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How hard is it to create values?

Abstract: This article examines what Nietzsche might mean by the proposition that “values are created”. It further raises the issue whether there is a “hard problem of value” analogous to the “hard problem” in the philosophy of mind. Nietzsche could be seen as a philosopher who tried to shift people’s views about values away from any realist-objectivist intuitions. He was optimistic that these views could be eliminated, and that eventually most or all would come to conceive of values as perspectival and created. It is shown first that Nietzsche rejects value realism in favour of a compelling antirealist conception of value, which he takes to be superior due to one specific property of values, their “aliveness”. If there is a “hard problem of value”, however, i.e. that for the realist any created value simply does not count as a value, it is unclear if Nietzsche’s conception is constructive.

Keywords: Nietzsche, values, antirealism, realism, “hard problem of value”.

Zusammenfassung: Der Beitrag überprüft, was Nietzsche mit der Behauptung meinen könnte, „Werte seien geschaffen“. Er wirft ferner die Frage auf, ob es ein „hartes Wertproblem“ des Werteschaffens analog zum „harten Problem“ in der Philosophie des Geistes gibt. Nietzsche könnte als Philosoph betrachtet werden, der versuchte, das Denken über Werte von allen realistisch-objektivistischen Intuitionen abzuwenden. Er war zuversichtlich, dass dieses Denken überwunden werden könnte und die meisten, wenn nicht alle dazu kommen würden, Werte perspektivisch als geschaffene zu verstehen. Es wird zuerst gezeigt, dass Nietzsche den Werterealismus zugunsten einer einleuchtenden antirealistischen Wertkonzeption verwirft, die er insbesondere aufgrund einer einzigen spezifischen Eigenschaft von Werten für überlegen hält, ihrer „Lebendigkeit“. Wenn es jedoch ein „hartes Wertproblem“ gibt und für den Realisten jeder geschaffene Wert schlicht nicht als Wert zählt, bleibt unklar, ob Nietzsches Konzeption weiterführt.

Schlagwörter: Nietzsche, Werte, Antirealismus, Realismus, „hartes Wertproblem“.

Kritik der subjektiven Werthgefühle. Das Gewissen. Ehemals schloß man: das Gewissen verwirft diese Handlung: folglich ist diese Handlung verwerflich. Thatsächlich verwirft das Gewissen eine Handlung, weil dieselbe lange verworfen worden ist. Es spricht bloß nach: es schafft keine Werthe. (Nachlass 1888, 15[92], KSA 13.461)

Der Werth des Lebens liegt in den Werthschätzungen: Werthschätzungen sind Geschaffenes, nichts Genommenes, Gelerntes, Erfahrenes. Das Geschaffene muß vernichtet werden, um dem neu-Geschaffenen Platz zu machen: zum Lebenkönnen der Werthschätzungen gehört ihre Fähigkeit, vernichtet zu werden. Der Schöpfer muß immer ein Vernichter sein. Das Werthschätzen selber aber kann sich nicht vernichten: das aber ist das Leben. (Nachlass 1882/83, 5[1]234, KSA 10.214)

In the philosophy of mind we sometimes speak of a “hard problem” when we seek to accommodate in our theories not only the physical or functional properties of mental states, but also their phenomenal properties. Arguably, attempts to eliminate phenomenal properties have not made them go away. One might contend that these properties came back persistently and ever more forcefully, and that the “hard problem” is only now taken seriously. I want to try out an analogy and claim that a similarly hard problem might also exist in the philosophy of value. Nietzsche could be seen as one of the philosophers who forcefully tried to shift people’s views about values away from any metaphysical, realist-objectivist intuitions: Nietzsche was optimistic that ultimately such views could be eliminated. Arguably, to this day they have not gone away. And when antirealist “creativists” about value try to create, communicate, and share their perspectival values across the meta-ethical divide, to the realist their creations do not even count as values. If Nietzsche was wrong – too optimistic – that most or all people would eventually come to conceive of values as created, then might he be blind to the hard problem of values? A problem that, if taken seriously, might require very different – rather than “eliminative” – solutions? Before I return to these questions at the end of this article, I will first explore what Nietzsche actually means by “creating values”.

In 1888 Nietzsche criticises the idea of “conscience”. It is not that conscience is a poor judge in matters of value. In fact, it judges very accurately, and usually without much inefficient doubt, that which has been accepted, learned, and experienced as “right” or “wrong”, “good” or “bad” innumerable times. The logic that drives conscience’s mechanism of intuitive judgements, Nietzsche argues, appears to those who rely on it as follows: (Premise 1) Conscience intuitively condemns action x, (Premise 2) Whatever conscience condemns is bad, (Conclusion) Action x is bad. Conscience, according to Nietzsche, is realist and objectivist about values. It knows what it takes to be good or bad based on some kind of value recognition or value encounter. But, according to what can be seen as Nietzsche’s attack on most varieties of intuitionism (that we somehow intuit moral properties), it is recognition only of what has previously been embodied – evolutionarily and culturally – as commendable or condemnable. Whatever the causal mechanisms, Nietzsche suspects conscience works more like this: (P1) Action x has been evaluated negatively or positively many times, (P2) Conscience recognises an action as an instance of action x, (C) Conscience condemns or commends action x.

Thus, when it comes to values and how one should act, not in the thin sense of what is customary, but in the ethical sense proper of how one should live, conscience is not a reliable mechanism for “detecting” the “right” values. As Nietzsche puts it, conscience “merely repeats after [*Es spricht bloß nach*],” it “does not create values [*es schafft keine Werthe*]” (Nachlass 1888, 15[92], KSA 13.461). “Conscience” is merely one part of what Nietzsche takes to be the self-system that is composed of drives, affects, and unconscious and conscious mental states.¹ He believes that such self-systems

¹ Nietzsche takes selves to be systems of drives and affects, partly innate and partly acculturated, and

produce, more or less automatically, and not just in the moral domain, the sensory, affective, cognitive, and imaginative “feelings of value” (*subjectiven Werthgefühle*)

unconscious and conscious mental states. For example, arachnophobia could be seen as the expression of an innate drive or instinct to avoid what is, or used to be, dangerous for a self-system. Drives create, to use Katsafanas’ term, an affective orientation – picking out this black spot as a spider and “coloring” it with felt fear or disgust – accompanied by the conscious thought that “spiders must be avoided.” Self-systems avoid spiders unless there are other, competing, or acquired drive-affect orientations.

A guilty conscience would be a different example. In Nietzsche’s model, conscience functions through innate and acculturated affective orientations and concomitant judgements expressing what is customarily praised, or prohibited. It functions by creating immediate affective orientations, conscious and unconscious, e.g., pride, shame or guilt, which motivate actions. Nietzsche takes consciousness to be much less fundamental than is traditionally assumed, though not, in my assessment, as epiphenomenal. Current debates are trying to understand what function different types of conscious mental states can play in his model of self. While both Schopenhauer and Nietzsche (they differ but Nietzsche’s view is heavily indebted to Schopenhauer) argue that conscious states are often “confabulatory,” both leave ample room for the causal efficacy of consciousness. Schopenhauer, for example, takes character to be largely innate but he allows for different, conscious conceptualizations of a situation to result in very different actions. Although character and motive for him determine an action, it matters greatly, for example, whether you think of person x behind the bathroom door as a friend or as an enemy. If you, mistakenly, think of x as your enemy, given your character, the representation will be a motive for specific actions. If, however, for whatever reason, you become conscious of your error, and you recognize (“re-represent”) person x as your friend instead, this will, given your (largely selfsame) character, result in different actions. As regards Nietzsche, in *Daybreak* 103 he states, for example, that “we have to learn to think differently, in order at last, perhaps very late on, to attain even more: to feel differently.” What distinguishes human self-systems from most animal self-systems is that abstract, conscious thoughts, and not just immediate representations or stimuli, can be motives. This allows for the possibility to change over time the drive-affect-thought composition of self-systems also through conscious, reflective thought. If I no longer consciously conceptualize the person next door as “the immigrant”, but as “my neighbor”, this will over time put the self-system in a different drive-affect-thought state that results in different affective orientations – or attitudes – and actions. For example, an arachnologist will over time develop a fine-grained range of affective orientations and concomitant higher-order thoughts and actions appropriate to different types of spiders. Not everyone has what it takes to become an arachnologist, just as not everyone has what it takes to become Mother Teresa. This is consistent with the interpretation that character (Schopenhauer) or psycho-physiological type (Nietzsche) together with a motive determine action, and that there is considerable room for affecting how one acts given who one is, i.e. who one becomes.

Changing values (in a broad sense of perceptual, aesthetic, and ethical values) for selves conceived as such requires, as I will argue, changing the sensory, affective, cognitive, and imaginative capacities, creating new ways of seeing, feeling, and conceptualizing the world. The literature on these issues is vast. See, for example, Brian Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, London 2002; Paul Katsafanas, *Nietzsche’s Theory of Mind: Consciousness and Conceptualization*, in: *European Journal of Philosophy* 13 (2005), pp. 1–31; recent contributions by Peter Railton, R. Lanier Anderson and Christopher Janaway in Christopher Janaway / Simon Robertson (eds.), *Nietzsche, Naturalism and Normativity*, Oxford 2012; contributions by Günter Abel, Paul Katsafanas, and Rex Welshon, in Manuel Dries / Peter Kail (eds.), *Nietzsche on Mind and Nature*, Oxford 2015. Other important collections are Brian Leiter / Neil Sinhababu (eds.), *Nietzsche and Morality*, Oxford 2007, and Ken Gemes / Simon May (eds.), *Nietzsche on Freedom and Autonomy*, Oxford 2009.

that motivate action: just as when *x* is hungry, she immediately sees the piece of fruit as salient and attractive, judges it to be edible, imagines it to have a certain pleasant taste, and therefore reaches out to pluck it. When *x* witnesses *y* stealing the apple, given her moral culture, she immediately sees *y* as bad, judges *y* to be wrong, imagines bad consequences, and feels some pressure to act in some way (e.g., confront or report *y*).

While conscience is thus useful to motivate drive-selves to comport and control themselves in certain ways, and to regulate the behaviour of groups, it is not a mechanism that would detect any positive value in what is novel or the exception to the rule. Not only is conscience not in the business of creating any new values, it would actually, Nietzsche suggests, appraise any new, innovative values negatively.

As I have indicated, Nietzsche champions an evolutionary account of moral judgement that I cannot discuss here in any detail.² I also cannot attempt any comprehensive account of Nietzsche's views on values. What I do wish to discuss is his conception of "created" values: what it might mean theoretically, and how one might in practice "create" values. To this end I will focus my discussion on one passage that features the proposition, "values are created" (proposition VC). In Section 1, I will discuss the indirect definition of "created" that Nietzsche provides in Nachlass 1882/83, 5[1]234, KSA 10.214, that points to what I take to be his rejection of value realism in favour of (a type of) antirealism. In Section 2, I will discuss two requirements he stipulates of created values. In Section 3, I will argue that he takes created values to be superior due to one specific property, their "aliveness". It is only in Section 4 that I address the practical question and raise the issue of what I see as the "hard problem of value", for which I take Nietzsche to have little concern.

1 What "created" values are not (against value realism)

In the 1882/83 notebook 5[1], Nietzsche writes the following passage, which for ease of reference I divide here into ten proposition-like sentences:

- (1) The value of life lies in the evaluations [literally "value-estimations", *Werthschätzungen*]:
- (2) Evaluations are something that is *created* [*Geschaffenes*],
- (3) [Evaluations are] not taken, learned, experienced.
- (4) What is created must be annihilated [*vernichtet*],

² On a recent defense of Nietzsche's contention that moral judgements are "symptoms", "sign-languages" of the affects (BGE 187), see Brian Leiter, *Moralities are a Sign-Language of the Affects*, in: *Social Philosophy and Policy* 30 (2013), p. 237–258. For an illustrative example, see D 34, which Leiter discusses on p. 255.

- (5) in order to make room for what is newly created:
- (6) The evaluations' *ability to live* [*Lebenkönnen*]
- (7) requires their ability to be annihilated.
- (8) The creator [*Schöpfer*] must always be an annihilator [*Vernichter*].
- (9) Valuing itself, however, cannot annihilate itself:
- (10) *This, however, is life.* (Nachlass 1882/83, 5[1]234, KSA 10.214)

I would like to bracket for now lines (1) and (9)–(10), the title and the conclusion of note 5[1]234, which assert that the value of life as a whole depends on creating values or evaluations (*Werthschätzungen*). I will return to (1) and (9)–(10) at the end of Section 4.

In (2)–(3) Nietzsche offers a provisional definition *ex negativo* of what he means by “created” (*Geschaffenes*). “Created”, we are told here means (i) *not* taken or taken up (*Genommenes*), (ii) not learned (*Gelerntes*), and (iii) not experienced (*Erfahrenes*). It is not immediately clear what these three qualifications of “created” denote. Do they refer to three *different* properties of created values, or rather point to one way of thinking about values that Nietzsche wishes to exclude? What would it mean for values – presumably those that are not “created” – to be “taken,” “learned,” and “experienced”?

The German language has, for example, the verbs *annehmen*, “to take on or accept”, *aufnehmen*, “to take in or take up”, and *übernehmen*, “to take over, take on or receive”. We might wish to say that for a value to be *genommen*, “taken up”, “taken on” or “taken in”, it would have to (i*) be there in some way or form, ready for “the taking”. For a value to be anything that could be “learned” or “taught”, again it presumably would have to (ii*) exist in some way or form, available to someone to teach or learn that value. And for a value to be “experienced”, again, it would have to (iii*) be there in some way or form, for someone³ to experience a value in some kind of value encounter. Values, Nietzsche asserts, are none of the above. “Created” derives its meaning from what is often referred to as Nietzsche’s antirealism about value.⁴ The three qualities, it seems, point to one and the same supposition about values that he

³ Nietzsche sometimes speaks as if “values” were pervasive in the sense of also including the non-human, the organic “values” in some sense. While Nietzsche does indeed at times speak this way, and while he most definitely held metaphysical views that favor a kind of “continuum model” defended by Günter Abel, *Bewusstsein – Sprache – Natur. Nietzsches Philosophie des Geistes*, in: *Nietzsche-Studien* 30 (2001), pp. 1–43; also Galen Strawson, *Nietzsche’s Metaphysics?*, in: Dries / Kail (eds.), *Nietzsche on Mind and Nature*, I will limit my discussion here to the sphere of human values.

⁴ For recent discussions of Nietzsche’s metaethical views, see Janaway / Robertson, *Nietzsche, Naturalism and Normativity*, pp. 1–19; also Brian Leiter, *Nietzsche’s Moral and Political Philosophy*, in: Edward N. Zalta (ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2013 Edition), URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2013/entries/nietzsche-moral-political>>; and Nadeem J.Z. Hussain, *Nietzsche’s Metaethical Stance*, in: John Richardson / Ken Gemes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Nietzsche*, Oxford / New York 2014, pp. 389–415, who, following Leiter, emphasizes that it is ultimately impossible to attribute to Nietzsche one particular metaethical stance.

wants to deny, namely their real *qua* independent and objective existence. He indirectly defines “created” then – in opposition to any traditional realist understanding of value as something “out there” that makes our moral claims true or false – as precisely *not* this kind of independently existing thing.⁵

One might be tempted to ask a number of questions. On what grounds is he denying value realism? And if he is an antirealist about values, is he an “error theorist” who does believe that moral claims purport to be claims that can be true or false (which is why they are all false)?⁶ Or is he a non-cognitivist, expressivist about value, who denies that moral claims purport to refer to independent moral facts, and in fact express motivational mental states such as emotions, desires, attitudes of approval and disapproval? Is he a fictionalist or perhaps irrealist?⁷

Much has been written in recent years on Nietzsche’s commitment to naturalism and different types of antirealism about value. In what follows I will not enter the metaethical debate. I would suggest instead that this passage be read *hypothetically*, in the spirit of BGE 36. “What if” (*Gesetzt*) values are created rather than out there “like petroleum in the earth” (see Section 4), fully formed and ready to be discovered, taken up, learned, and encountered!

2 The “annihilation” and “novelty” requirements

After his initial, indirect definition of “created” in opposition to value realism, note 5[1]234 emphasises the connection that qualifies created values further. (4) and (8) specify what I wish to call the annihilation requirement, and (5) the novelty requirement:

- (4) What is created must be annihilated [*vernichtet*],
- (5) in order to make room for what is newly created
- (8) The creator must always be an annihilator.

⁵ This is not true, e.g., of our conception of geometric properties. We assume the circle in the sand has the property of being a circle even if no one is measuring it. However “values” are only “there” when activated in actual human acts of valuation.

⁶ On Nietzsche as an error theorist see, e.g., Nadeem J.Z. Hussain, *Honest illusion: valuing for Nietzsche’s free spirits*, in: Leiter / Sinhababu (eds.), *Nietzsche and Morality*, pp. 157–191, and Manuel Dries, *Nietzsche’s Critique of Staticism*, in: Manuel Dries (ed.), *Nietzsche on Time and History*, New York / Berlin 2008, pp. 1–19. Error theorists about moral discourse hold that a sentence such as “lying is morally wrong” are typically asserted as true or false, but that they are untrue.

⁷ Non-cognitivism, a form of anti-realism, can be roughly defined here as the non-existence of moral knowledge. But as is commonly acknowledged, this tells us only what moral statements are not, e.g., not beliefs that can be true or false, and leaves room for a great many proposals of what they might be.

What if one's attitude to values were such that values are the kinds of things that are always already there, to be taken up, discovered, taught, and experienced in encounters with them? If one thought that there existed some kind of ahistorical and universal value space to which one had, at times, access? If such a Platonist realm of values existed, then they certainly could not be annihilated and the value space, the set of all values, would at no time and at no point be subject to change.⁸

Nietzsche's argumentative strategy is familiar. He often challenges what I have elsewhere called a certain "staticism" that he thinks characterises the dominant way that privileges the stability, permanence, and certainty of beliefs and values. Critical of staticist values that govern language and thought, he usually offers an exaggerated position (like the one I just presented) that hypostatizes the "static" and then contrasts it with a different perspective that allows for – appreciates and values positively – change, instability, and uncertainty.

If the "value space" were static and values could never have come into existence and go out of existence, then (4) would be correct: they could not be annihilated.⁹ Nietzsche seems to argue that unless one got rid of a strong realist assumption that there are objective moral facts or properties, and that the value space is fixed and closed, there would be no room for (5) *novelty* in the realm of values. Realism about values, then, in Nietzsche's exaggerated presentation, would not just threaten the possibility of novelty, it would make innovation in the space of values outright impossible.

We can summarise Nietzsche's argument as follows: If values are taken as metaphysically real, and if by real we mean "not subject to change," "ahistorical," then neither values nor the set of all values admit of change. For a strong realist, new values could be at best conceived as *newly discovered*. Innovation, however, requires changes to values and the value space. This is the meaning of (4): it must in principle be possible for any value to be annihilated.¹⁰

It is well-known that one of Nietzsche's philosophical projects is committed to what he calls the "transvaluation" (*Umwertung*) of values. This project clearly requires changes to at least some values. One might ask about the normative justification for such a project: based on which value or values does he assess traditional values? Is it simply that old values are problematic, and if so, by which value standard are they

⁸ Except presumably by God, who is not traditionally conceived as making things up as he goes.

⁹ While values need to be capable of "annihilation" in Nietzsche's proposals for new, created values, this is crucially different from auto-annihilation (*Selbstentwertung*), which he sees as a highly problematic feature of traditional values, one of the causes of nihilism.

¹⁰ For Nietzsche "valuation" is never absolute or categorical, but always contextual, and this means that every positive valuation is also a negative valuation. To say (or act as if) I like Ligeti is always tacitly to say or act as if I preferred him to Bach, and that means a kind of disvaluation, of a contextual and relative kind, of Bach. If I "value" Ligeti, I "annihilate" Bach.

problematic?¹¹ Or is the *Umwertung* based on a value or values that are privileged, and that are exempt from the requirement of annihilation? Before we come back to these questions in Section 4, let us return to note 5[1]234 in order to find out more about the meaning of created values. In (4)–(5) annihilation was introduced as a necessary condition for novelty.¹² Propositions (6)–(7) are characteristically concise:

- (6) the evaluations” *ability to live* [*Lebenkönnen*]
 (7) requires their ability to be annihilated.

In (6)–(7) Nietzsche makes an additional, conceptual point. Unless something is by definition capable of annihilation, it cannot be said to have ever been properly alive. And what has never been alive cannot be said to have ever been properly real or effective (*wirklich*). The claim in (6)–(7) is then that what can be predicated of you, me, Dolly the sheep, or the French Revolution must also be the case for values.¹³ A value, conceived as ahistorical, universal and unchanging, “really real” by the Platonist standards Nietzsche rejects, would never count as *properly* real, if it could not, by the standard of “aliveness”, be annihilated. But what is the positive content, what is meant by a “living” value?

3 “Living” values?

We have no difficulties making sense of metaphorical statements such as “the French Revolution is still alive in France today”, or “Dada, the art movement, is dead”. Both refer to historical, political and aesthetic events and movements that strove for new

¹¹ As is well known, Nietzsche gives a number of reasons, such as the impending threat of nihilism, the existence of an ascetic culture that hampers human flourishing, and *vice versa* the lack of a culture that fosters flourishing of a certain kind.

¹² It is not difficult to obtain novelty without annihilation of existing values. New values could be added, *ad infinitum*, without the need for annihilation or change of existing values. If, however, we conceive values not atomistically but holistically, then at least the relational properties of values would change, and in this sense previous values would change in their relational properties the moment new values are added to the value space. On a recent discussion of different types of value holism and a defence of Moorean holism against Dancy, see Campbell Brown, Two Kinds of Holism about Values, in: *The Philosophical Quarterly* 57 (2007), pp. 456–463; on holism in Nietzsche’s account of aesthetic value, see Peter Railton, Nietzsche’s Normative Theory? The Art and Skill of Living Well, in: Janaway / Robertson (eds.), *Nietzsche, Naturalism, and Normativity*, pp. 20–51; on Nietzsche’s value monism, see John Richardson, Nietzsche’s Value Monism: Saying Yes to Everything, in: Dries / Kail (eds.), *Nietzsche on Mind and Nature*, ch. 5.

¹³ Alain Badiou’s ethics of the event, which are roughly based on the idea that an event (in spheres such as politics, love, art, and science) creates its own values and normative framework, uses “alive” in precisely the Nietzschean sense. See, e.g., Alain Badiou, *Ethics. An Essay on the Understanding of Evil*, trans. P. Hallward, New York / London 2001, p. 41.

political and aesthetic values respectively. When Kazimir Malevich painted “Black Square” (conceived in 1913 and exhibited for the first time in 1915), he noted that the artist can be a creator only when “everything disappears”, when the forms in a picture no longer have anything in common with what one merely encounters in nature. Echoing Nietzsche’s critique of conscience, he writes with reference to the revered masters of the Renaissance: “they should have created, but they repeated”.¹⁴ “Black Square” may be seen as an example of the tight fit between the annihilation and novelty requirements contained in (4)–(5) and (8). But what about the criterion of “aliveness” Nietzsche adds in (6)–(7)? One hundred years later, who is still sensitive (if we have ever been) to Malevich’s newly created aesthetic sensibilities and values? We know that it only takes one or two generations for cultural or political values to lose their vitality. One might value freedom of speech because one grew up in a dictatorship and had to fight for it. But it is far from clear how, for subsequent generations, this value can maintain its motivational force, remain “alive”. Values might still be known in the abstract but have lost their motivational, action-guiding force. Nietzsche would say that this happens when the conditions under which they were first created and adopted no longer apply, when they are no longer felt, no longer affect the self-system. In BGE 296 he famously describes the expiry of the affective relationship that is required and has to be maintained for created values to remain alive.¹⁵ In order for a value to be alive, and for an agent to be sensitive to and motivated by a value, one might have to first create, i.e. embody, and then re-create, the meaning-relation for a self-system.¹⁶

We have seen that Nietzsche’s emphasis on the temporal aspects of values – creation and annihilation, i.e. their historicity and transitoriness – is motivated to an important extent by his realist worries. Whatever the content of new values might be – Nietzsche’s positive proposals are not very developed and he discourages mere “disciples” – Nietzsche tries to put in place not so much new, substantive values as

¹⁴ Kazimir Malevich, *From Cubism and Futurism to Suprematism: The New Painterly Realism* (1915), in: *Russian Art of the Avant-garde*, ed. and trans. John E. Bolt, New York 1976, pp. 116–134, p. 123.

¹⁵ Cf. BGE 296: “Oh, what are you anyway, my written and painted thoughts! It was not long ago that you were still so colorful, young and malicious, so full of thorns and secret spices that you made me sneeze and laugh – and now? You have already lost your novelty, and I am afraid that some of you are ready to turn into truths [...] We only immortalize things that cannot live and fly for much longer, only tired and worn-out things! [...] I only have colors for your *afternoon* [...] but nobody will guess from this how you looked in your morning [...] my old, beloved – – *wicked* thoughts!”

¹⁶ Here we would have to distinguish between the creation of a new value and the re-creation of values with the end to maintain them, to keep them alive. Nietzsche is aware that value systems, in particular the religious value systems that he regards as problematic, usually come with mechanisms of their own re-creation. Likewise, today’s neuro-marketing is well aware, much to the detriment of the consumer, that value-estimations need to be well-maintained and function most effectively when aimed directly at the self-system’s immediate affective, rather than self-conscious and reflective levels.

a new normative scale with which to weigh future values as better or worse exemplars of created values. I will come back to this at the end of the section. Traditionally, values were often presented as ahistorical in order to make them appear as unassailable and universally binding, thereby concealing their creation conditions. Such values require sophisticated practices to continuously re-create them, to keep them embodied and alive.¹⁷ So how does one, practically, create living values? As we have seen already, one way to interpret (8) is to be continuously suspicious of our natural – evolved and acculturated – value-estimations. It would be better to regard them as perspectival biases that require careful examination and in many cases “annihilation,” “unlearning” – and for Nietzschean self-systems that requires changing their drive-affect-thought composition – in order to create the space for new values. Before I turn to what I see as the “hard problem” of creating values shared across the meta-ethical divide that separates antirealists and realists, I wish to turn briefly to Peter Railton’s recent account of aesthetic value.¹⁸

Railton argues that Nietzsche understands values as relational (but not as relativistic). If an object has feature *x* it will, when “attended to and engaged with” by a certain type of individual *F* with a specific set of sensory, cognitive, imaginative, and affective capacities (hereafter SCIACs) result in specific, more or less invariant or recurring (hence non-relativist), “intrinsically rewarding appreciative experiences”.¹⁹ He cites GS 290 (“*One thing is needful*. – To ‘give style’ to one’s character – a great and rare art!”) as an example of the creation of such relational, non-relativist values. Giving style to what one is – as we saw earlier “what one is” refers to a complex drive-affect-thought self-system (see footnote 1) with embodied evaluations – is a difficult task precisely because it requires, first, a high level of self-understanding of one’s “strengths and weaknesses” (GS 290), or to use Leiter’s terminology one’s psycho-physiological type or character. Second, it calls for an “artistic plan” that arranges or composes the self-system such that both strengths *and* weaknesses appear purposive, “as art and reason” (GS 290). If successful, if style is achieved, and if a self-system would have composed its SCIACs in such a way that it entertains specific self-world relations, it will have created a specific, ordered set of values that from now on determines action. This style would be recognisable for all that can appreciate the values, i.e. the relations individuals of the type *F* have with features of objects *x*.

It is not difficult to find examples in Nietzsche’s works. For example, for the higher types he describes in TI, hard-to-achieve, high-resistance, creative tasks will appeal to their SCIACs. And “who they are” and the relations they entertain with certain features of objects (including people, etc.) in the world – that is, because of their

¹⁷ For a discussion of what I call the “non-perpetuating”, and “affirmation” conditions that new values would have to meet, see Manuel Dries, *On the Logic of Values*, in: *Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 39 (2010), pp. 30–50, p. 34.

¹⁸ Railton, *Nietzsche’s Normative Theory?*, pp. 20–51.

¹⁹ Railton, *Nietzsche’s Normative Theory?*, p. 41.

values – result in actions that show that they are attracted to specific features. Such self-systems will relate to specific features *x* and *y* such that they result in “intrinsically rewarding appreciative experiences”.

I have no space here to pursue this further, but it should have become clear in which sense values are *created* when self-systems acquire the requisite sensory, cognitive, imaginative, and affective capacities to entertain intrinsically rewarding, appreciative experiences that are action guiding. This aesthetic, perspectival model of value would be consistent with reading Nietzsche as a naturalist-antirealist about value (in the sense of GS 301). Naturalism, as I see it, only commits Nietzsche to the claim that the world in itself – *without* suitable relations between some of its (in themselves valueless) features and some self-system – is valueless. Railton’s account thus helps to flesh out what Nietzsche might mean by “living” values, namely precisely the relational, perspectival appreciative experiences between self-systems and features or objects that are in themselves valueless.²⁰

So far we have said very little about which values, if any, would be for Nietzsche privileged, what determines the “styles,” and which sets of values, a self-system, one should strive for. Many commentators past and present have argued that “power” and “life” are the values that enjoy such privileged status for Nietzsche. Note 5[1]234 does not mention “power” but it does in (1) put the “value of life” first. (1), (9), and (10) thus add a minimal normative framework for value creation. Nietzsche holds that those values that best serve Life with capital are, on his own evaluative scale, privileged.²¹ I do not want to say much here about Nietzsche’s substantive value commitments. Suffice it to say that when he invokes the perspective of Life, he means something like the “active encouragement of healthy, regulated complexity and conflict, both within the individual and among individuals, with the strategic aim of promoting the strength and diversity of perspective-bearing entities.”²² Thus the values that rank

20 Railton also proposes to see aesthetic value in analogy to life in general: “Aesthetic value thus is a living thing, not an inert substance lying about like underground petroleum. Just as *life* does not exist until the various elements of matter are brought together and form an organism, so aesthetic value does not exist until its elements are brought together in a unity that G. E. Moore called an ‘organic whole’. And just as diverse *species* of living organisms can co-exist, none more or less genuine than the others, so can many species of genuine aesthetic values. Not every jumble of elements counts as living, they must possess an active functional integrity; not every way in which subjects derive pleasure from interacting with the world will count as aesthetic appreciation, it too has a distinctive functional integrity [...] The survival of species and aesthetic practices alike is a matter of health and adaptiveness to a changing world, not conformity to fixed, a priori rules or principles.” (Railton, Nietzsche’s Normative Theory, p. 43).

21 Many commentators have of course argued that “power” is the one value that enjoys privileged status for Nietzsche. On reading Nietzsche’s own evaluative claims as a form of subjective reductive realism, see section 5 of Hussain, Nietzsche’s Metaethical Stance.

22 See Charlie Huenemann, Nietzsche and the Perspective of Life, in: Manuel Dries (ed.), Nietzsche on Consciousness and the Embodied Mind, Berlin / Boston 2015 (forthcoming). For a defence of Nietzsche’s complex conception of life that, because it aims at power, “has authority, as criterion

higher on Nietzsche's value scale, the values that should be created, are those that better fulfil the criteria of Life.²³ Life's privileged status as a value becomes clear in (9) and (10), as the annihilation requirement does not apply. In particular (10) makes it clear that note 5[1]234 is intended not only as a definition of what he means by value creation, it is ultimately a definition of "Life" that he is after: Life is nothing other than the evaluating processes, the value relations that hold between self-systems and the world. And only when these evaluating relations are of a certain kind, namely living and in principle revisable rather than fixed or static, and when self-systems become aware that valuing is what they essentially are, do they "serve" or increase Life's value.

4 The hard problem of value creation?

We have made, I hope, some progress in understanding what Nietzsche might mean when he talks of created values. As we have seen, his account is based on suppositions about what selves are, and value creation involves the entire self-system, its evolved and acculturated drives, affects, unconscious and conscious mental states. It is important to the Nietzschean conception that values no longer be conceived in a metaphysical realist sense, as "out there", independently existing, and ready to be "taken up, learned, experienced". They should instead be seen as in principle revisable, capable of being "annihilated". Rather than unchanging, static entities, in order

for judging values, because of this bodily presence in each of us", see John Richardson, Nietzsche on Life's Ends, in: John Richardson / Ken Gemes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Nietzsche*, Oxford 2014, pp. 756–783. For a reading that argues that Nietzsche privileges a specific psychological conception of power, namely "self-efficacy" defined as the felt ability of overcoming resistance, rooted in his analysis of the phenomenology of freedom, see Manuel Dries, *The Feeling of Doing – Nietzsche on Agent Causation*, in: *Nietzscheforschung* 20 (2013), pp. 235–247.

²³ As I have argued in Dries, *The Feeling of Freedom*, such values would also increase the level of self-efficacy of a self-system. Already in 1875, in notes on Dühring's *The Value of Life*, Nietzsche argues that real value shows itself in the intensity with which *homo mensura* strives towards some goal. He distinguishes in this relatively early note between the aim or goal of the striving, and its intensity: "Also am Streben mißt sich der Werth der Dinge, für den gar nicht Strebenden giebt es keine Werthe, für den rein Erkennenden fehlt alles Gut und Böse, alles Zustimmung und Verwerfen. Der gar nicht Strebende giebt nur rein theoretische Urtheile. Mir scheint also, daß alle Höhe des Urtheils über den Werth des Lebens an der Höhe und Stärke des Strebens hänge d. h. einmal am Ziele, und zweitens an dem Grad des nach dem Ziele Hindrängens, Hinlaufens." (Nachlass 1875, 9[1], KSA 8.133). On power as second-order end in overcoming resistance, see Bernard Reginster, *The Will to Power and the Ethics of Creativity*, in: Leiter / Sinhababu (eds.), *Nietzsche and Morality*, pp. 32–56. The idea of striving to overcome resistance remains important also in his mature writings; see, e.g., the opening lines of TI "Skirmishes" 38: "the value of a thing is not what you get for it but what you pay for it – what it costs". See Manuel Dries, *Freedom, Resistance, Agency*, in: Dries / Kail (eds.), *Nietzsche on Mind and Nature*, ch. 7.

to be properly real and effective, they require care, need to be continually “kept alive”. This also entails that values are not the kinds of things that one can possess, that stay the same, stay with us. Their motivational, action-guiding force changes when they are no longer embodied and embedded in self-systems that together make up and participate in larger value systems or cultures. Value innovation requires creation, but even the transmitting of “living” values requires, one might say, their re-creation. And although values become enshrined in institutions or laws, their continuous embodiment, their re-creation, remains necessary. Only then, Nietzsche holds, can they function as intrinsically motivating, as affective orientations that can compete with and perhaps replace the intuitive value judgements we make, and fall back on, that have been built into us evolutionarily and culturally.²⁴ The faculty of conscience and its value judgements are no longer to be trusted uncritically. Conscience needs first “genealogy” and scientific investigation, and then, it needs updating. Both are hard. This is especially so when there are no new substantive, first-order values “out there”, to be discovered and adopted. Giving a fuller philosophical account, and one that would take into account also the embodied, physiological and psychological mechanisms as we currently understand them through our best empirical science, would be extremely challenging.²⁵ And yet, the *hard* problem of value creation is not to give such an account and review one’s values (and biases).

The hard problem may lie, as indicated above, elsewhere. How to get experience out of the physical or the functional if it is by definition non-experiential? When it comes to the practical question of value creation, the hard problem is not how to create values, but rather how to create, communicate, and share values together with someone who rejects the idea that values are, in fact, created. How might one create values with those who believe that objective values are out there, just like petroleum is, and that they have been revealed?

I am not sure that any of the answers that one can find in Nietzsche are of much use for the hard problem. Many hold that his practical ethics are perfectionist, directed mainly at those who are by his own standards of “power” and “life” (as already indicated, those standards are sophisticated and do not refer to brute domination or vitalism respectively) “higher types,” engaged in activities of self-creation but without much concern for other value- and self-systems. If these are Nietzsche’s ethics then they are of limited help with the hard problem. Nietzsche seems to offer a range of solutions to disagreement about value: individualistic self-creation is only

²⁴ These may be tacit or explicit. On “affective orientations”, see Paul Katsafanas, *Value, Affect, Drive*, in: Dries / Kail (eds.), *Nietzsche on Mind and Nature*, ch. 8.

²⁵ Contemporary research provides evidence that something like Nietzsche’s evolutionary account of moral values as the “sign-language of affects” is plausible. See, e.g., Jonathan Haidt / Joseph Craig, *The Moral Mind. How Five Sets of Innate Intuitions Guide the Development of Many Culture-Specific Virtues, and Perhaps Even Modules*, in: Peter Carruthers / Stephen Laurence / Stephen Stich (eds.), *The Innate Mind, Volume 3: Foundations and the Future*, Oxford 2008, pp. 367–392.

one, agonistic value competition is another, and at times he seems to favour outright value wars. Self-creation will not get us far with the hard problem. Agonistic competition of the kind that could accommodate coexistence, mutual appreciation, and strengthening of different competing values, is premised on a minimal amount of respect for other perspectives, respect for and toleration of the SCIACs of others. Respect encourages communication with the goal not primarily to convert another person to one's own values but to sensitise one another to each other's point of view. Agonistic competition then presupposes at least some shared values, such as respect.

But we are facing the hard problem of value in encounters between, on the one hand, those who view their values not as created but as discovered, as unassailable, and in the extreme or extremist case, to be defended on pain of death, and, on the other hand, those who expect that new shared values can in fact be created. What is at stake in such encounters is not just one small aspect of an otherwise shared experience – and unable to think of alternatives, we resort to traditional, militant value conflicts. Creation by annihilation?

Nietzsche was optimistic about value creation. He believed that it is only a question of time until the former value realists conceive of values as created – in other words, that there is no “hard problem”. If there is, however, then neither a Nietzschean aestheticism nor any of his impatient, belligerent proposals are likely to help.²⁶ Creating and re-creating cultures of value that over time prove so attractive that they inspire respect in spite of realist commitments – this might require ingenuities of which our conscience knows as yet too little.

²⁶ I refer here to his impatient, war-mongering proclamations, e.g., of the “domination of humanity” (Nachlass 1883, 7[238], KSA 10.315), and “ecstatic nihilism” (Nachlass 1885, 35[82], KSA 11.547). I would like to thank Raymond Geuss and Sophie-Grace Chappell for comments on an earlier draft of this paper.