not all created equally. This leads to an openness to potential univocal political norms.

6) Perspectivism entails relativism in two ways, yet it also goes beyond relativism by its unifying standard, the enhancement of self-affirming vitality. It proposes that all perspectives are equally valuable for the preservation of life and humanity; relativism. Given that life includes death, all perspectives invariably preserve life equally. However, life also prefers life over death, and not all perspectives promote life over death and those that do do not all do so equally. Thus, relativism is surpassed by life's own norm of enhancing self-affirming vital living life. Second,

perhaps unsettlingly, Nietzsche claims that evil is of equal value for the preservation humanity; relativism. For this reason, although he vehemently despises all the various forms of Christian asceticism, he also recognizes their immense value for the Christian ascetic priests. The priests gained intellectual and political control of the knightly aristocrats through their distorted inverted interpretations and valuations of the world. The posit of another, better, unattainable world is good for them: with it “they sacrifice the future to *themselves* - they crucify all man’s future” (Z, III, Tablets, §26, p. 325). Ascetic values are as valuable as the next in the preservation the human species. In 1887, Nietzsche claims: "life wrestles in [the ascetic ideal] and through it with death and *against* death; the ascetic ideal is an artifice for the *preservation* of life" (GM, III, §13, p. 556). By giving suffering meaning, asceticism preserves humanity, albeit a stagnant dying one.

Yet, perspectivism goes beyond this baseline relativism that allows for every perspective to be as valuable as the next for the preservation of life and humanity. Perspectives have different values for at least some individual or group and in what he deems to be the sole norm in nature or life: the enhancement of self-affirming vitality. Nature constantly seeks more power, more vitality and more exuberance, even to the extent of squandering or destroying itself. Life is the ongoing search for a greater capacity to feel, exhibit and expand its power, its energy, its vitality. The only norm of evaluation in perspectivism is the one Nietzsche finds ubiquitous in life. It follows that the unhesitating, uncompromising, unabashed affirmation of one’s power to feel, exhibit and expand one’s energy is the sole norm for evaluating all human meanings and values. This allows Nietzsche to vehemently critique the same asceticism that serves the Christian priests so well. For enhancing vigorous self-affirmation, the ascetic posit of another, better, unattainable world is terrible. It devalues the actual present reality in favour of an imagined one; it diminishes its belie-

vers' capacity to affirm their vitality, energy and power. "And whatever harm the evil may do, the harm done by the good is the most harmful harm" (*Ibid.*, p. 324). Christian asceticism merely aims for the survival of its adherents and not also for their thriving or health, growth, prosperity and strength. Thus, Christian asceticism is as valuable as any other position for the preservation of humanity and simultaneously detrimental for everyone from the perspective of enhancing self-affirming vitality. Therefore, on the one hand, the good is relative: all perspectives are equally valuable or good for the preservation of humanity and life insofar as no perspective is excluded from being valuable for them. On the other hand, some perspectives are considered better or more valuable because of their ability to support and enhance the natural universal good: self-affirming vitality.

A political system that properly applies perspectivism, regardless of Nietzsche's positions on the matter, should also be relativistic and not. It should be relativistic in its acknowledgment that all political ideas and values are equally valuable for the preservation of life or humanity. Yet, it should be non-relativistic in its acknowledgement that some ideas and values are better at enhancing vital self-affirmation than others. Each member of a society ought to be free to hold the political ideas and values they wish, as all equally preserve life or humanity, but since only some ideas and values also enhance them, only these ought to be adopted socially. Now, because difficulties can arise (and unfortunately atrocities have arisen) when trying to determine what counts as vital self-affirmation, I propose that perspectivism could allow for another ontology, thus leading it to a different definition of a positive outcome, or a different standard of evaluation, which, as the first point hinted, also leads to a different understanding of a society's beneficial outcomes. Since perspectivism is derivable from any ontology where our meanings and values

are the only ones we can access and where life includes evil, illness, pain and the like, it could, for instance, start from an ontology of beings rather than becoming and still lead to and pass relativism in the search of the appropriate outcomes. Or, it could go beyond its relativism by adopting any universal standard, some of which would not coincide with liberalism. Or, it could reject adopting any and remain relativistic, from which total neutrality about all citizens' political ideas and values ensues. In either case, each citizen is free to uphold any political values and ideas, and their political values and ideas are recognized as equally valuable, given that they are equally valuable to preserving life and humanity. Then, if perspectivism's relativism is not overcome by Nietzsche's (arguably perfectionist⁷⁷) ideal, the questions of who determines the ideal, as one is needed for political decisions, and of what it entails arise.

Since perspectivism goes beyond its relativity with its conception of the universal norm of evaluation, self-affirming vitality, its corresponding political system ought to as well, even if it chooses another path. For instance, instead of self-affirming vitality, a political arrangement that properly follows from perspectivism could choose Mill's suggested norm of the freedom of the individual to act in all ways that do not cause unwanted harm to others. When limiting the acceptance of the relative worth of political ideas and values by another norm, such as Mill's standard of "absolute" personal individual sovereignty, where social individual sovereignty is limited only by others' "self-protection" (2001, p. 13), the outcome should resemble the current liberal acceptance that all speech, under the ideal of freedom of opinion, and all religions, under the freedom of religion, are allowed to be considered publicly valuable, barring exceptions made for language

⁷⁷ Lemm (2007) argues (against Rawls's and Cavell's positions respectively) that Nietzsche is a political perfectionist and a moral perfectionist who embraces democracy. Contrastingly, Egedy (2013) argues that Nietzsche is neither a political nor an ethical perfectionist; for he does not aim at augmenting the happiness of all or most but at intensifying living and revitalizing culture.

and religions that encourage violence. In any case, since the political values and ideas that are held by the members of a society that is guided by perspectivism, if against Nietzsche's wishes, must be evaluated by any shared standard, these ought be established by its constitution. Any perspectival society must determine its fundamental guiding aims or principles for living together, for they allow for the neutral evaluation of each citizen's political values and beliefs. In light of its aims, whether neutrality or the perfection humanity, a political system that properly applies Nietzsche's perspectivism must determine which values and political ideas are coherent with and conducive to attaining its goals for shared living, given that it must see the value and good in all political values and ideas while stably managing their conflicts.

7) Nietzsche's perspectivism claims that all statements and knowledge are equally created, although they are not created equally. Because statements are our metaphors of our experiences of reality, none can be inherently true or false. Since their vehicle, language, is itself a creation of humankind, the only truth or falsity possible is established by linguistic conventions or practical outcomes. There is no essential or certain truth to any statement or knowledge. For example, it is true that the sun rises in the morning, but perspectivism refrains from asserting that this is true from a non-human perspective. 'Truth' and 'falsity' are inestimable conceptual tools for scientific and daily affairs, but we cannot assess them in themselves, which is to say, independently of our perspectives. Traditionally objective correspondence truths are useful and valuable in everyday life and the empirical sciences; whereas in metaphysical, aesthetic, political and ethical matters, perspectival truths, which are pragmatic and coherence-based, are. "Objectivity itself is a perspective that can have its place, as long as it does not presume to replace or displace other perspec-

tives" (Hatab, 1995, p. 158). Being limited by human perspectives, perspectivism does not conceptualize things outside of science and daily life as being objectively or certainly false.

Perspectival objectivity uses the universal standard for evaluation, self-affirming vitality, to distinguish true or better statements and knowledge from false or worse ones. Although every perspective is equally created: all perspectives are equally metaphors, those that do not encourage self-affirming vitality are to be considered false and less or not valuable. It follows, for instance, that the belief in a monotheistic, kind, providential God, the belief in a plurality of unpredictable, interfering, self-interested Gods and the belief in the absence of any God are all equally human interpretations of the divine; all three equally preserve human life, although each, a different kind of life. Neither is inherently more justified than the others; neither position can be verified by us, although they can be ranked by using Nietzsche's normative standard of self-affirming vitality. Monotheism is unjustified and deplorable in its effects on humankind, polytheism and atheism are better more life-affirming alternatives. In 1878, he writes: "Man thinks of himself as noble when he bestows upon himself such Gods [the Homeric gods] ... Christianity, on the other hand, crushed and shattered man completely and buried him as though in mud" (HATH, III, §114, p. 66); followed by, ten years later: "That we find no God - either in history or in nature or behind nature - is not what differentiates *us*, but that we experience what has been revered as God, not as 'godlike' but as miserable, as absurd, as harmful, not merely as an error but as a *crime against life*" (A, §47, p. 627); and: "The evil god is needed no less than the good god: for after all, we do not owe our existence to tolerance and humanitarianism" (A, §16, p. 583). Nietzsche claims that just as no language holds an essential claim to truth, no belief is in itself true or false.

Yet, he further proposes that some languages better reflect and entice self-affirmation and vitality, as do some beliefs, and these should be held as true. For example, both the Ancient Greeks and Christians used the word 'good,' but only for the former is it a celebration of instinctual, assertive, outwardly directed energy. Nietzsche characterizes this overarching difference in moralities as that between the masterly and the slavish conceptions of the 'good.'⁷⁸ In the former, the 'good' is an instinctive self-celebration and a manner of elevating oneself above a despicable or bad counterpart; while in the latter, it is "an afterthought and pendant" (GM, I, §10, p. 475) to the initial concept of the evil masters; it is praise of that which is rationally deemed useful to one's survival and to increasing one's feeling of power without incurring any suffering. Further, and in accordance with the different 'good' of their moralities, the two types of self-consciousness vary. Nietzsche hence also deplores the Christian 'good' because it is associated with meekness, self-harm and guilt.

Accordingly, I propose that a political system that follows from perspectivism, if against Nietzsche's own claims, must accept that no political claim is in itself true or false. Each type of political arrangement needs to be considered and evaluated based on its ability to bring forth a given society's chosen aims most effectively and efficiently. Nietzsche's perspectivism allows for any aim, including the one he proposes, to be chosen by a society, which has the consequence of permitting the possibility of authoritarian or totalitarian regimes to exist. However, the chosen aims of a society could equally allow for the dismissal of such liberty-restricting political arrangements. There is no guarantee of this exclusion, as the aims of a society could simply be, for

⁷⁸ Nietzsche elaborates on these two types of will to power, their respective moralities and their differences at length in *On the Genealogy of Morals, A Polemic*, which in the sense that it builds precisely upon this distinction, is truly an appendix or a 'supplement to and clarification' of *Beyond Good and Evil, Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*.

example, peace and order with no mention of freedom, fraternity, equality or equity, or, more dangerously, the breeding of a master race. As Jennifer Ratner-Rosenhagen reports: "According to Archer, the *Übermensch* was both a political and a cultural symbol as well as a representation of the German 'eugenic ideal'" (2012, p. 137).⁷⁹ In any case, a political system that embraces perspectivism must accept that there is an ongoing possible validity to every regime, including newly invented ones, at best attaining its chosen aims. Thus, properly applying Nietzsche's perspectivism leads to a permanent flexibility with regard to the correctness and efficiency of the political system in place.

Third, 8) Nietzsche presents his perspectivism as being relational. There is an ongoing relationship of perceiving or having perspectives and being perceived or generating perspectives in others, of overcoming and resisting, all of which perspectivism tracks. "Reality is not to be understood as an organisation of discrete unities, but is seen in its relational structure and dynamical development, in which every apparent unit is merely an intellectual simplification" (Carli, 2016, p. 97). A perspective that exists alone is not possible. As Ciano Aydin writes in "Nietzsche on Reality as Will to Power: toward an Organisation-Struggle Model" (2007): "In other words, there are no first things, which then have relations with each other; rather, things are what they are by virtue of their relations" (p. 26). There can be no solitary perspective. A perspective is always first provoked by something that first appears as a nerve stimulus (OTL, I, p. 256), and which could have its own perspectives. If, in order to grasp reality, every perspective must overcome or impose itself upon it, then there must exist something else that can resist the perspective's attempt or not. In addition, the initially partial and idiosyncratic nature of every metaphor, the social na-

⁷⁹ Ratner-Rosenhagen (2012) explores the early receptions of Nietzsche and their subsequent transformations in the academic and popular cultures of the United States of America.

ture of all concepts and interpretations and the existence of non-human perspectives combine so that no assessment of reality is ever alone.

First, every metaphor is "intuitive ... individual and without equal" (OTL, I, p. 258). Each different qualifiable will to power can produce, or at least embrace, a multitude of different perspectives and interpretations by changing its own characteristics or by imagining what perspectives would emerge if it had different ones. "The congealment and solidification of a metaphor by no means guarantees the necessity and exclusive justification of that metaphor" (OTL, I, p. 259). That is, another metaphor could have been or be created or chosen. In fact, others should be explored, since in 1887, Nietzsche advocates knowing "how to employ a *variety* of perspectives and affective interpretations in the service of knowledge" (GM, III, §12, p. 555). Next, the metaphors that come to be considered truths are chosen by each society's rulers.

The lordly right of giving names extends so far that one should allow oneself to conceive the origins of language itself as an expression of power on the part of the rulers: they say 'this *is* this and this,' they seal every thing and event with a sound and, as it were, take possession of it (GM, I, §2, p. 462).

Since there are many rulers, there are many assessments by which to take possession of reality.

Lastly, being a twofold metaphysical sceptic, Nietzsche pragmatically accepts the existence of the external world as independent of human beings, which leads to his acknowledgment of the possibility of various non-human perspectives on reality. The coexistence of conflicting or differing perspectives on every reality is in these three manners built into perspectivism.

In the first chapter, I denied the presence of any "strong perspectivism" or "truths for all" in Nietzsche, respectively against Hales and Welsch or Schrift. The former propose that in "strong perspectivism," some statements have the same truth-value in all perspectives, whereas in "weak perspectivism," which applies to almost every perspective or claim, most perspectives are

true for some "bundles of power" while false for at least one other bundle of power. The latter proposes that some truths are shared by all; that some statements are true from every possible perspective; that some errors are necessary for the entire species. I propose that there is no unique perspective or single truth-value for every perspective, not even on such foundational elements as logic, beings, numbers, space and time. With Cratylus experiencing becoming rather than being as his main illustration, Nietzsche does not deny the possibility that one could honestly perceive and experience these key elements or other errors that are necessary for the species differently (GS, III, §112).

I suggest that a political system that aims to apply Nietzsche's perspectivism well, if against his own proposals, ought to dismiss all single-leader political arrangements. For, they do not fully allow for the relational nature inherent to his perspectivism to be expressed or explored. A solitary ruler could imagine a variety of positions different from his or her own, but still the possibilities envisaged would be severely reduced. The presence of at least one other leader better ensures the relational element inherent to Nietzsche's perspectivism. Notwithstanding logistical matters, the more rulers in place, the larger the available variety of possible perspectives. Thus, a

form either of oligarchy or of democracy⁸⁰ is best suited to a perspectivist society. Although, the appropriate application of Nietzsche's perspectivism could also support Mill's proposal that to avoid mediocrity, the most talented and intelligent "One or Few" ought to serve as council to "the sovereign Many"⁸¹.

In sum, then, given its main characteristics, Nietzsche's perspectivism, whether or not he would in fact agree, leads to a flexible multi-leader political system that is mostly focused on its internal coherency and procedures and which is non-exclusive, participatory and discursive. This liberty-embracing democratic outcome seems diametrically opposed to the aristocratic politics for which Nietzsche is known and seems to advocate. Accordingly, in the following section, I shall examine his political claims.

⁸⁰ In theory, democracy is distinguished from monarchy and oligarchy by the number of rulers in each political system. Unlike the latter two, in which political decisions are restricted respectively to one or to some, democracy means that the political rule of a society is shared by all its citizens (*demos* in Ancient Greek refers to the common people, the populace, the mass). In practice, democracy is either direct or representative. Direct democracy refers to the political organizations in which all political decisions are made by all adult citizens. Representative democracies, to those configurations in which these decisions are made by the representatives whom these same citizens elect. Historically, few, if any, direct democracies have existed outside the inner dealings of the elected officials in representative democracies or of the rulers in oligarchies, for example, those of the few citizens in the Assembly in the Ancient Athens of 5-4 B.C. This sparsity can be at least partially credited to this system's cumbersome application. The logistics required to make any decisions make direct democracy unfeasible, especially given the large size of modern societies. Hatab acknowledges "that modern technology can overcome the spatial and temporal limits that have made direct democracy unworkable in a large-scale society" (1995, p. 127). I agree and add that there must also be some work done to overcome the economic restrictions that are caused by the time required for participation in a direct democracy, as that time cannot also be dedicated to the individuals' regular remunerated labour.

⁸¹ "No government by a democracy or a numerous aristocracy, either in its political acts or in the opinions, qualities, and tone of mind which it fosters, ever did or could rise above mediocrity, except in so far as the sovereign Many have let themselves be guided (which in their best times they always have done) by the counsels and influence of a more highly gifted and instructed One or Few" (Mill, 2001, p. 62).

3.2 Perspectivism's Textual Implications

To begin this section, I shall explore Nietzsche's political position⁸² and the possibility of its presence, regardless of its desirability, in contemporary societies.⁸³ Subsequently, I shall re-view each of his perspectivism's characteristics and their textual implications to see whether or

⁸² Bonnie Honig (1993) proposes, against Villa (1992), that Nietzsche's agonism is neither excessive nor anti-political, whereas Valadier (1998) understands Nietzsche as only having treated political philosophy peripherally. Conversely, Frank Cameron and Don Dombowsky (2008) gather, organize and historically situate Nietzsche's political writings to show that he is consistently a political philosopher albeit with an inconsistent position as an agonistic aristocratic who begins with an agnostic position as a reaction to the Paris Commune and moves to admiration for the hierarchy in the Greek *polis*. Strong's "Genealogy, the Will to Power, and the Problem of a Past" (2006) argues that Nietzsche wrote *On the Genealogy of Morals, A Polemic* to help with humanity's political problems by offering an in-detail analysis of its transformations via the strong and the weak (and their moralities), which are not opposing, but different and complementary types of will to power. For only such knowledge can lead to structural change.

⁸³ An appropriation of the political implications of Nietzsche's perspectivism is largely considered undesirable, if not moreover dangerous. I propose that it can instead be defensible. Defending Nietzsche's political suggestions is generally thought to be undesirable, as it is understood as upholding undemocratic forms of oligarchy against more democratic ones. In addition, it is infamously dangerous, as unfortunately Nietzsche's theories and ideals have and continue to garner disturbing and harmful interpretations, which are incompatible with contemporary liberal democratic principles. For instance, Steven E. Aschheim (1992) argues that after 1890, the uses of Nietzsche's categories by the various German socialisms of the left and of the right are equally casuistic, although their selectivity differs. Due to their unclassifiable quality or vagueness, Nietzsche's categories appeal to radicals. The radical right embraces Nietzsche's concepts of heroic struggle and power, whereas the left employs his individualism and aristocracy with their respective brand of Marxism, although without always considering or admitting that Nietzsche's influence is central. Nevertheless, I maintain that another more defensible interpretation of the political implications of Nietzsche's perspectivism is feasible. I propose that due to its main characteristics, it could be interpreted as a favourable possible means to enhancing current liberal democracies. John Pittman (2006) argues that resentment can help make sense of the cruelty of lynching. By contrast, Higgins (2006) claims that only Nietzsche's psychological offerings, not also his political ones, are useful to African American societal concerns. Between these positions, Ishay Landa (2007) proposes a treatment of the conscious and unconscious cases of the *Übermensch's* characteristics as they are found in mainstream Western culture.

not the correct implications correspond. Here, the eight traits shall be independently assessed to see if and how each one corresponds to its 'proper' counterpart.

Nietzsche's concern for politics is unavoidable given his understanding of all human beings as somewhat naturally gregarious since "primeval times" (GM, II, §19, p. 524). In 1887, he claims that during the prehistory of humanity, or under "the morality of mores," individuals became accustomed to their sociability and to the small initial self-consciousness and conscience that are required for sustaining families. Family units are helpful for survival and reproduction, and societies are extensions and formalizations of these naturally established social hierarchies, "of communities on the basis of blood relationship" (GM, II, §20, p. 526). Humanity was initially and is still subdivided into two overarching types, which presently exist as blends and which he calls 'master' and 'slave.' Masters act spontaneously and without forethought in service to their own, their society's, humanity's and life's luxuriant celebration and expansion, which only in certain cases, implies their own conservation. For, they are active, healthy, intuitive and strong. Slavish wills to power, by contrast, are reactive, rational, sick and weak. Therefore, by consciously seeking their aims from outside of themselves, they serve mainly as a means to dwindling life's conservation and preservation. Under the original communities that are bound by familial ties, the masterly wills to power hesitantly gathered amongst themselves to further their self-interests, while the slavish wills to power congregated together with joy and ease (GM, III, §18). The individual's first limited self-consciousness and consciousness subsequently developed into larger ones, as was needed to follow more customs, which came with more sizeable communities and societies (GM, II, §2).

In 1882, Nietzsche proposes that self-consciousness and consciousness are not the essence of human beings or the "unity of the organism" (GS, I, §11, p. 85). Five years later, he adds that his "idea is, as you see, that consciousness does not really belong to man's individual existence but rather to his social or herd nature; that, as follows from this, it has developed subtlety only insofar as this is required by social or herd utility" (GS, V, §345, p. 299). Self-consciousness is a social means: "It was only as a social animal that man acquired self-consciousness" (GS, V, §354, p. 299). Based on the type of morality governing a society, its individual members must develop the corresponding self-consciousness. Both self-consciousness and consciousness originate in the need for social interactions, which all take the form of a promise or "personal obligation." Thus, as Ridley writes: "conscience, then, is related to the capacity to make promises" (1998, p. 18). The ability to make a promise comes with the mastery of a language, which regularizes human beings. For, one speaks a language by promising to use its terms correctly, which is determined by the linguistic community. That is, one promises to speak truthfully. In 1873, Nietzsche argues that the birth of language is precisely the differentiation of truth from lies (OTL, I, p. 255). To share truths or to speak truthfully is one of the obligations that each citizen must undertake to join and remain a part of their societies. Nevertheless, making a promise does not entail that one is invariably able or willing to keep it. One can always choose to dissent and, possibly, face the sanctions. Possibly, as in some cases the lie is permitted, such as in poetry and fiction, whereas in others, there are better outcomes to be had, if one or all parties cancel their agreement.

All promise-making, being an agreement, requires that each party be sufficiently conscious of itself and others and correspondingly responsible for itself. "Man himself must first of all have become calculable, regular, necessary, even in his own image of himself, if he is to be

able to stand security for his own future, which is what one who promises does" (GM, II, §1, p. 494)! That is to say that to make a promise, one projects oneself into the future and considers it possible to achieve said projection. In a promise, each party must see itself and the other parties as each being a subject: a "legal subject" with responsibilities and rights (GM, II, §4, p. 499). In 1887, Nietzsche argues that the dynamic between creditor and debtor is the most fundamental social relationship: "the oldest and most primitive personal relationship, that between buyer and seller, creditor and debtor: it was here that one person first encountered another person, that one person first measured himself against another" (GM, II, §8, p. 506). This echoes and clarifies his proposition from almost ten years earlier, in 1878: "Without a compact no rights" (HATH, VIII, §446, p. 164). Rights and responsibilities, which are born of contracts or promises, only arise when mutual some benefit is reached. "*Rights* originally extend *just as far* as one *appears* valuable, essential, unlosable (sic), unconquerable and the like, to the other. In this respect the weaker too possesses rights, but more limited ones" (HATH, II, §93, p. 50). All have rights, but equal rights require equal parties. Thus, appearing to be less valuable, slavish individuals cannot truly enter into contracts or promises with masterly ones. They can only do so with their peers.

Among peers, exchange is natural and just. In 1878, Nietzsche claims that: "where there is no clearly recognizable superiority of force and a contest would result to mutual injury producing no decisive outcome the idea arises of coming to an understanding and negotiating over one another's demands: the characteristic of *exchange* is the original characteristic of justice" (HATH, II, §92, p. 49). In an exclusive group of masters, each one seeks to be the solitary ruler of the others, to be a tyrant. However, given their similarity in strength, they are unable to dominate one another. Being similarly matched, the masters come to the conclusion that they will incur less draw-

backs and even gain benefits, if they mutual agree to redirect their dominant expressions of the unqualified will to power. The masters thus enter into an agreement with one another that is just: where each one has to give in order to get. The need for spontaneous self-directed political arrangements, therefore, only arises in cases of similarly matched individuals. Where there are unequally matched individuals, the stronger one dominates the other: "He who can command, he who is by nature 'master,' he who is violent in act and bearing — what has he to do with contracts" (GM, II §17, p. 522)! Masters need contracts amongst themselves because they are unable to command another master. Only a similar masterly will to power offers any restriction and resistance to another master's unburdened expressions of its dominant form of the unqualified will to power. Since masterly wills to power can only lord over each other, if they do so jointly, it follows that: "they are doubly obliging toward their *peers* whom it would be honourable to fight if the occasion should ever arise. Spurred by the good feeling of *this* perspective, the members of the knightly caste became accustomed to treating each other with exquisite courtesy" (GS, I, §13, p. 87). The duties, rights, responsibilities, hate and respect of the masters are reserved for its peers, as a masterly will to power feels distance, contempt and benevolence, but not obligation, towards a slavish one. The masterly will to power, "can endure no other enemy than the one in whom there is nothing to despise and *very much* to honor" (GM, I, §11, p. 475)! A master's friends and enemies must both be its peers in order to serve its self-glorification.

In 1887, Nietzsche proposes that the masters are more resistant to social arrangements than the slaves, although not entirely so: "For one should not overlook this fact: the strong are as naturally inclined to *separate* as the weak are to *congregate*" (GM, III, §18, p. 572). Although reluctant to admit another as its equal, a masterly will to power recognizes a mirror of its strength

in other similarly matched individuals, and thus both its pleasure and self-interest are best served by agreeing to a mutual compact that establishes each one's rights. "It is merely another aspect of its egoism, this refinement and self-limitation in its relations with its equals — every star is such an egoist — it honors *itself* in them and in the rights it cedes to them" (BGE, IX, §265, p. 405). This passage from 1886 claims that the masterly wills to power only extend rights to one another out of egoism. They extend to their peers that which they wish to receive from them. Nietzsche also writes that: "placing one's will on a par with that of someone else — this may become, in a certain rough sense, good manners among individuals ... if these men are actually similar in strength and value standards and belong together in one body" (BGE, IX, §259, p. 393). Yet, an arrangement where one's will is on a par with another's will in a single body is a democrat one. This means that each member gets and gives an equal say in their collective decision making.

As Strong states, politics is fuelled and maintained by a healthy contest between individuals about public affairs: "The combination of slave morality and politics inevitably leads to a democratization of relations between classes and a decline of the agon" (2000, p. 201). Thus, once the state becomes an instrument of private affairs and individuals are valued mostly by their usefulness to it, proposes Strong, democracy's fostering of individualism, which is also the reduction of both the public space and the healthy competition over it, can flourish. A fully inclusive democracy undermines autonomy and creativity, and thus, it ultimately undermines itself and threatens its own existence by grooming its citizens to be uninvolved in political decisions and hardly able to promise (let alone sovereignly as will be soon developed) (WS, §276). Moreover, an inclusive democracy that is also representative lessens the need for individual opinions and responsibility. In 1882, Nietzsche writes: "Parliamentarianism — that is, public permission to

choose between five basic political opinions — flatters and wins the favor of all those who would like to *seem* independent and individual, as if they fought for their opinions" (GS, III, §174, p. 202); and four years earlier, more succinctly: "Public opinions— private indolence" (HATH, VIII, §482, p. 178). By definition and in practice, a representative democracy encourages citizens to rely upon others to make decisions with coercive outcomes upon them.

Conversely, the arrangement between masters requires that each one participates directly in decision making: "Signs of nobility: never thinking of degrading our duties into duties for everybody; not wanting to delegate, to share, one's own responsibility; counting one's privileges and their exercise among one's *duties*" (BGE, IX, §272, p. 411). Noble individuals enjoy and demand the exercise of their rights and responsibilities. Thus, for these three reasons: that the masterly wills to power intrinsically resist social living, because it requires them to limit their actions to socially sanctioned ones, that they only cede rights to and enter into agreements with peers, as only they can resist them, and, that they avoid delegating the exercise of their duties and responsibilities, since they enjoy and require it, it follows that the full and equal participation of all potentially affected members in making coercive decisions and establishing rights, or direct democracy, is the sole naturally acceptable political structure between an exclusive group of masters (as it in fact was for the Athenians whom Nietzsche admired). For, it alone allows each member to determine collectively which socially sanctioned actions will limit it. Thus, I propose that the implicit democracy of Nietzsche's noble aristocrats is implicitly a direct one. This is the type of democracy that he subtly admires with an uncharacteristic lacklustre in such seldom passages as: "Democratic institutions are quarantine arrangements to combat that ancient pestilence, lust for tyranny: as such they are very useful and very boring" (WS, §289, p. 383).

Being amongst equals, direct democracy is limited to the masters or is elitist. The masters can dominate the slaves and therefore do not make agreements with them. By not finding enough similarities in the slavish will to power, the masterly one excludes it from its spontaneous direct democracy of peers. Direct democracies must be elitist and only occur among similar notably masterly wills to power. Among dissimilar individuals, equality is irrational and undesirable. Equality of people and of their rights, Nietzsche states in 1878: "is possible; but, as aforesaid, only within the ruling class, which in this case *practices* justice with sacrifices and self-denials" (HATH, VIII, §451, p. 165). Direct democratic equality is thus elitist. It is only practiced in the internal proceedings of a society's ruling class. Insistence upon the duties, responsibilities and costs of enacting fairness among equals, of justice as attained through an elitist direct democracy, excludes any members unwilling to practice these requirements in order to benefit from their counterparts: opportunities, rights and benefits. Since to exercise rights requires that their corresponding responsibilities be met. Through such sacrifices, justice is practiced. Hence, direct democracy is limited to the nobles, who will exercise "sacrifices and self-denials." In 1886, Nietzsche describes anew the possibility of equally sharing stable political power among the masterly members of a homogeneous group:

Refraining mutually from injury, violence, and exploitation and placing one's will on a par with that of someone else — this may become, in a certain rough sense, good manners among individuals if the appropriate conditions are present (namely, if these men are actually similar in strength and value standards and belong together in one body) (BGE, IX, §259, p. 393).

The direct democracies that occur between rulers, that is, between masterly wills to powers of similar strength and noble⁸⁴ qualities, Nietzsche admires as "good manners." Six years earlier, he even writes of democracy as the guarantor of independence and "something yet to come" (WS, §293, p. 384). Yet, given that promises are made between independent peers, his admired direct democracy is limited to the internal management of a society's rulers, none of whose members are unable to participate due to lack of social power or resources. I suggest that Nietzsche refrains from calling these inner workings 'a direct democracy,' as they are to date present only within the elite group that rules its overall society, such as was the case in Pericles' Athens.

Although Nietzsche mostly deems it the practical inner justice of an oligarchy or of one of its variations, what he describes is a restricted, exclusionary or elitist direct democracy. Nietzsche only admires direct democracies that have an elite membership, that is, those that occur within oligarchies, like that of the ancient Athenians. Since each noble will to power seeks to rule more than itself, a group of them can only rule itself collectively through a direct democracy. Once their compact is installed, the masterly wills to power understand that such an agreement amongst themselves allows them to further benefit personally as well as collectively by its redirection outwards of the actions that they must repress in order to live communally. From then on, the masters only embrace only communal living in which they can directly participate. Yet, since

⁸⁴ Nietzsche is not merely referring to the nobility of hereditary or financial oligarchies, but rather mostly to the superiority or nobility of the will to power that the masterly and *Übermensch* wills to power naturally possess and which "wealth necessarily engenders" (HATH, VIII, §479, p. 177). Yet, he insists that his proposed aristocracy is not simply a capitalistic plutocracy, as there is no increase in the produced nobility with an incessant increase in wealth. "Verily, whoever possesses little is possessed that much less: praised be a little poverty" (Z, I, Idol, p. 163)! Nietzsche claims that his aristocracy is the countermovement born of the modern movement of setting all meanings and values as mechanistic and economic. Thus, modern worldwide democratic capitalism provides the raw societal material needed for Nietzsche's new aristocracy.

every will to power inherently seeks to tyrannize , although only the masters can do so directly and spontaneously, I propose that Nietzsche ought to have admiration for any direct democracy that manages the relationships between any equals. Yet, he nowhere discusses the initial inner workings of the slaves as a direct democracy; they seemed to be immemorially ruled by their priests.

I also propose that what Nietzsche calls 'democracy' and vehemently critiques, especially in its Western liberal variant, actually describes an inclusive democracy, especially a fully non-restricted or universal one. Nietzsche constantly disparages all fully inclusive democracies, given that he sees the mass of individuals that compose it as being invariably unequal. "For, to *me* justice speaks thus: 'Men are not equal.' Nor shall they become equal" (Z, II, Tarantulas, p. 213). All-inclusive democracies treat everyone equally, but a democracy that treats the unequal equally stifles rather than channels each members' will to dominate. Inclusive democracies, by fostering the conformity and mediocrity of their citizens, through a belief in substantive equality of free, rational, peaceful subjects, claims Nietzsche, in 1878, can, eventually, even destroy individual sovereignty: "The state is a prudent institution for the protection of individuals against one another: if it is completed and perfected too far it will in the end enfeeble the individual, and, indeed, dissolves him— that is to say, thwart the original purpose of the state in the most thorough way possible" (HATH, V, §235, p. 113). Rather than fulfilling the goals for which societies were initially created, promoting and instilling personal autonomy and sanctioned promising in its members, inclusive democracies tend to diminish both. Nietzsche writes in 1888: "Liberal institutions cease to be liberal as soon as they are attained: later on, there are no worse and no more thorough injurers of freedom than liberal institutions" (TI, Skirmishes, §38, p. 541). Liberty attained

thwarts itself and makes us complacent. Inclusive democracies not only represent "the decay of political organization but" also that of the individual by "making him mediocre and lowering his value" (BGE, V, §203, p. 307). An inclusive democracy mistakenly considers everyone to be equal, which is our mediocritization.

Fully inclusive democracy partakes in as well as sustains the lesser type of equality, as equality can either enhance or diminish individuals, states Nietzsche, in 1878:

Twofold kind of equality. — The thirst for equality can express itself either as a desire to draw everyone down to oneself (through diminishing them, spying on them, tripping them up) or to raise oneself and everyone else up (through recognizing their virtues, helping them, rejoicing in their success) (HATH, VI, §300, p. 136).

By treating the unequal equally, inclusive democracies make humanity more mediocre, as the more numerous average individuals draw down the few exceptional ones. "The sick represent the greatest danger for the healthy; it is *not* the strongest but the weakest who spell disaster for the strong" (GM, III, §14, pp. 557-558). The sick and weak not only outnumbered by the healthy and strong, but also their sick priests are strong and can thus and do create meanings and values. "Nietzsche's endorsement of the second type of will to equality makes clear that he is not, as commonly supposed, an anti-egalitarian thinker," writes David Owen, in his article "Equality, Democracy, And Self-Respect: Reflections On Nietzsche's Agonal Perfectionism" (2002), "but an advocate of, what we might call, the perfectionist view of equality in which everyone is called on, and aided, to develop their capacities for self-government" (p. 120). As Owen claims, Nietzsche is only contesting that most modern democracies' sole concern is for recognitional respect, which tends to level everyone down equally into conformity. This supports my argument that he only critiques inclusive democracies, since in elitist direct democracies, the appraisive respects, which promote both equality and individuality, are maximized. Direct democracies, elitist and not,

cradle the equality that raises everyone up, as they allow their elite citizens an equal opportunity to offer their own unique perspectives. I quickly add that Nietzsche insists that these views may be of unequal value and use for majestic self-affirming individuals, societies, humanity and life, and that direct democracies ought to be elitist and occur only in their inner relations of masterly oligarchs or sovereign individuals.

In 1882, Nietzsche writes: "nothing is more democratic than logic" (GS, V, §348, p. 291). It does not make idiosyncratic distinctions and necessitates only "the concept of substance" (GS, III, §111, p. 171), not actual substances, as it was shown in the first chapter to follow from his twofold metaphysical scepticism. The belief in the equality of all completely free and rational actors, which is consequently logical even if one does not exist, is the gradual and initially furtive democratization or "animalization of man into the dwarf animal of equal rights and claims" (BGE, V, §203, p. 308). This means that the equality of all souls before God has become the equality of all individuals as citizens and moral agents (BGE, III, §62). In time, "the democratic idea" is carried by scholarly members of "all kinds of classes and social conditions, like plants that require no particular soil" (GS, V, §348, p. 290). This limitlessness is possible, as the dogmas of the ascetic ideal are no longer religious: "the *democratic* movement is the heir of the Christian movement" (BGE, V, §202, p. 306). Being ascetic, democracy views life as essentially adaptive and therefore reactive, which goes against Nietzsche's theory of life as activity, as the unqualified will to power. It "opposes everything that dominates and wants to dominate"; it is "the modern *misarchism*" (GM, II, §12, p. 514). (Representative inclusive) democracy dislikes all authority and domination; its inclusiveness lessen them. In seeking: "Freedom from all masters!" (BGE, VI, §204, p. 311), it equalizes everyone. In 1886, Nietzsche insists that he is not a democrat

(BGE, P). A year later, he adds that democracy's flourishing and "predominance" is a sign of "declining life," a sign that: "something is wrong" (GM, III, §25, p. 590). As they are gradually made to believe in universally free human will, the masterly aristocratic social organization is dissolved. It becomes inverted into its ascetic or democratic form by the priests. And once the inclusion of the priestly will to power in a society's political rule goes unnoticed or uncontested, the democratization of politics that ushers in (negative) nihilism begins (GM, I §5; III, §25). Thus, fully inclusive democracies are problematic because they level all individuals down by claiming their full absolute equality, rationality and freedom as moral subjects.

I propose that the distinction for which I have just argued, between Nietzsche's positions on an elitist direct democracy and an egalitarian inclusive representative democracy, is apt and helpful, despite not being explicitly found in his writings, because it reconciles his opposing claims about democracy. Some passages contain admiration for democracy's ability to manage the relationships between equals, notably between masters; while most others contain aversion to democracy's equal treatment of unequals and its hatred of domination. Thus, in order to read Nietzsche coherently, I claim that he implicitly distinguishes an acceptable elitist direct democracy from the all- inclusive egalitarian representative democracy he disparages. Still, rather than call this arrangement of equal political participation between masterly wills to power 'direct democracy,' Nietzsche mostly writes of it as the natural justice which arises within an oligarchy or one of its variations. In 1887, he proposes that within such a group, order is maintained by the members' mutual "lust for tyranny; every oligarchy constantly trembles with the tension each member feels in painting control over this lust" (GM, III, §18, p. 572). Thus, the stability of their beneficial mutual rule is maintained only by the tensions between their conflicting similar wills to

power. Similarly, eight years earlier, in 1880, he writes: "Democratic institutions are quarantine arrangements to combat that ancient pestilence, lust for tyranny: as such they are very useful and very boring" (WS, §289, p. 383). Thus, as Egyed proposes, Nietzsche shows "a grudging acceptance of democratic institutions as inevitable and practically necessary" (2007, p. 105). In other words, he only dully praises the natural or spontaneous direct democracy between oligarchs that controls or channels their desires to dominate. For, if one of the oligarchs could gain mastery over the others, their collective rule would immediately dissolve into a tyranny.

Thus, it is important for Nietzsche that the ruling group that exercises direct democracy amongst itself only consists of similarly matched individuals. In 1878, he claims: "Justice (fairness) originates between parties of approximately *equal power*, as Thucydides correctly grasped (in the terrible colloquy between the Athenian and Melian ambassadors)" (HATH, II, §92, p. 49). In 1882, Nietzsche fondly writes outright that such an arrangement is democratic to disparage the faith in the durable heredity of separate tasks for separate people, or art become nature: "there are opposite ages, really democratic, where people give up this faith, and a certain cocky faith and opposite point of view advance more and more into the foreground — the Athenian faith that first becomes noticeable in the Periclean age, ... all nature ceases and becomes art" (GS, V, §356, p. 303).⁸⁵ Democracy, which is here implicitly a direct democracy among oligarchs as it was in Ancient Athens, expresses and allows for the admirable conscious perspectival play, or art, which permits the ruling individual total fluidity of experience, or nature. For this play or flexibility of

⁸⁵ The passage continues: "After accepting this *role faith* — an artist's faith, if you will — the Greeks, as is well known, went step for step through a rather odd metamorphosis that does not merit imitation in all respects: *They really became actors.*" Also see *UAH I*, §10, p. 123.

perspectives to occur, one must not be restricted by decisions that one did not agree upon; one must be able to partake in every political decision as is only allowed in direct democracy.

Nietzsche writes in 1886: "it is the characteristic *right of masters* to create values" (BGE, IX, §261, p. 399). Masters are creative individuals with small souls or limited consciousnesses. In their initially exclusive societies, the masters only require a simple rudimentary grammatical and legal self-consciousness and conscience. They require only enough of each so as to allow them to share a language and thus truths, meanings and values, as well as to enter into promises as legal subjects. Humanity's fundamental pattern of thought and standard for evaluation are thus based on an agreement between legal subjects, creditor and debtor. Gradually, these roles and relationships are magnified and even later replicated into, in and between societies; that is, societies exist, are managed by and interact with each other through the relationships of creditor and debtor. Initially, societies are homogeneous and stand before their members as a creditor before its debtors. For, its members have made promises in order to partake in the many advantages of communal living (GM, II, §9). Smaller societies are born out of these agreements, and similar societies interact with one another through them (GM, II, §8). Over time, in later, even larger, blended societies, there exist linguistic and legal conventions among the rulers and an imposition upon the ruled to reach their own agreements: "Justice on this elementary level is the good will among parties of approximately equal power to come to terms with one another, to reach an 'understanding' by means of a settlement—and to compel parties of lesser power to reach a settlement among themselves" (GM, II, §8, pp. 506-507)— There is not, then, in these societies the need for agreements directly between the rulers and the ruled. They are unequal.

Being reciprocal only among equals, contracts or promises are made only between peers, especially between commanders. Masterly individuals can only bear to submit their dominant expression of the unqualified will to power mutually and to similarly constituted, or masterly, wills to power. Being similarly matched, masters cannot command each other without each other's consent. A masterly will to power, after determining that a similar one is its peer, treats it as it treats itself. Of "a noble soul," Nietzsche writes in 1886: "Perhaps it admits under certain circumstances that at first make it hesitate that there are some who have rights equal to its own; as soon as this matter of rank is settled it moves among these equals with their equal privileges" (BGE, IX, §265, p. 405). The only acceptable form of external domination for the masterly will to power is reciprocal and between peers. The masters act harshly but respectfully toward each other. However, they prey on those who do not belong to their society, notably larger slavish communities, to thrive. And because their concerted mutual restraint and respect allow them to easily survive and thrive, their governing expressions of the unqualified will to power are communally as well as individually served and satisfied (GM, II, §17). Thus, even once their communities have engulfed the slavish ones and thereby form a larger heterogeneous society that they govern via an oligarchy, a direct democracy is maintained among the masterly rulers. "A morality of the ruling group, however, is most alien and embarrassing to the present taste in the severity of its principal that one has duties only to one's peers" (BGE, IX, §260, p. 396). The masters only feel obligations towards their peers. Seeing themselves reflected in them, they treat their peers as harshly and as lovingly as they treat themselves. A master has duties exclusively to its peers, masters engage in promises only among themselves. In 1887, Nietzsche proposes: "equality as the presupposition of all compacts, consequently of all law" (GM, P, §4, p. 454).

Thus, masters can only promise with masters and slaves, with slaves. Yet, the promises between masters are distinguished from the promises made between slavish individuals. The masters' promises are sovereign and thus differently sanctionable.

Promises are verbal contracts entered into by a creditor and a debtor; they are binding agreements wherein the parties establish what ought be true, and thereafter they must either make it so, or submit to facing the agreed upon penalty. Sanctioned promises purport to be unbreakable (GM, II, §5). In 1887, Nietzsche writes that only "sovereign" promises are invariably kept, that is, those made by "sovereign individuals." Individual sovereignty is the end for which "society and the morality of custom" are the means (GM, II, §, p. 495). They both serve to domesticate humanity. They breed and bleed into human beings less forgetfulness and more responsibility, until these have "become instinct, the dominating instinct. ... sovereign man calls it his conscience" (GM, II, §2, p. 496). That is to say that not only is memory is inherited and developed by learning to promise, but it is also developed by cruelty, as "pain is the most powerful aid to mnemonics" (GM, III, §3, p. 497). Acampora's claim in "On Sovereignty and Overhumanity: Why It Matters How we Read Nietzsche's Genealogy II: 2" that the human power of forgetting "perished" under humanity's being "hooked on" promising, which comes from the human power of remembering (2006, p. 150), thus seems too strong. Since without any forgetting at all, one is unable, among other things, to live in the "present" (GM, II, §, p. 494). Our ability to forget has greatly diminished, but it has not perished entirely, or else we could not live in the moment at all.

Nietzsche proposes that humanity's initial, meagre and fleeting instinctual consciousness and self-consciousness were reshaped by the development of its societies, until they became, at least in the masterly individuals, the enduring instinctual consciousness of individual sovereignty,

which is mostly characterized by the ability to freely and fully sanction promises. "The task of breeding an animal with the permission⁸⁶ to make promises evidently embraces and presupposes as a preparatory task that one first makes men to a certain degree necessary, uniform, like among like, regular, and consequently calculable" (GM, II, §2, pp. 494-495). The sovereign individuals have not merely the capacity to make promises by being self-aware as well as aware of their peers, but they also possess the freedom and follow-through to keep these promises, come what may.

This emancipated individual, with the actual *permission* to make promises [der wirklich versprechen darf], this master of a *free* will, this sovereign man - how should he not be aware of his superiority over all those who lack the sanction to make promises and stand as their own guarantors [was nicht versprechen und für sich selbst gut sagen darf], ... - and of how this mastery over himself also necessarily gives him mastery over circumstances, over nature, and over all more short-willed and unreliable creatures? The 'free' man, the possessor of a protracted and unbreakable will, also possesses his *measure of value*: looking out upon others from himself, he honors or he despises; and just as he is bound to honor his peers, the strong and reliable (those with the *sanction* to make promises [die welche versprechen dürfen]) - that is, all those who promise like sovereigns reluctantly, rarely, slowly, who are chary of trusting, whose trust is a mark of *distinction*, who give their word as something that can be relied on because they know themselves strong enough to maintain it in the face of accidents, even 'in the face of fate' (GM, II, §2, pp. 495-496).

In this passage from 1887, Nietzsche claims that the sovereign individual promises exclusively with caution and to other sovereign individuals. Sovereign promises are rare signs of the peers' reciprocal respect. Further, the sovereign individual understands this permission to promise as a sign of superiority and dominance over the environment and over the non-sovereign individuals,

⁸⁶ Although the Kaufman translation uses 'right,' I prefer to translate "versprechen darf" as the sanction or permission to promise, as Nietzsche does not use the noun 'right' [das Recht] but the verb 'to permit' or 'to allow' [dürfen]; hence my translation is 'the sanction' or 'permission to promise.'

those without the ability to sanction their promises. Subordinates are not parties in sovereign promises, perhaps unless passively. Furthermore, the sanction to make promises entails that one holds oneself both free to and responsible for withstanding all eventualities in order to keep one's promises "in the face of accidents". These promises are fated.

Freedom and responsibility are thus each other's counterpart. The sovereign individual's will is free because it is able to withstand all changes in circumstance. In 1888, Nietzsche writes: "For what is freedom? That one has the will to assume responsibility for oneself" (TI, Skirmishes, §38, p. 542). The sovereign individuals are distinguished by freely, honestly, responsibly but rarely permitting themselves to sanction a promise. Or, as Mark Migotti writes in "A Promise Made Is a Debt Unpaid" (2013), by "the unprecedented kind of strength —of will— *enjoyed by sovereign promisors alone*" (p. 521). For justice to be maintained, communities should be small enough that individuals who break their promises are invariably reprimanded. In 1887, Nietzsche proposes: "a kick for the feeble windbags who promise without the right to do so, and a rod for the liar who breaks his word even at the moment he utters it" (GM, II, §2, p. 496). Every broken and dishonest promise must be paid for by the transgressor. For, thereby a promisor learns the self-discipline that allows one to eventually become Nietzsche's favoured "master of a *free will*" (GM, II, §2, p. 495), the one who makes sovereign promises. In "Nietzsche on Free Will, Autonomy, and the Sovereign Individual" (2009), Gemes states that strong wills never doubt their limited "agency free will," as it comes from their ability to maintain their internal hierarchies long enough to complete their set aims: "On this picture having free will is not a matter of being free of necessity, but rather acting from a kind of inner necessity stemming from this centre of gravity" (p. 9). I contend only that all parties of sovereign promises must also posit each other's

"deserts free will," guidelines about "who does and does not merit punishment and reward" (Gemes, 2009, p. 2). In "Nietzsche's Intentions: What the Sovereign Individual Promises" (2009), Ridley writes: "Sovereign promising, then, amounts to whole-hearted commitment to someone or something, to executing the relevant intention come what may" (p. 6). He claims that the difference between promises and "top-ranking" or sovereign ones is the resoluteness of the latter. It "consists in his capacity to commit himself whole-heartedly to undertakings whose character is inconceivable except in the context of the social world, and of the formulable and unformulable(sic) laws comprising it, from which they draw their sense" (Ridley, 2009, p. 11). Thus, not every promise is sanctioned, "sovereign" or "top-ranking". Sanctioned promises are extremely restricted, as they are stringent.

Foremost, sovereign promises are the binding of one's present self to one's future self, even when they are made to others: "so that between the original 'I will,' 'I shall do this' and the actual discharge of the will, its act, a world of strange new things, circumstances, even acts of will may be interposed without breaking this long chain of will" (GM, II, §1, p. 494). Sanctioned promises are a recognition of this, and thus they are chiefly about the promiser's intention and ability to keep promises to itself. As Strong writes: "This means that promising must become part of what I am, for me to have the right to it" (2006, p. 103). Sanctioned promising requires what Migotti calls "binding voluntary reliability," whereby one keeps one's "self-generated binding commitments" because one's "promissory reliability" is not founded upon moral obligation but rather upon personal integrity; one owes it to oneself to keep one's word (2013, pp. 511-512 & 516). "The conceptual point is that from the fact that one can *unbind* oneself it does not follow that one is *not* bound" (Migotti, 2013, p. 517). Thus, a sanctioned promise cannot be broken, as it

is made to oneself out of unprecedented strength. If one were to break a sanctioned promise, even if other party died or no one else knew, one would nonetheless exact the appropriate payment from oneself: one's responsibilities to others are first and foremost responsibilities to oneself. When one sanctions a promise, one is guaranteeing its fulfillment. When one makes a sovereign promise, no divergence from one's word in one's deed is possible. Either the promise is fulfilled or one suffers the consequences. For this reason, these exacting promises are exceedingly rare and significant. As Migotti emphasizes, by one's sovereign promises one shows the other parties respect (2013, p. 516). For, non-sanctioned promises are not completely guaranteed to be upheld. Promises are not backed by the promiser's "binding voluntary reliability," whereas sanctioned promises are and are thus binding or always guaranteed. Sovereign promises do not allow for any circumstances that warrant its not being fulfilled; they are fated. Hence, they are only made out of respect and in the rarest cases.

As I said, masters spontaneously direct their governing expressions of the unqualified will to power outwards, and they redirect them only if it is required by a promise, especially one between sovereign individuals. This requires that they see themselves and their peers as free and responsible. Yet, with ever more success in annexing larger slavish groups and sustaining social stability and peace, masterly aristocracies increase the debt of their communities to their ancestor-creditors until these become gods and a priestly caste is solidified. The overtaking of masterly societies by the priestly aristocracy is ensured by the gradual extension of the responsibility of the free and moral subject to all its actions, that is to say, its extension to those actions not bound by promises. This gives rise to the entirely free, rational and responsible moral subject.

The traditional concept of 'a free will' emerges from language's separation of a subject from the world of objects. Nietzsche explicitly illustrates this, for instance in 1887, when he writes of the (ongoing) effects of the priests' control over grammar upon the masterly wills to power:

our entire science still lies under the misleading influence of language and has not disposed of that little changeling, the 'subject' (the atom, for example, is such a changeling, as is the Kantian 'thing-in-itself'); no wonder if the submerged, darkly glowering emotions of vengefulness and hatred exploit this belief for their own ends and in fact maintain no belief more ardently than the belief that the *strong man is free* to be weak and the bird of prey to be a lamb — for thus they gain the right to make the bird of prey *accountable* for being bird of prey (GM, I, §13, p. 481).

One's use of grammatical subjects deeply affects one's perspective of reality, namely it separates one from the world.

For just as the popular mind separates the lightning from its flash and takes the latter for an *action*, for the operation of a subject called lightning, so popular morality also separates strength from expressions of strength, as if there were a neutral substratum behind the strong man, which was *free* to express strength or not to do so. But there is no such substratum; there is no 'being' behind doing, effecting, becoming; 'the doer' is merely a fiction added to the deed (*Ibid.*).

In opposition to this separation by "the popular mind," in 1881, Nietzsche proposes that all willing is akin to willing an unstoppable wheel's roll (DD, II, §124). Given the circumstances and one's type of will to power, certain outcomes, if not most, can be predicted as probable, if not as necessary. "A typical Nietzschean form of argument, for example, runs as follows: a person's theoretical beliefs are best explained in terms of his moral beliefs; and his moral beliefs are best explained in terms of natural facts about the type of person he is (i.e., in terms of type-facts)" (Leiter, 2009, p. 8). That is, one's perspectives are based on one's type of will to power, on the uncontrollable circumstances that one is in and on the inherited perspectives with which one

already views reality; these inherited interpretations influence deeply, if mutely, all our subsequent perspectives and interpretations.

Nonetheless, Nietzsche also claims that the will is not completely causally determined or unfree (BGE, I, §21). First, because being partially social, freedom is only partially controllable. As Lemm states: "responsibility is first and foremost self-responsibility, but in Nietzsche the possibility of self-responsibility always already presupposes the existence of a public struggle in which a plurality of agents are involved for and against each other" (2007, p. 11). The unshakable presence of other individuals limits the control over and predictability of any individual's will. Second, willing is an only partially controllable action, because, on the one hand, sometimes one is overtaken by unwanted desires, and on the other hand, because some actions are simply beyond our will's reach. Bodily functions are the clearest example of these, from the inopportune will to relieve oneself to the uncontrollable beating of one's heart. Willing is at best partially free or controllable. Instead, it is the domain of thought that: "appears to be the domain of liberty" (DD, II, §125, p. 131). Human beings are more free to think than they are to act, experience, feel or will. Totally free or unfree will is a fiction mainly because all willing is "above all something complicated, something that is a unit only as a word— ... the will is not only a complex of sensation and thinking, but it is above all an *affect*, and specifically the affect of the command" (BGE, I, §19, p. 215). Since willing is no simple and straightforward matter, the free or unfree will is not either.

Willing freely requires both command and obedience. Nietzsche writes in 1886: "That which is termed 'freedom of the will' is essentially the affect of superiority in relation to him who must obey ... A man who *wills* commands something within himself that renders obedience, or

that he believes renders obedience" (BGE, I, §19, pp. 215-216). One part of the individual thus temporarily enslaves the others in light of attaining some achievement. Slavery then is more than political unfreedom; it is all instances of having to obey without also having to rule. Conversely, one who both rules and obeys, if only oneself, is not a slave and has Nietzsche's conception of 'free will.' An individual with free will commands and obeys itself. In this manner, then, free will includes a form of self-enslavement. Therefore, the inability to command and obey, or slavery, occurs in a variety of forms, not all of which are destructive or despicable, although Nietzsche is conscious of those despicable forms.⁸⁷ Free will or autonomy emerges as authority self-imposed out of the necessity to avoid slavery. Freedom, authoritative as well as political, is either had or not; it is always wanted, and if it is obtained, then it has been conquered (TI, Skirmishes, §38).

Freedom is therefore more than a lack of constraints. In 1883, Nietzsche proposes that freedom is access to and gaining in desired abilities: "You call yourself free? Your dominant thought I want to hear, and not that you have escaped from a yoke. ... Free *from* what? As if that mattered to Zarathustra! But your eyes should tell me brightly: free *for* what" (Z, I, Creator, p. 175)? In Sir Isaiah Berlin's famous terms, from his "Two Concepts of Liberty" (c1969), freedom for Nietzsche is 'positive' and not merely 'negative.' That is, freedom requires more than the absence of external restrictions; it requires active external allowances and enhancements. The fiction of free will, although it has traditionally been a solely decadent enterprise, exists as a means to instil responsibility in the human animal. In this manner, the concept of free will is very useful to human beings. In fact that free will engenders responsibility is also what makes it invaluable

⁸⁷ In 1878, Nietzsche warns us against measuring past injustices such as political slavery solely by our current standards, as having changed, they can no longer understand and justify them (HATH, II, §101).

for Nietzsche; for one sanctions promises only if one has a free and responsible will. I claim that Leiter's position in "Nietzsche's Theory of the Will" (2009) that free will is epiphenomenal to Nietzsche's materialism neglects this presentation of free will as both a fiction and an ideal.

Under "the sway of society and peace" (GM, II, §16, p. 520), the priests transform the masters' small self-consciousness as a legal grammatical subject into the larger one of an entirely free, rational and responsible moral agent. In a moral, free, rational and responsible subject that lives in a peaceful society, little if any instinctual, spontaneous and healthy action is possible for its governing expression of the unqualified will to power. As a result, the moral agent redirects its action inward, upon itself as a qualifiable will to power, and thereby develops a bad conscience (GM, II, §17-19). The modern masters' soul as bad conscience is the result of the priests' reversal of their naturally outwardly directed governing form of the unqualified will to power when it is expressed as *ressentiment*. Initially, then, in the masterly will to power, legal self-consciousness is the benign predecessor to the larger more developed bad conscience. In his article, "Genealogy and Critical Method" (1994), Daniel W. Conway argues that the weak are psychologically susceptible to slave morality before the myth of free will. Given both their life-denying constitution and their socio-political inferiority, seeing themselves as legal subjects makes them so. In 1887, Nietzsche claims that bad conscience is more easily present in slavish wills to powers, given that they suffer naturally from unreleased *ressentiment*, which is essentially only creative by the "inversion of the value-positing eye — this *need* to direct one's view outward instead of back to oneself — ... its action is fundamentally reaction" (GM, I, §10, pp. 472-473). Since the slavish will to power must constantly deal with externally imposed posits, it copes with its plight by developing an initially "intellectual conscience." Driven by *ressentiment*, this leads it to its bad

conscience, in which absolute truth, which is inaccessible, if existent, is overestimated (GM, III, §24, p. 585). Thus, the weak, he declares, in 1888: "are the great majority — and they are also more *intelligent ... the weak have more spirit*" (TI, Skirmishes, §14, p. 523). Combined with an ascetic distaste for suffering, Nietzsche writes in 1886, they foster the longing for "the universal green-pasture happiness of the herd" (BGE, II, §44, p. 244). This means that the slavish will to power values humanity's peace and security above any enhancement. In contrast, Nietzsche suggests favouring the enhancement of the self-affirming vitality of individuals, societies, humanity and life over their mere preservation as life does.

In 1878, Nietzsche suggests that his ideal society is an aristocracy that is stratified by the individuals' sensitivity to suffering:

My utopia. - In a better ordering of society the heavy work and exigencies of life will be apportioned to him who suffers least as a consequence of them, that is to say to the most insensible, and thus step by step up to him who is most sensitive to the most highly sublimated species of suffering and who therefore suffers even when life is alleviated to the greatest degree possible (HATH, VIII, §462, pp. 168-169).

He proposes that the individuals that are the most sensitive to the suffering that occurs in a highly materially and socially comfortable life ought to work in the highest strata of society, such as in the political, economic or social services. Those whose sensitivity to suffering is lower, which includes those "slaves of the democratic taste" who "suffering itself they take for something that must be *abolished*" (BGE, II, §44, p. 244), ought to fill the more menial and physical positions of the larger lower strata of the socio-political pyramid that is any oligarchy. However, Nietzsche simultaneously also proposes that the individuals that are the most sensitive, the highest and

freest spirits, ought to be allowed to instead refrain from any political congregation with the less sensitive and insensitive:

if the purpose of all politics really is to make life endurable for as many as possible, then these as-many-as-possible are entitled to determine what they understand by an endurable life ... a few must first of all be allowed, now more than ever, to refrain from politics and to step a little aside: they too are prompted to this by pleasure in self-determination, and there may also be a degree of pride attached to staying silent when too many, or even just many, are speaking (HATH, VIII, §438, p. 161).

Here, Nietzsche proposes that politics is largely about self-determination, whether by and for the masses or the few. He claims that the self-determination of the masses is only acceptable if they do not impose their decisions upon the few who do not belong to the masses and who therefore benefit most either from solitude or from living among their few peers, enemies or friends.

Given the heterogeneity of modern societies, in 1886, Nietzsche proposes that his new aristocracy, "a good and healthy" oligarchy of the best as determined by his suggested shared standard of enhancing self-affirming vitality, might have to exist within another arrangement:

The essential characteristic of a good and healthy aristocracy, however, is that it experiences itself not as a function (whether of the monarchy or the commonwealth) but as their meaning and highest justification - that it therefore accepts with a good conscience the sacrifice of untold human beings who, for its sake, must be reduced and lowered to incomplete human beings, to slaves, to instruments (BGE, IX, §258, p. 392).

The augmentation of the self-affirming vitality of masterly aristocrats, which presupposes their physical and material or socio-economic wellbeing, is the end or aim of any proper aristocratic society, regardless of its actual political structure being a monarchy or a democracy. A properly organized society, whether it is a commonwealth, an oligarchy or a monarchy, must seek the enhancement of its best or most self-affirming masterly individuals at the expense of all others. "A

people is a detour of nature to get to six or seven great men” (BGE, IV, §126, p. 277). This explains why in 1880 Nietzsche advocates limitations on participation in what he calls a democracy: "Democracy wants to create and guarantee as much *independence* as possible: independence of opinion, of mode of life and of employment. To that end it needs to deprive of the right to vote both those who possess no property and the genuinely rich ... and the parties" (WS, §293, p. 384). Thus, his proposed exclusion of political parties as well as of the extremely poor and rich from democratic political participation creates instead (paradoxically) a non-democratic democracy; an oligarchy.

In addition to Nietzsche's proposed restrictions on citizens' access to direct democratic political participation, he insists on that of the higher education that is necessary for informed democratic political participation. In 1888, he writes: "'Higher education' and huge numbers—that is a contradiction to start with" (TI, Germans, §5, p. 510). The privileges of education and informed democratic participation are ones exclusive to the noblest of individuals. In accordance with the political emergence and effects of language and information in general, I turn to the main public tools for distributing facts and information: education and the media in Nietzsche.

Public education and media are a society's rulers' more subtle instruments of domination. For, they shape citizens' minds through their relay of language and information, which will in turn guide citizens' actions. Nietzsche writes in 1886 “of the parliamentary nonsense, including the obligation for everybody to read his newspaper with his breakfast” (BGE, VI, §208, p. 321). In an inclusive democracy, public education is the main instrument for the masses to learn the grammar they need in order to read and write for the then ever-multiplying newspapers. In 1887, Nietzsche claims that the conviction that grammar is truthful leads to ontological dogmas, such as beings and their entirely free and responsible moral will:

A quantum of force is equivalent to a quantum of drive, will, effect — more, it is nothing other than precisely this very driving, willing, effecting, and only owing to the seduction of language (and of the fundamental errors of reason that are petrified in it) which conceives and misconceives all effects as conditioned by something that causes effects, by a 'subject,' can it appear otherwise (GM, I, §13, p. 481).

By its effects on citizens' ways of thinking and acting, as exemplified through grammar, public education plays a role in either maintaining or subverting political power. By its influence upon most young citizens' minds through its lessons, it largely controls the information that is disseminated in a society, and that information could affect young citizens' understanding and opinion of political power. The public education system, which is a key component to the public dissemination of information, shapes its pupils to their society's present needs. It follows that the pupils resemble their teachers; so, Nietzsche asks in 1879, if the teachers "themselves are not educated: how should they be able to educate" (AOM, §181, p. 258)? Education requires future-oriented experienced educators chosen for their ability to impart their qualities and abilities along with their knowledge. Thus, it is of the utmost importance that educators be able to sanction their promises, which makes for both a good student or scholar and a good soldier, as it teaches one commanding as well as obeying, as well as be able to teach their pupils to do the same.

Education, claims Nietzsche, in 1878, ought to be concerned with cultivating balanced individual citizens:

Interest in education will become genuinely intense only from the moment when belief in a God and his loving care is abandoned ... An education that no longer believes in miracles will have to pay attention to three things: firstly, how much energy is inherited? secondly, how can new energy be ignited? thirdly, how can the individual be adapted to the enormously diversified demands of culture without being distracted by them and his individuality dispersed — in short, how can the individual be set in place within the counterpoint of private and public culture (HATH, V, §242, pp. 115-116)?

Public education should be a means for shaping civic-minded yet egotistical citizens. Textbooks should be notably inspirational: "Natural history," he states, as begun in the English "natural science textbooks", "ought to be narrated in such a way that everyone who hears it is irresistibly inspired to strive after spiritual and bodily health and vigour, to the glad feeling of being the heir and continuator of mankind, and to an even nobler need for practical activity" (AOM, §184, p. 258). Textbooks should serve to develop both one's communal and one's individual capabilities. In 1883, Nietzsche claims that one learns when one incorporates the knowledge, when one learns it "by heart": "Whoever writes in blood and aphorisms does not want to be read but to be learnt by heart" (Z, I, Reading, p. 152). The value of good writers and of good readers are in the writers' expression of their idiosyncrasies and in their transformation of the readers' own (EH, Write); reading well requires well written writing. Thus, Nietzsche disparages the budding public media of his day for its lack of good writers and therefore lack of good readers. In 1879, he criticizes the press for writing poorly and for misleading the masses by its daily soundings of "the *permanent false alarm* that" allows for political events to go under-noticed, even unnoticed (AOM, §321, p. 287). Rather than inform, newspapers distract and entertain. This is why they are a degenerate influence on public education and politics.

In 1883, Nietzsche emphasizes that the dangers of misguided public education and media are the "sickness and misfortune" and indigestion they foster in the masses (Z, I, Idol, p. 162). By making individuals slavish, they prepare them for more comprehensive political domination. For, the State and its culture are both antagonistically contrasting and each other's vital condition. They are antipodes, because the more multifaceted and impactful the education that is given by experienced experts is, the higher the culture is and the less likely it will be that its pupils, being well educated, will agree to accept to be politically subjected to the State as an entity in which they

do not directly participate as a noble privilege. In 1888, Nietzsche writes that: "Educators are needed who have themselves been educated, superior, noble spirits ... Educators are lacking ... hence the decline of the German culture" (TI, Germans, §5, p. 510). "All great ages of culture are ages of political decline" (*Ibid.*, §4, p. 509). Thus, the less diversely and experientially educated citizens are, given their poor instructors, the more likely it is that they will embrace the State and its representatives. In 1883, he writes that: "What the 'higher schools' in Germany really achieve is a brutal training, designed to prepare huge numbers of young men, with as little loss of time as possible, to become usable, abusable, in government service" (*Ibid.*, §5, p. 510). Individuals are valued and evaluated solely in light of their use for the State, which lying claims to be "the people" (Z, I, Idol, p. 160). The State can never be the people, because the people are created to serve life, whereas the "state [is] where the slow suicide of all is called 'life'" (*Ibid.*, p. 162). The State is an ascetic management of the masses of mediocre individuals, who are maintained in and by it at the expense of everyone and all else. Exceptional individuals prefer to be autonomous, whether together or alone.

At the same time though, the State and a people's culture are each the condition of the other. The nature of a society's political arrangement dictates the culture it favours, and the type of culture a society favours, notably through its education and media, either supports or contests its current political structure. Modern liberal democratic institutions require an agonistic culture to be maintained, or else they gradually deteriorate, dissolve and even invert. Nietzsche proposes in 1888 that:

Liberal institutions cease to be liberal as soon as they are attained: later on, there are no worse and no more thorough injurers of freedom than liberal institutions. ... These same institutions produce quite different effects while they are still being fought for; then they really promote freedom in a powerful way. ... war educates for freedom (TI, Skirmishes, §38, p. 541).

A political structure that enables the people to govern survives through a sustained mirror-image culture: a people that governs via collective competition must educate and prepare itself about and for this communal contest via its culture. Given the unpopularity and difficulty of this requirement, Nietzsche's foreseen culture is as restricted or aristocratic as his politics are as he writes in 1888: "All higher education belongs only to the exception: one must be privileged to have a right to so high a privilege" (TI, Germans, §5, p. 510). Since the modern masses are masses of mediocrity instead of being peoples, which can be exclusively composed of exceptional individuals, the highest education is restricted to his aristocrats. These exceptional wills to power, being initiated to perspectivism and sanctioned promises, are thereby the best educators of a new higher culture.

As one of these new educators, for a long time, Nietzsche expects a very limited readership and an even smaller number of good readers: "the very few. Perhaps not one of them is even living yet" (A, P, p. 568). Nonetheless, he underlines the importance of (his) writing well to coax them along, since experienced information affects one's actions. For instance, of his work on *Zarathustra*, he writes (immodestly), in 1888, that: "having understood six sentences from it — that is, to have really experienced them — would raise one to a higher level of existence than 'modern' man could attain" (EH, Books, §1, p. 715). In 1882, Nietzsche already suggests that properly reading or living his properly written writings is transformative: "Behold, I am sick of my wisdom, like a bee that has gathered too much honey; I need hands outstretched to receive it; I want to give away and distribute until the wise among men enjoy their folly once again and the poor their riches" (GS, IV, §342, p. 275). He shares his wisdom with the hopes that it has the appropriate

impact on the different types of individuals, but most especially on his foreseen friends, the new aristocrats.

This wisdom is that once one has truly denied all dogmatic metaphysics and finds oneself in the ensuing state of sceptical or neutral nihilism, which in the first chapter was found to be the state of meaninglessness and valuelessness underlying humanity's experience of reality, one may either be terrified, negative nihilism, and return to the comfort of dogmas, or enticed and accept this opportunity to adopt perspectivism and constantly create one's own meanings and values, positive nihilism. Of the individuals that choose the former, in 1886, he writes that: "there may actually be puritanical fanatics of conscience who prefer even a certain nothing to an uncertain something to lie down on — and die. But this is nihilism and the sign of a despairing, mortally weary soul" (BGE, I, §10, p. 206). Thus, it is to the individuals who choose the latter, positive nihilism, that Nietzsche offers his conceptualization of the 'will to power' and 'perspectivism' as their temporary replacements for their discarded ontologies and epistemologies. As was discussed in the first chapter, Nietzsche claims that his concepts are more in line with life's appearances to our species as a flux of space and time that, understood as the unqualified will to power, barrages us with becomings, which we as qualifiable wills to power instinctually fix into beings through our metaphors. Those who not only accept these conceptions, but who also use them as the most practical and efficient instruments for their transformation into the *Übermensch* are his foreseen aristocrats, whom he insists are geniuses that must become great (HATH, IV, §163, p. 86). Yet, this transformation is a long, gradual, winding journey; not all will embark or make it the whole way at once: "if they learned to laugh from me, it is still not *my* laughter that they have learned. But what does it matter? They are old people, convalescing in their own way, laughing in their

own way; my ears have suffered worse things without becoming grumpy" (Z, IV, Awakening, §1, p. 422). Even the higher types have yet to fully become aristocrats. The successful transformation of a second nature into a new first one, or as he writes in 1876: "we plant a new way of life, a new instinct, a second, nature, that withers the first" (UAH, III, p. 106), could take many generations. In this way, not all will become an *Übermensch*. Still, the higher individuals are on their own path toward becoming or at least engendering the *Übermensch*.

As the intended recipients of this wisdom, friends or peers are important in the political arrangement of a society. In 1881, Nietzsche writes of honesty towards oneself and one's friends as one of the new four cardinal virtues: "Honest towards ourselves, and to all and everything friendly to us" (DD, V, §556, p. 387). However, he also values the solitude of the (still) peerless. Five years later, he opposes "democratic taste" with individuals who have "their own solitude" (BGE, II, §44, p. 244), and writes: "solitude is a virtue for us, as a sublime bent and urge for cleanliness which guesses how all contact between man and man - 'in society' - involves inevitable uncleanness" (BGE, IX, §284, p. 416). Hence, for the few, solitude or peer-exclusive communal living is best. For instance, after years spent in solitude, his main illustrative character, Zarathustra, learns to seek not the companionship of the common people but that of the few select higher freer individuals, who are able and willing to be his peers, enemies or friends. Thus, in 1883, he writes: "I teach you not the neighbor, but the friend. The friend should be the festival of the earth to you and an anticipation of the [*Übermensch*]. ... My brothers, love of the neighbor I do not recommend to you: I recommend to you love of the farthest" (Z, I, Neighbor, pp. 173-174). In 1882, in his previous book, Nietzsche likens neighbors and democrats (GS, V,

§368). He claims that one seeks neighbours instead of friends because oneself has not yet been sanctified.

Conversely, friends only exist when one neither fears nor flees from oneself but rather loves and endures oneself. Moreover, friends teach one about the *Übermensch*, as they exemplify the goodness that comes from the complete dissolution of opposites into each other, especially good and evil. In "Nietzsche and Emerson on Friendship and Its Ethical-Political Implications," (2008) Benedetta Zavatta contrasts Nietzsche's distinction between the unhealthy compassion, which hides the superiority felt by its giver and which is given indiscriminately to all, and healthy or noble friendship, which occurs solely between equals and is thus given only to those whom "we know intimately and whose needs we can therefore correctly comprehend" (p. 516). The giving "of gifts" "from an overflowing heart" only occurs between friends. At best, says Zarathustra, the others might "themselves pluck the fruit from my tree: that will cause them less shame" (Z, II, Pitying, p. 201). Friendship is thereby both the motivation for and the glue that bonds either Nietzsche's proposed aristocracy or his secluded community of the few currently best wills to power.

A requirement for friendship and accordingly for happiness with oneself, since happiness is essentially to being at one with one's instincts, is the loss of one's bad conscience. In 1888, in an attempt to clear up a fascinating misunderstanding as old as Socrates, Nietzsche writes: "To *have* to combat the instincts— that is the formula of decadence: as long as life is *ascending*, happiness equals instinct" (TI, PS, §11, p. 479). Rationality in opposition to and at the price of the instincts is "a mere disease." One year earlier, he writes that only once the masterly aristocratic rulers are overturned by the priestly aristocratic ones, given humanity's unredeemable debt to the divine in large peaceful societies, does the "illness" of "bad conscience" occur (GM, II, §19-22).

Thus, this illness is a widening and deepening of the subject, by which self-harm (i.e., altruism) substitutes for all other desires to harm. Nevertheless, rather than suggest outcry over bad conscience outright, in 1887, Nietzsche questions its forged bond to the "natural inclinations" for which humanity "has all too long had an 'evil eye'" (GM, II, §24, p. 531). The formidable breadth of our consciousness and self-consciousness is to be liberated from its perceived obligation to self-harm when the so-called 'evil' instincts naturally arise.

Losing bad conscience for Nietzsche is not losing conscience altogether then. In 1879, he writes: "To revere the bad too, and to embrace it, if it *pleases* us, and to have no idea that we might be ashamed of being thus pleased, is the mark of sovereignty, in great things and small" (AOM, §329, p. 289). One is sovereign when embracing what pleases oneself, and, he adds in 1886, when creating one's meanings and values for oneself from self-love or "beyond good and evil" (BGE, IV, §153, p. 280). Although this does mean that those who take pleasure in baseness ought to embrace it, it does not mean that one ought to enjoy base pleasures. Thus: "learning better to feel joy, we learn best not to hurt others or to plan hurts for them" (Z, II, Pitying, p. 200). Or as Ridley puts it: "there is no conceptual connection between the adoption of a style of valuation which affirms life for what it is, including the suffering in it, and the desire to *increase* the amount of suffering that the world contains (and hence that needs affirming)" (1998, p. 129). Thus, to embrace the evil or negative elements of life does not equate to enhancing or augmenting them. By its sanctioned promises, the sovereign individual is free from outside constraints: "for 'autonomous' and 'moral' are mutually exclusive" (GM, II, §2, p. 495). Still, such sovereignty is not actually license to anything, as one ought to keep all of one's promises, notably the ones required for benefiting from the community's staunch protection and many luxuries

(GM, II, §3), and must definitely keep all of one's sanctioned promises. Autonomous individuals restrain their freedom consciously by giving themselves their own laws. Thus, these laws ought to embrace all that brings that individual pleasure. Yet, to some degree, this will require abiding by the chosen social conventions. In this way, the dissolution of politics or society is rather the internalization of society's political sovereignty among those of its citizens who are becoming sovereign individuals (and as was treated in the first chapter, ultimately, *Übermenschen*).

Nietzsche initially claims that his ideal political arena is international; subsequently, that it is global. In 1878, Nietzsche writes that a society's politics is "grand politics and ensuring to itself a decisive voice among the most powerful states" (HATH, VIII, §481, p. 178). In 1886, he claims that "petty politics is over: the very next century will bring the fight for the domination of the earth — the compulsion to large-scale politics" (BGE, VI, §208, p. 321), where, he adds in 1888: "all power structures of the old society will have been exploded — all of them are based on lies: there will be wars the like of which have never yet been seen on earth. It is only beginning with me that the earth knows *great politics*" (EH, Destiny, §1, p. 783). From his earlier claim that politics involve competing States, he moves to the position that politics will engulf the entire globe and involve unseen power structures. It is a transition from a world divided into States, which interact with one another as sovereigns, to a world that is differently or non-political in its organization. "Whatever may be the influence in high politics of utilitarianism and the vanity of individuals and nations, the sharpest spur which urges them on is their need for the feeling of

power" (DD, III, §189, p. 186). Thus, whatever its form, Nietzsche's great politics⁸⁸ must happen on the world stage, for that is where the most power can be felt.

Overall, then, I propose that Nietzsche is a barely political philosopher, by which I mean that either he treats politics very briefly and vaguely or he focuses on the individual's beliefs, conduct, rights and responsibility. Nevertheless, when he does discuss politics, Nietzsche presents his political ideal either as that of the oligarchical rule of the best or as that of their political segregation and isolation. It is for these reasons that Nietzsche is known as either a (radical) aristocrat or a non-political philosopher. However, it is important to recognize that his continuous descriptions of the internal organization of his proposed aristocracy is as an elitist direct democracy. For this reason, I propose that Nietzsche's position on the rule of the government by all its people varies with democracy's more specific forms: elitist and direct or (fully) inclusive and representative. He embraces the elitist direct democracies that spontaneously occur between masters (as he does those between *Übermenschen*, to which I turned in the first chapter and for whom the participation afforded by an elitist direct democracy is required in part to quash their disdain for mass politics), but as an aristocrat, he is consistently very critical of all inclusive representative democracies.

Since Nietzsche's aristocrats are distinguished by their own transition as well as by their indirect help in the transition of others to sovereign individuality (and then to the *Übermensch*), they are mainly recognizable by their progressive embrace of perspectivism, which requires positive nihilism, and by their use of sanctioned promises, which shows one's free sovereign will. I

⁸⁸ In "Un prisme de la pensée historique de Nietzsche: l'élevage" (2016), Emmanuel Salanskis suggests that Nietzsche's great politics is a conscious and methodical cultural rearing by means of physical rearing, such as the Ancient Greeks practiced unconsciously.

turn now to an overview of their presence in contemporary liberal democratic societies, first, since as Hatab writes: "In political practice, representative democracy can be interpreted as a kind of temporary aristocracy" (1995, p. 123). Second, because despite being the undemocratic rulers of others, his aristocrats are democrats among themselves: they manage themselves internally by a stable yet spontaneous direct democracy. This democracy could have features that are useful to bettering our contemporary democracies once modified to account for our preference for all-inclusive representative democracies.

Perspectivism, first, has started to become a common theme in contemporary Western lives and philosophy, if perhaps not fully explored in and applied following the Nietzschean conception. Modern Western liberal democratic societies embrace the plurality of their citizens' private and political opinions as fundamental facts with which they must cope, if not also as a reality through which they can thrive, or differently, as one against which they must contend. Multiple philosophers and theorists continue to develop accounts of how different political, cultural or ethnic groups within a nation and its State ought to coexist (or not), if not also cooperate. Largely, most contemporary political philosophers and theorists have taken the irreducible plurality of citizens' full or partial religious or metaphysical views of reality as an inescapable given social fact. As Mill writes lucidly: "People decide according to their personal preferences" (2001, p. 13). Nonetheless, we may ask if today's political pluralism is entirely equivalent to Nietzsche's perspectivism?

Nietzsche's perspectivism, quickly summarized, is his ontologically derived, created and not merely relativistic substitute for all dogmatic epistemologies. It affirms that all languages, whence come truth and knowledge, are the interpretations of the socially dominant wills to power

that are mutually chosen to be shared. The results of the competitions between their perspectives shape our understanding of reality and are thus key to shaping humanity. Thus, by both exposing and embracing the created nature of language and knowledge, perspectivism challenges current commonplace compliance with perspectives and ideas that are unquestionable, such as 'truth,' 'being,' 'altruism,' 'bivalence,' 'causality,' etc. For, so long as one clings to seemingly neutral concepts, one is unable to see the morality or personal and social interests being advanced through them. One's metaphysical understanding shapes one's personal and political views, thus it must also be examined for the personal and political perspectives that foster it. For instance, in 1878, Nietzsche writes: "He who has fully grasped the theory of total unaccountability can no longer accommodate so-called justice that punishes and rewards under the concept of justice at all; provided, that is, that this consists in giving to each what is his own" (HATH, II, §105, pp. 56-57). Once one has passed from metaphysical to moral scepticism, justice as the rendering of what is due to each becomes limited to cases where the concept of 'free will' is appropriate, such as in sanctioned promising.

Perspectivism questions and judges all perspectives equally relatively to the preservation of life and humanity as well as unequally relatively to their effects on their holder's interests and the development of confident ascending individuals, societies, humanity and life. Perspectivism thus allows for multiple contrasting perspectives to flourish. For, all perspectives equally preserve humanity and life, and since only through their combination is objectivity attained. Perspectivism denies the relativity of these perspectives through its advocacy, alongside life, of exuberant self-loving individuals, society, humanity and life. Correctly applying perspectivism thus not only means that the irreducible plurality of citizens' metaphysical conceptions must be allowed for but

ignored by politics, it also means that such a multiplicity must be allowed for, nurtured and taken into consideration by politics, in light of perspectival objectivity and a communally autonomous humanity. In 1883, Nietzsche writes: "Would that you might invent for me the justice that acquits everyone, except him that judges! ... How can I give each his own? Let this be sufficient for me: I give each my own" (Z, I, Adder's, p. 181). Autonomous individuals do not judge others. For: "each person must have his own opinion about every thing about which it is possible to have an opinion, because he himself is a special, unique thing that holds a new, previously nonexistent view about all other things" (HATH, IX, §286, p. 192). In this manner, applying perspectivism is most useful to politics, if its shared aim is efficient, stable, beneficial, socially enhanced personal striving; although for Nietzsche, this goal is valid only among noble equals.

Perspectivism therefore resembles current political pluralism, yet by accepting life's norm of self-affirming vitality, it restricts itself more than pluralism does. Nietzsche's perspectivism is inline with political pluralism's stance that beliefs, interests and needs are irreducibly diverse. Yet, it reins itself in more tightly than political pluralism both by restricting its application to the nobles and by adopting Nietzsche's suggested shared standard of evaluation and valuation in life: more self-affirming vitality. However, pluralism does not question the metaphysical dogmas upon which it rests, such as the universal equality of individuals, which is taken as its starting point. Whereas Nietzsche's perspectivism questions all the potentially obscured, personal, social and overall effects that all framings of reality may have.

Second, sanctioned promising, which goes well beyond mere promising, is understood today, but it is not yet regularly enacted. Promises are the essence of all social interactions. Nonetheless, making a promise is not the same as sanctioning one. When one promises, one agrees to

fulfill the accepted modification in thought or behaviour. Yet, in many circumstances considered acceptable by all involved parties, this agreement may be impeded upon or broken. For instance, Nietzsche claims that by learning a language, one promises or agrees to comply with its acknowledged uses of sounds to convey specific experiences. Still, such acceptance of the recognized thoughts and behaviours does not entail that one can and will not contravene them, if no or few negative consequences ensue from one's departures, such as with 'little white lies,' and especially, if positive ones do, such as with art. Conversely, there are no circumstances in which a sovereign promise may be broken that are also understandable, rational or reasonable. Such sanctioned or sovereign promise-making is coined in familiar expressions such as 'To keep one's word,' 'To be as good as one's word,' 'To walk one's talk,' 'To be a person of their word,' 'To give one's word of honour' and 'One's word is one's bond.' Sovereign promises are thus certainly not yet the norm. For instance, we accept as normal that so-called 'campaign promises' may not be fulfilled once the candidate is elected, or, that international treaties, although signed and ratified, may fall apart at any time. Even the most serious and genuine political promises still cannot be considered as sanctioned, since one can escape their obligations, especially if circumstances change in such a manner that it becomes more beneficial for either or all parties to forego said promises. Since contemporary societies accept such a wide distance between one's words and one's deeds, today promises are not made sovereignly. Given that sovereign promises do not allow for circumstances that warrant a promise not being fulfilled; they are fated and hence, made rare respectful cases.

It follows from the overall contemporary lack of the two main characteristics of sovereign individuals, perspectivism and sanctioned promising, that I must deny that Nietzsche's aristocrats are already present. Nonetheless, the current initiation to these modes of thinking and behaving

not only confirms the possibility of progressing towards their complete realization, which may or may not be desirable, but it also potentially strengthens Nietzsche's claim that negative nihilism and everything that fosters it are its best stimulants. For this reason, I turn to the related question of whether or not any form of nihilism is currently widespread.

As was shown in the first chapter, following Nietzsche, nihilism is the neutral state in which the total lack of unassigned, that is, non-human, meanings and values in the world appears as inherent to it. Nihilism therefore not only requires the loss of one's faith in the articles of religion but also in those of science, logic, and grammar: "I am afraid we are not rid of God because we still have faith in grammar" (TI, Reason, §5, p. 483). Nihilism is concordantly the inescapable state that underlies all creations of meanings and values. Nihilism can therefore be lived either positively or negatively; that is, as the freeing reopening of the primal plane of complete creation, or else as the disorienting and paralyzing, if not suicide-enticing, one. Interpreting nihilism negatively either inhibits all of one's actions or it sends one back to the ascetic ideal and dogmatic metaphysics. Positively experiencing nihilism helps an individual become newly aristocratic and an *Übermensch*. For, one must firmly accept the meaninglessness and valuelessness of reality before the conscious recreation of all one's meanings and values is repeatedly possible for each of one's dominant expression of the unqualified will to power. As Gemes writes in "'We Remain of Necessity Strangers to Ourselves', The Key Message of Nietzsche's Genealogy" (2006): "nihilism is, on first approach, rather distant and unfamiliar, and yet in some deep, perhaps, as yet, unarticulated sense, profoundly close and familiar. ... Europe must first go through nihilism if it is to reach the possibilities of creating genuinely life-affirming values" (p. 203). Thus, from nihilism's

completely blank canvas, new perspectives can emerge and can be consciously redrawn into new interpretations for new purposes.

Nietzsche's foreseen aristocrats hence embrace the sceptical stance of positive nihilism as their opportunity to create meanings and values: "I favor any *skepsis* to which I may reply: 'Let us try it!' But I no longer wish to hear anything of all those things and questions that do not permit any experiment. This is the limit of my 'truthfulness'; for there courage has lost its right" (GS, I, §51, p. 115). However, the currently steadfast belief in the sciences' impartial access to absolute truth inhibits our experiencing positive nihilism while slowly fostering its negative variant. The snares that entrap one in the articles of ascetic dogma are insidious; they infect all of the sciences, because they mostly remain unnoticed in logic and grammar. Nihilism is therefore not currently embraced or widespread. The current widespread reliance upon the natural sciences and language as the ultimate truth-tellers highlights our ascetic belief in an absolute truth about an independent world that we can access impartially. However, once this belief questions itself, rather than foster positive nihilism directly, it will first further the negative variant.

Therefore, having found only a partial contemporary presence of Nietzschean aristocrats and nihilism, I claim that positively nihilistic aristocrats are not yet arrived as a type. It could and should be asked if perhaps they are still being prepared in opposing manners both in and by a few individuals, *à la* Zarathustra, and by society's fostering of the masses and their dogmatic conceptions, which leads to the negative nihilism upon and against which the Zarathustrian individual must work and war? Or, if it is best that Nietzsche's aristocrats are not here and not on their way? Given the scope of this thesis, for now, I answer only that the answer is up to the reader.

Now, with Nietzsche's political positions and their contemporary absences now exposed, I turn to clarifying the textual political implication of Nietzsche's perspectivism in order to see if they cohere with its proper political implications. The eight main characteristics of his perspectivism that were discussed in the previous section will be revisited although here undivided by their two related textual implications: the establishment of a new aristocracy and the rejection of "all" democracy.

First, as I argued in the first chapter, Nietzsche derives his perspectivism from his twofold sceptical ontology that recognizes the pragmatic usefulness and internal consistency of his posits of the 'will to power' and 'nihilism' rather than their truthfulness. Statements that are both consistent with the rest of a given language's accepted statements and responsible for desirable outcomes are thus considered truthful. It ought to follow from this that a polity correlated with perspectivism must also focus on the internal coherence and the pragmatic usefulness of its organization. Such a polity ought to concern itself with the outcomes and the internal consistency of its constitution, rules, rights and responsibilities. Its guiding principles must be coherent with one another, and its rules, rights and responsibilities must cohere foremost with its constitution, then with one another. In fact, "Agonistic democracy is the preferable arrangement for devising political rule, since as such it has no overarching conception of the good, and the sites of power that do unfold in democracy will always be unstable and susceptible to challenges from other power sites" (Hatab, 1995, p. 193). The flexibility of a procedural agonistic democracy mirrors that of perspectivism. That is, perspectivism entails a mostly procedural approach to politics. Its substantive elements should only be found in the consideration of its society's positive outcomes; a position that is not upheld by Nietzsche himself, which Hatab also acknowledges.

Nietzsche proposes that politics, regardless of its actual form, ought to concern itself with and set as its main goals the creation and enhancement of great masterly individuals, of new spiritual aristocrats. “Human society is a trial: thus I teach it - a long trial; and what it tries to find is the commander. A trial, O my brothers, and *not* a ‘contract.’ Break, break this word of the softhearted and half-and-half” (Z, III, Tablets, §25, p. 324)! “O blessed remote time when a people would say to itself, ‘I want to be *master* - over peoples.’ For, my brothers, the best should rule, the best also want to rule. And where the doctrine is different, there the best is *lacking*” (Z, III, Tablets, §21, p. 322). The choice of a society’s rulers is of the utmost importance. Thus, democracy ought not be chosen. For, it does not ensure that “the best” rule. In 1888, Nietzsche reminds us that since 1878, he has declared modern democracy to be “the form of decline in organizing power ... the form of decline of the state” (TI, Skirmishes, §39, p. 543). His new aristocrats ought to rule each other through direct democracy, but they may rule the others however suits them best. His focus is almost exclusively on these new rulers and their wellbeing. Thus, in contrast with the appropriate implications of his perspectivism, Nietzsche’s texts focus on defining the substantive elements of his political system instead of its procedural ones, the truth and goodness of his proposed system and its rulers.

Second, Nietzsche’s perspectivism entails a baseline relativism, but it also goes beyond it by setting as a unifying shared standard the enhancement of self-affirming vitality. Unless we imitate life, there is no absolute standard that is naturally given to us by which we could evaluate every perspective and interpretation. Thus, by proposing a shared standard of human evaluation, which he takes from what he deems to be the sole standard of nature or life: the enhancement of self-affirming vitality, Nietzsche goes beyond the simplistic relativism in which every perspective

is as valuable as the next for the preservation of life and humanity. In perspectivism's appropriate political system, each member of a society ought to be free to uphold any values and political ideas they wish. However, since Nietzsche's perspectivism goes beyond this baseline relativity by adopting a universal evaluative norm, its corresponding political system ought to similarly pass relativism and determine its fundamental guiding principles or aims for living together, which can then allow for the differing evaluation of each member's political values and beliefs. A society that is organized following Nietzsche's perspectivism is not obligated to adopt his suggested norm. Nonetheless, it must both be able to see the value and good in every one of its members' values political and ideas, individuals or groups, and not lose sight of their differing value in light of that society's chosen aims.

In 1886, Nietzsche proposes that in light of his suggested goal to cultivate and enhance his new aristocrats, all other citizens are to be reduced to their instruments and servants. "A people is a detour of nature to get to six or seven great men" (BGE, IV, §126, p. 277). He further writes that "a good and healthy aristocracy ... accepts with a good conscience the sacrifice of untold human beings who, for its sake, must be reduced and lowered to incomplete human beings, to slaves, to instruments" (BGE, IX, §258, p. 392). However, in his previous book, Nietzsche writes that these underlings or 'dogs' ought to be allowed to keep their own beliefs, if they don't interfere with the aristocrats' or 'wolves' rulings and plans. "Thus the master lets his slaves have their way and is even amused by their pranks" (Z, II, Wise, p. 214). In some passages, he even encourages quickening their inevitable demise: "he whom you cannot teach to fly, teach to fall faster" (Z, III, Tablets, §20, p. 321)! In this manner, unfortunately, against what I have argued are the appropriate implications of his perspectivism, Nietzsche seems to minimize and ridicule, if

not entirely forego, the relative valuation of all non-aristocrats in light of their instrumental value for his new aristocracy. Nietzsche's position is incompatible with current liberal democracies.

Third, Nietzsche's perspectivism claims that all statements and knowledge are all equally created, although they are not all created equally. There is, Nietzsche thinks, no essential truth or falsity to any statement. Nevertheless, those that do not encourage self-affirming vitality are 'false' and less valuable. Thus, a political system that follows from his perspectivism must also accept that no proposition about a political system is in itself true or false; no political system is itself better than another. Each type of political arrangement ought to be considered and evaluated based on its ability to bring forth a given society's aims most effectively and efficiently. Perspectivism ought to lead Nietzsche to a permanent political flexibility with regard to the correctness of the system in place. Instead, however, he proposes, in 1886, that: "The essential characteristic of a good and healthy aristocracy, however, is that it experiences itself not as a function (of the monarchy or the commonwealth) but as their meaning and highest justification" (BGE, IX, §258, p. 392). He seems to unwaveringly advocate his foreseen aristocrats' rule, even if it somehow exists within another political arrangement. Also, given Nietzsche's specific aim of fostering a new aristocracy, he does not dismiss or disallow the possibility of horrible authoritarian regimes.

Fourth, Nietzsche's perspectivism is a theory that applies to itself coherently or without being self-defeating. In fact, its logical coherency and validity are underlined precisely by its self-referentiality. Outside of the sciences and everyday affairs, truth is a perspective that is chosen among many others. It can change, if a society changes its norms of what is acceptable. It follows that a political system that takes its lead from Nietzsche's perspectivism ought to embrace the existence of all competing political systems while simultaneously offering itself to its society's

members as a better method for attaining their chosen goals. The elimination of any competing political regimes must follow from a lack of support and not simply arise beforehand from an ideological substantive position. Yet, Nietzsche disparages modern democracies for their essential characteristics, rather than for their inability to reach his suggested goal of rearing new aristocrats. A criticism he could not make, since he acknowledges that the democracies he so disparages also provide the plasticity needed to develop such a caste:

The very same new conditions that will on the average lead to the levelling and mediocritization of man - to a useful, industrious, handy, multi-purpose herd animal — are likely in the highest degree to give birth to exceptional human beings of the most dangerous and attractive quality. ... while the democratization of Europe leads to the production of a type that is prepared for *slavery* in the subtlest sense, in single exceptional cases the *strong* human being will have to turn out stronger and richer than perhaps ever before. Thanks to the abundance of prejudice from his training, thanks to the tremendous manifoldness of practice, art, and mask. I mean to say: the democratization of Europe is at the same time an involuntary arrangement for the cultivation of *tyrants* — taking that word in every sense, including the most spiritual (BGE, VIII, §242, pp. 366-367).

Thus, despite his recognition of their involuntary benefits and against his perspectivism's political open-mindedness, Nietzsche associates fully inclusive democracies with decadence and illness and “splinter wills” whose end he wishes for through “*one will* by means of a new caste that would rule Europe, a long, terrible will of its own that would be able to cast its goal millennia hence” (BGE, VI, §208, p. 321). He wishes for a strong-willed ruling caste that can achieve his goal of strengthening humanity's future, even if it arises through the weakening of or at the cost all non-aristocrats.

Fifth, Nietzsche's perspectivism redefines objectivity as seeing a reality from as many different perspectives as possible, as collecting or gathering multiple partial perspectives in order to grasp a reality from its multiple angles or aspects. It follows that a political system that wishes

to apply Nietzsche's perspectivism should also include the widest diversity of political ideas and interpretations available. Thus, the corresponding political system ought to be fully inclusive, discursive and participatory. It ought to encourage an ongoing discussion about itself, its guiding principles, rules, rights and responsibilities that includes all willing participants, as well as foster the participation of all its members; in these ways, gathering as many perspectives as possible. However, given the large size of societies and the limited number of citizens with the interests and skills required to govern, such full and fully inclusive political participation, claims Hatab, is more easily and efficiently ensured by a representative democracy (1995, p. 124). In spite of these difficulties, I propose that instead direct democracy is the best guarantor of equal, active and communal self-creation and self-government, if only among Nietzsche's aristocrats. For, the noble all require direct political participation, that is, a participatory, discursive, elitist to others but fully inclusive to them direct democracy. A representative democracy, even a fully inclusive one, would require that some nobles delegate their command to others, which would reduce them to their slaves. Such a case, all nobles consider unacceptable, and in that case, claims Nietzsche, they would prefer to preserve their freedom in isolation.

In any case, perspectivism, by both accepting no absolute truths and having no capacity-based grounds for excluding any perspectives, ought to lead to political participation that is open to all citizens equally. Yet, given Nietzsche's standard of self-affirming vitality, it does not. His proposed aristocracy cannot fully encourage discursive participation, as it only has a few selected rulers; everyone else must merely obey. He specifically restricts his projected rulers to those very "few" individuals who are "able" and have "the will" (Z, III, Tablets, §7, p. 312) to speak his new truth, who are hard, who are able to command as well as obey themselves and who "do not want

to have anything for nothing" (Z, III, Tablets, §5, p. 311). At least twice, Nietzsche writes: "creators are hard. ... Only the noblest is altogether hard ... *become hard*" (Z, III, Tablets, §29, p. 326/II, Hammer, p. 563); and like hard diamonds among soft coal, creators are more rare and more valuable.

Next, Nietzsche's perspectivism proposes non-exclusionary scales to better account for all binary differences; opposites are merely the extremes of a single scale or gradation. This thus precludes eliminating any aspect of life because of its qualifications, such as 'bad' or 'evil,' but rather it fosters their elimination by their lack of support. Likewise, a political system derived from Nietzsche's perspectivism should be non-exclusionary. No individual, group or idea ought to be eliminated, unless it is eliminated by its lack of support. Yet, he excludes the possibility of fully inclusive democracies because of their qualities, notably an association with *ressentiment*. Georges Goedert (1999) claims that Nietzsche's association of democracy with *ressentiment* misses democracy's alternative origin in the love of humanity, as Henri Bergson proposes (p. 242). "Die Gleichheit aber, ganz egal aus welchem politischer Lange sie stammt, wird selber zu einer Quelle des Ressentiments. Also: *circulus vitiosus* der demokratischen Gleichheit" (Goedert, 1999, pp. 237-238)!⁸⁹ Still, I disagree that Nietzsche exclusively associates the source as well as the results of democracy with *ressentiment*, although I recognize that he does so in the case of inclusive democracy. In the case of the exclusive or limited democracy that naturally occurs among the nobles, however, Nietzsche proposes that its source is their mutual desire to rule and enmity and its results is their mutual respect and friendship. He praises the nobles' sentiment or

⁸⁹ Goedert uses Nietzsche's criticism of democracy and *ressentiment* beyond his own intentions to improve today's democracy by breaking its vicious cycle with *ressentiment*. To which end, he employs Rawls's "justice as fairness" to eliminate the conditions of envy or *ressentiment*.

feeling of distance from and height or superiority over their subjected counterparts, their “*pathos of distance*” (BGE, IX, §257, p. 391/GM, I, §2, p. 462), which leads them to only interacting with one another through direct democracy.

Seventh, Nietzsche presents his perspectivism as being relational in nature. No solitary perspective on anything is possible because of the idiosyncrasy and the anthropocentrism of its creation. It follows that a political system correlated to perspectivism should dismiss all single-leader political arrangements, for the reason that they are not able to fully embrace the relational nature inherent to his perspectivism. Again, on this point, Nietzsche’s texts are not completely consistent with the proper implications his perspectivism. Instead, he advocates the rule of the fewest best, which could allow for the rule of the solitary best, should the case arise. In 1888, he writes of the natural tripartite pyramid that is a “heathy” society. “The highest cast - I call them *the fewest*- being perfect, also has the privilege of the fewest ... They rule not because they want to but because they *are*; they are not free to be second” (A, §57, pp. 645-646). And a few years beforehand, he writes that: “The time of kings has passed: what calls itself a people today deserves no kings” (Z, III, Tablets, §21, p. 322). Thus, Nietzsche recognizes that the modern lack of understanding of and desire for rank, which comes with the increased inclusivity of democracy, disallow for monarchies as well as for his new proposed aristocracy to take hold.

Lastly, Nietzsche creates his perspectivism as dynamic; first, because in it, becoming has precedent over being; second, because it embraces the fluidity both of the various individual and collective perspectives possible and of the objectivity that these perspectives create once they are all collected; and third, because it is relational as just seen briefly. Accordingly, a political system generated from Nietzsche’s perspectivism ought to be fluid or flexible in terms of its actual ar-

rangement, from its leaders to its guiding principles, rules, rights and responsibilities. The solid or inflexible elements of such a system must be restricted as much as possible; it must remain a stable political system while maximizing its dynamism. However, given his strong belief in a triangular political arrangement as “*a natural order*,” such political dynamism seems limited. For, in 1888, Nietzsche writes: “whatever is *different* is contrived — contrived for the ruin of nature” (A, §57, pp. 645-646). Nietzsche claims that hierarchies, like his proposed aristocracy, are naturally necessary.

I end this chapter by proposing that Nietzsche’s infamous textual political claims are largely opposed to the political implications that actually follow from his perspectivism. Rather than generally advocating a flexible multi-leader political system, which is mostly procedural and coherence focused, non-exclusive, participatory and discursive, Nietzsche mostly recommends a substantive, exclusive, authoritarian aristocracy. He largely disparages democracy, although he does not specify the type. Thus, I have argued that Nietzsche consistently attacks all inclusive representative democracies, while he sparsely but positively describes the inner workings of his proposed aristocracy as one would an exclusive or elitist direct democracy. Finally, given these inner workings, I have ventured to see if the sanctioned promising, perspectivism and positive nihilism upon which the second is based, were present today. I found that they were barely (perhaps, thankfully) beginning to be.

Conclusion

My doctoral dissertation aimed to determine the proper and textual political implications of Nietzsche's perspectivism. In the first chapter, I argued that Nietzsche ought to be read as a twofold metaphysical sceptic whose working ontological posits are 'neutral nihilism' and the 'will to power.' Itself neutral, nihilism is the natural state of humanity. In it, we realize that all of our meanings and values are created. Nihilism can be interpreted positively or negatively. Respectively, it can allow for the recreation of all meanings and values or it can be terrifying. The will to power is the unqualified substrata of all reality and it is each qualifiable aspect of reality that the first creates. It is a dynamic, relational, ontological and anthropological term that focuses on becoming and not just on beings and events. All drives can be reduced to the unqualified ontological will to power, which notably creates an anthropological account of human beings as qualifiable wills to power. There are five types: master, slave, priests, ill master and the *Übermensch*. The last type is Nietzsche's ideal. It is a childlike, perspectivism embracing, sovereign, collective, Dionysian individual, who, having the great health, embraces reality as it appears and who would do so again eternally.

In the following chapter, I argued that perspectivism is Nietzsche's ontologically based created epistemology, which goes beyond the relativism of all perspectives equally preserving humanity and life, by adopting life's shared standard of evaluation, self-affirming ascendance. Perspectivism is ontological, because perspectives are created or upheld by a qualifiable will to power; through perspectives, all knowledge is created. Perspectivism is itself created, given that perspectives are all created. If language and perception both invariably involve the creation of metaphors, so too does all knowledge. Perspectivism is relativistic. All perspectives can equally

preserve humanity and life. To move past this relativism, perspectivism requires a standard; here, life's norm of self-affirming vitality. Moreover, perspectivism was shown to unmask and surmount three perspectives that Nietzsche finds very harmful. Respectively, because perspectives are partial, life's servants and contestable, perspectivism challenges all dogmatic positions that claim infallibility, superiority over life and an exclusive access to truth.

In the final chapter, perspectivism's political implications were found to correspond to a flexible multi-leader political system, which is mostly coherence focused, procedural, non-exclusive, participatory and discursive, although against Nietzsche's expressed aims. His texts favour instead a new spiritual aristocracy on the world-stage, or else his aristocrats' political segregation and isolation from the democratic masses, or even solitude. Nietzsche's aristocrats, being noble peers, can only govern themselves through an elitist direct democracy. Thus, to account for these paradoxical claims about democracy, I proposed a distinction between Nietzsche's favourable position on an elitist direct democracy and his vehement one opposing inclusive representative democracy. I claimed that he embraces the former's ability to channel dissension among noble peers and despises the latter's overextension of equality to all, thereby devaluing domination. This interpretation is implicitly supported by his sparse suggestions regarding public education and media. I argue that perspectivism implies that each citizen should have an equal and direct say in the decisions that may be enforced upon them whether or not they are an aristocrat or *Übermensch*, despite Nietzsche's own claims to the contrary. Still, in conjunction with his claims about noble education, I proposed that each should be educated as experientially, as perspectively, as much and as widely as possible, as well as taught to promise sovereignly and embrace perspectivism, which relies upon positive nihilism. Then, I examined the possibility of these concepts ha-

ving a contemporary presence, but more accurately, found an absence. They are only narrowly recognizable in contemporary Western liberal democracies. The question, nevertheless, remained regarding this change, monumental in its importance, size and in the extent of its effects, of it being desirable or not.

In the end, I claim that, on the one hand, Nietzsche's proposed political guidelines are highly undesirable, if only because they are aristocratic. Yet, on the other hand, I argue that the proper political implications of Nietzsche's perspectivism could be desirable, since they could entail a political system that embraces direct democracy, even over representative democracy. The proper political implications of Nietzsche's perspectivism warranted being developed, first, to highlight their incongruity with Nietzsche's texts and, second, to determine that they, and thereby the adoption of perspectivism, could be of value and use for strengthening contemporary liberal democracies, if despite Nietzsche's wishes.

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