Deleuze's Nietzschean Mutations: From the Will to Power and the Overman to Desiring-Production and Nomadism

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Abstract

This article examines Nietzsche's enduring influence on Deleuze by showing how the interpretation advanced in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* informs Deleuze's later work with Guattari. I analyse Deleuze's reading of the will to power as a typology of forces and his interpretation of the Overman as a pinnacle of creative activity with an eye towards demonstrating that these are not merely Deleuzian creations but are also defensible interpretations of Nietzsche; and I suggest how these portions of Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche influence his concepts of desiring-production and nomadism, respectively. By analysing Deleuze's relation to Nietzsche as a *longue durée*, we can better appreciate how Deleuze's early reading of Nietzsche is carried forward in his later work.

Keywords: Nietzsche will to power Overman desiring-production nomadism

Deleuze famously describes himself as belonging to 'one of the last generations, that was more or less bludgeoned to death with the history of philosophy'. He expounds on the 'repressive role' played by the history of philosophy for his generation by describing how students were told, '"You can't seriously consider saying what you yourself think until you've read this and that, and that on this, and this on that"' (Deleuze 1995: 5). After these comments, Deleuze provides his all-too-frequently cited means of escaping this situation: 'I coped ... [by seeing] the history of philosophy as a sort of buggery ... I saw myself as

taking an author from behind and giving him a child that would be his own offspring, yet monstrous' (6). This provocative image makes it unsurprising if Deleuze's historical monographs receive little attention from scholars seeking clarification on a particular thinker within the philosophical tradition. In a sense, scholars sympathetic to Deleuze also tend to neglect these works. Citing Deleuze's call to 'experiment, never interpret' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 48) and his declaration with Félix Guattari that 'we will never ask what a book means … we will not look for anything to understand in it' (1987: 4), such sympathisers often stress Deleuze's rejection of traditional hermeneutics, to the point that one gets the impression that asking after the accuracy of his historical monographs is contrary to his aims. The general view seems to be that, while these historical works can clarify *Deleuze's* thinking, they are not serious works in the history of philosophy.

This description of Deleuze's reception is, of course, a generalisation. Nevertheless, it reflects a common tendency to neglect Deleuze's historical works *as* close readings in the history of philosophy. This is understandable insofar as it is difficult to determine where, in Deleuze's texts, exegesis gives way to interpretation, and interpretation gives way to creation. It may seem futile, contrary to Deleuze's objectives, or, at any rate, not worth the effort, to attempt to trace a line from an earlier philosopher, through Deleuze's reading of that philosopher, and to Deleuze's own conceptual creations. But an exception to this outlook should be made for Deleuze's early study of Nietzsche. For, if we return to the 'Letter to a Harsh Critic' where Deleuze describes his readings as monstrous, we find that he goes on to write: 'Nietzsche … extricated me from all this… He gets up to all sorts of things behind *your* back. He gives you a perverse taste … for saying simple things in your own way.' Here Deleuze indicates that his reading of Nietzsche *isn't* an instance of 'buggery'. In fact, reading Nietzsche *frees* Deleuze from requiring such an approach by allowing him to write in his 'own name' (Deleuze 1995: 6; see also Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 16). If one is interested in Nietzsche *or* in Deleuze's philosophical development, there is thus reason to attend to Deleuze's *Nietzsche and Philosophy*.

In what follows, I make a case for Nietzsche's enduring influence on Deleuze by showing how the interpretation advanced in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* informs Deleuze's later work with Guattari. This may seem unnecessary, as Nietzsche's influence on Deleuze is commonly acknowledged. However, many commentators pass over the question of the *plausibility* of Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche (e.g. Böhler 2010; Vignola 2019) or treat *Nietzsche and Philosophy* in isolation

(Pecora 1986; Marsden 1998; Ward 2010). Scholars also tend to focus on Deleuze's interpretation of the eternal recurrence (Voss 2013; Woodward 2013), with the result that Nietzsche's influence seems to wane after *Difference and Repetition*, or to emphasise *discontinuity* between Deleuze's early reading of Nietzsche and his treatment of him when working with Guattari (Perry 1993: 186–91; Schrift 1995: 62; Patton 2010: 10–12). My approach is distinct in that I begin by analysing Deleuze's reading of the will to power as a typology of forces and his interpretation of the Overman as a pinnacle of creative activity, with an eye towards demonstrating that these are not merely Deleuzian creations but are also defensible interpretations of Nietzsche. Afterwards, I suggest how these portions of Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche influence concepts central to his collaboration with Guattari: namely, the concepts of desiring-production and nomadism. These efforts reveal how Deleuze remains committed to his early reading of Nietzsche throughout his philosophical development.

I. The Will to Power

A. *Deleuze's Interpretation*

Nietzsche and Philosophy (1962) is the first major study of Nietzsche published in France after Heidegger's four-volume work (1961). Like Heidegger, Deleuze draws extensively from Nietzsche's notebooks. Perhaps it is unsurprising, then, that Deleuze's Nietzsche understands the world as comprised of forces, for while Nietzsche's publications provide some support for this claim (BGE 12, 17; GM I.13), his notebooks provide much more support for it.[1] Forces, on Deleuze's reading, are essentially relational and plural (Deleuze 1983: 6). Forces are also necessarily unequal, such that whenever two forces relate, one is quantitatively superior (43). Deleuze analyses these quantitative differences in terms of command and obedience, though he adds that such quantitative differences produce a *qualitative* difference, which he analyses in terms of *activity* and *reactivity* (40–3; citing KSA 11:36[22]; 12:2[76], 5[11, 64], 6[14], 7[25]; 13:11[281–2]). Deleuze further maintains that 'Every relationship of forces constitutes a body' and insists that this holds for chemical and biological bodies as much as for social and political bodies. As 'all reality is already quantity of force. There are nothing but quantities of force in mutual "relations of tension"' (1983: 40; citing KSA 13:14[79]), Deleuze analyses *forces*,

rather than, say, the individuals or social phenomena that forces produce.

Nietzsche frequently analyses allegedly primitive concepts – such as the soul – as products of more basic, dynamic principles, such as drives and affects (BGE 12). Deleuze distils this emphasis on underlying, dynamic processes down to a single concept: force. He also distils Nietzsche's emphasis on various qualitative differences – such as strong and weak, healthy and sick, noble and slavish – down to a single qualitative distinction: active and reactive. Nevertheless, Deleuze thinks there is at least one aspect of Nietzsche's thinking that this qualitative distinction cannot explain – namely, his insistence that reactive forces can triumph over active forces *without* ceasing to be reactive (Deleuze 1983: 57, 66, 68; citing GM). In particular, Nietzsche describes slave morality as characteristically reactive: 'its action is, from the ground up, reaction' (GM I.10). And while the slave revolt's success continues to shape humanity today, slave morality *remains* reactive (GM I.11–12; BGE 202). This yields two questions which animate much of *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. First, how do reactive forces triumph *as* reactive? Second, what accounts for the qualitative difference between active and reactive forces, such that reactive forces remain reactive even when they command?

Deleuze addresses the first of these questions by holding that reactive forces triumph not through forming a greater, active force, but through *decomposing* active forces. Reactive forces '*separate active force from what it can do . . .* In this way reactive forces do not become active but, on the contrary, they make active forces join them and become reactive in a new sense' (Deleuze 1983: 57). Sometimes, Deleuze cites the whole of Nietzsche's *Genealogy* in support of this claim, but elsewhere he suggests that the claim rests largely on GM I.13 (Deleuze 1983: 122–4). There, Nietzsche writes:

> just as common people separate the lightning from its flash and take the latter as a *doing*, as an effect of a subject called lightning, so popular morality also separates strength from the expressions of strength as if there were behind the strong an indifferent substratum that is free to express strength – or not to. But there is no such substratum; there is no 'being' behind the doing, effecting, becoming; 'the doer' is simply fabricated into the doing – the doing is everything. (GM I.13)

Deleuze analyses this passage in detail, breaking it into a moment of causality, when force is distinguished from its manifestation; a moment of substance, when force is projected onto a substrate and neutralised;

and a moment of reciprocal determination, when force is moralised (Deleuze 1983: 123–4). With this, reactive forces multiply. Whereas they previously referred only to forces that obey quantitatively superior forces, reactive forces now include forces that separate active forces from their expression, and previously active forces separated from their activity (67).

What explains the qualitative difference between forces other than their quantitative differences, so that reactive forces remain reactive, and active forces remain active, in cases where the former command the latter? Deleuze answers this question by interpreting the will to power as the differential and genetic element that produces forces: '*The will to power is the element from which derive both the quantitative difference of related forces and the quality that devolves into each force in this relation*' (1983: 50; citing KSA 11:36[31]).[2] Qualitative differences in the will to power produce active and reactive forces. If the will to power is affirmative, it is typically expressed in active forces; if it is negative, caught in the will to nothingness, it is typically expressed in reactive forces (1983: 53–4). Deleuze illustrates this genetic distinction by appealing to GM I.10, 11 and 13, where Nietzsche analyses an evaluative difference between masters and slaves. Whereas masters move from an affirmative premise ('We are good') to a negative corollary ('therefore what is other is bad'), slaves move from a negative premise ('you are other and evil') to a positive corollary ('therefore we are good'). Deleuze makes much of this genetic difference and suggests that the genealogist's task is to trace forces to back to the quality of the will to power they express (1983: 75). In its affirmative dimension, the will to power is 'the power of transformation, the Dionysian power' (42), is '*essentially creative and giving*' (85). In its negative dimension, the will to power is 'the will to nothingness' and the power of 'subtraction' (57). Partly because of Nietzsche's descriptions of the will to power as primarily a will to expenditure and only derivatively as a will to self-preservation (GS 349; BGE 13), Deleuze takes the will to power to be fundamentally affirmative, despite its negative qualities.[3]

Although active forces have an 'affinity' with affirmation, and reactive forces with negation (Deleuze 1983: 67–8), the active/reactive and affirmative/negative distinctions are not the same. Reactive forces are capable of affirmation, as when they affirm themselves as reactive. Active forces are also capable of negation, as occurs in priests' creation of slave morality. Each change in relations among active and reactive forces is accompanied by a change in the quality of the will to power (50, 85).[4] The qualities of the will to power thus become increasingly subtle as

the relations among forces become increasingly complex. The ability of the affirmative/negative and active/reactive distinctions to come apart allows Deleuze to explain the creation of slave morality, but it also allows him to maintain that reactive forces can *become* affirmative and active through a 'transmutation', whereby reactive forces are destroyed and nihilism is overcome (170–4).

B. *Appraising Deleuze's Interpretation*

A striking feature of Deleuze's reading is his transposition of Nietzsche's master/slave typology onto forces. As one commentator observes, 'what Deleuze does with this distinction is almost as well known as Nietzsche's distinction itself, as he reframes the noble-slave types in terms of the forces of action and reaction' (Schrift 2006: 188). This is not to suggest that this move is commonly recognised as valid, however. Joseph Ward, for one, criticises Deleuze on precisely this point:

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

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

It is unclear whether Ward's complaint concerns the application of evaluative terms in general, or the active/reactive distinction in particular, to forces. In either case, there is support for Deleuze's interpretation. Nietzsche's analysis of evaluative dispositions doesn't stop at the social or individual level. He attributes evaluations to unconscious, psychological forces, as when he claims that 'a drive without some kind of knowing evaluation of the worth of its objective, does not exist' (HH I.32) and that 'every drive craves mastery' (BGE 6). Nietzsche's notes further attribute evaluations to forces. A representative entry reads: 'every centre of force adopts a *perspective* toward the whole *remainder*, i.e., its wholly determinate *valuation*, mode of action, and mode of resistance' (WP 567/KSA 13:14[184]; see also KSA 13:14[186], 12:2[148]). A similar case can be made for applying the active/reactive distinction broadly. Nietzsche not only describes masters and slaves as active and reactive; he describes affects (GM II.11, 12) and forces (GM

II.18) in these terms. Nietzsche's notes analyse activity in an unrestricted sense: 'What is "active"? – grasping out for power' (WP 657/KSA 12:5[64]) and 'What do *active* and *passive* mean? is it not becoming-*master* and becoming *subjugated*?' (WP 700/KSA 12:7[48]). Absent a principled criterion for when we should take seriously Nietzsche's use of evaluative language and of the active/reactive distinction, which Ward does not provide, Deleuze's interpretation remains viable.

Ward's concerns are orthogonal to familiar worries about how we should understand the scope of Nietzsche's will to power. Nietzsche's descriptions of social and cultural phenomena as expressions of the will to power are intuitive enough (GM II.12, III.15, 18), as these involve conscious agents. But he also describes unconscious, psychological forces in terms of the will to power (BGE 9, 198; GM II.18). While some scholars can stomach this, many resist Nietzsche's attribution of the will to power to organic life in general (Z II.12; BGE 13, 36, 259; GM II.12) – and even more stomachs turn when Nietzsche describes the will to power as the world's 'essence' (BGE 186; see also BGE 22). In its least restricted form, the will to power verges on a metaphysical hypothesis – and this is difficult to square with Nietzsche's criticism of metaphysics (GS 347). At this point, some commentators deny that Nietzsche is fully committed to the will to power. Others restrict the will to power to the psychological or biological domain. And some opt to restrict Nietzsche's criticism of metaphysics, so that the will to power is exempt from it. Deleuze pursues an alternative path here. He takes the will, in will to power, to be a non-anthropomorphic notion – comparable to Schopenhauer's notion of Will but different in its pluralist and affirmative aspects (Deleuze 1983: 6–8, 82–4). This much is common. But Deleuze further takes the *evaluative* dimension of the will to power to be non-anthropomorphic: evaluation is part of the essence of life. This is why the will to power is a *typology*; it designates affirmative and negative *types*. And typology, Deleuze insists, is not metaphysics. It is only when we separate the will to power from the forces that it determines, and which reciprocally determine it, that we fall 'into metaphysical abstraction' (50). Deleuze thinks 'Nietzsche *did* intend to "go beyond metaphysics"' (195). This is because Nietzsche 'makes nihilism the presupposition of all metaphysics rather than the expression of a particular metaphysics: there is no *metaphysics* which does not judge and depreciate life' (34; see also 145).[5] Deleuze countenances Nietzsche's application of evaluative language to forces by taking Nietzsche to hold that evaluation goes 'all the way down' and to hold that the attempt to establish ontological hierarchies is itself symptomatic of nihilism.

Another reply to Ward's methodological objection concerns how far reaching one takes Nietzsche's account in the *Genealogy* to be. Deleuze and Guattari will describe the *Genealogy* as 'the great book of modern ethnology' (1983: 190). But already in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze insists that the *Genealogy* reveals that *ressentiment* and nihilism are not discrete phenomena. Rather, 'this instinct of revenge has gained such a hold on humanity through the centuries that all of metaphysics, psychology, history and above all morality bear its imprint' (Deleuze 1983: 21). Deleuze maintains that '*Ressentiment* is not part of our psychology but the whole of our psychology, without knowing it, is part of *ressentiment*' (34). If it is the case, as Deleuze takes it to be, that Nietzsche explains the emergence of the subject of consciousness through his analysis of slave morality (GM I.13; II.16), then we can begin to see the reasoning behind Deleuze's insistence on the *Genealogy*'s importance. For, elsewhere, Nietzsche suggests that metaphysical categories such as substance are *projections* of our understanding of subjects as substrata (TI III.5; VI.3; KSA 12:9[98], 10[19]). And just after he criticises the understanding of the subject-as-substrate in GM I.13, Nietzsche criticises a correlate view in physics, writing, 'natural scientists do no better when they say "force moves, force causes," and so on' – as though force were an atom behind its expression (GM I.13; see also BGE 12, 22). Attending to these portions of Nietzsche's thought leads Deleuze to hold that the slave revolt implicates the basic categories that we use to interpret the world. *Pace* Ward's suggestion that Deleuze assimilates Nietzsche's analysis of 'fundamental physics' under his analysis of 'certain historical phenomena', Deleuze takes the slave revolt to be the *definitive* historical phenomenon, one which fundamentally transforms humanity's outlook by subsuming it under a negative will to power.[6]

II. The Overman

A. *Deleuze's Interpretation*

The Overman is a difficult concept to grasp. The figure is primarily discussed in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* – a literary work that presents the views of its namesake character rather than those of its author. We also cannot illuminate the figure through an exemplar, as Zarathustra declares: 'never has there been an Overman' (Z II.4). Despite such difficulties, it is uncontroversial that the Overman somehow contrasts with humanity. We can therefore begin to appreciate Deleuze's reading

of the Overman by considering his interpretation of Nietzsche's view of human nature.

For Deleuze's Nietzsche, humanity is 'essentially reactive' (Deleuze 1983: 140; see also 21, 34–5, 167). For this to cohere with Nietzsche's view that humanity lacks an essence (HH I.2; GS 143; BGE 62; TI V.6), we must understand Deleuze as claiming that *insofar as* humanity has an essence, this essence must be reactive, for positing essences is a reactive gesture that arrests active forces (Deleuze 1983: 34, 76–7). This isn't to suggest that Deleuze attributes an otherwise positive view of humanity to Nietzsche, however. Deleuze maintains that humanity is 'the becoming-reactive of forces' (169). As for how humanity enters this condition, Deleuze takes Nietzsche to analyse this process in the *Genealogy*.

Deleuze's reading of the *Genealogy*, like the *Genealogy* itself, is complex and non-linear, but his explanation of how the slave revolt fundamentally transforms human nature doesn't diverge wildly from Nietzsche's telling of the story. Some brutish type overpowers those weaker than them and violently imposes some form of social organisation (GM II.17). This produces *ressentiment* among the subjugated, who cannot physically overpower their masters. But for slaves' *ressentiment* to become efficacious, they require the help of another type – the priest, who is 'the accomplice of reactive forces but ... not part of them' (Deleuze 1983: 126). Priests forge the fiction of a force separated from its expression, of a substrate endowed with volition (GM I.13). Upon succumbing to slave morality, masters' instincts are internalised in a manner similar to the slaves' internalisation of resentment (Deleuze 1983: 128). Nietzsche calls this internalisation of instincts 'the most fundamental of all changes [humans] ever experienced', which he compares to animals' transition from water to land, and says that this results in humans' 'entire inner world' growing in 'depth, breadth, [and] height' (GM II.16; see also GM I.6). But in addition to producing psychological complexity, the internalisation of instincts produces *pain* (Deleuze 1983: 128). This forms the foundation of bad conscience, which becomes *guilt* when coupled with an ideal of selflessness (129; citing GM II.18). Guilt redirects *ressentiment* inward, producing self-hatred (132; citing GM III.15). Drawing on Nietzsche's description of how memory is produced in humans through inflictions of pain (GM II.3), Deleuze characterises culture, in its dominant and historical sense, as the continued use of pain to domesticate individuals (1983: 139; citing GM III.13–20; BGE 62). Humanity's retention of social norms is purchased by the infliction of various degrees and types of pain.

This sketch leaves out much of the *Genealogy* and Deleuze's analysis of it, but it suffices to motivate Deleuze's view that the slave revolt lies at the origin of the subject of interiority. Reading Nietzsche alongside Freud, Deleuze suggests that the human animal has two reactive systems – one unconscious and one conscious (1983: 112; citing GM II.1, I.10). The unconscious reactive system contains 'mnemonic traces' and 'lasting imprints' akin to species' memory and responsible for processes such as digestion. The conscious reactive system, by contrast, registers external forces' influence on a body and determines 'in what form and under what conditions reaction can be acted'. For consciousness to carry out this process, unconscious mnemonic traces 'must not invade consciousness' – and this requires 'an active super-conscious faculty of forgetting' (112; citing GM II.1, I.10; UM II.1). At this stage, consciousness is reactive in the sense that it registers superior, external forces, which healthy individuals respond to immediately (Deleuze 1983: 111; citing GM I.10). Matters change with the triumph of the slave revolt, however. The progressive internalisation of instincts thins the membrane separating unconscious and conscious reactive systems, and crowds out the active faculty of forgetting with 'a prodigious memory' (115; citing GM I.10, II.1). As a result, reaction ceases to be acted as subjects consciously invest in producing mnemonic traces of the excitations they receive. This process is exacerbated with the transformation of bad conscience into guilt. Moralised subjects consider *themselves* the cause of their pain and suffering (GM III.20), such that they become increasingly inward directed (Deleuze 1983: 127–9, 141–2).

Another means of approaching humanity's reactive character is by considering Nietzsche's view that the belief in truth's unconditional value is a manifestation of the ascetic ideal (GM III.24–7). Deleuze takes genealogical analysis to reveal that the unconditional valuation of truth is born of a negative will to power. The belief that truth is always valuable could not arise from the will not to let oneself *be* deceived without assuming in advance that truth is always beneficial, when, in fact, some truths are useless and even harmful, whereas some illusions are life promoting (Deleuze 1983: 95; citing BGE 1; GS 344). Hence, the belief that truth is unconditionally valuable must arise from a moral judgement never *to* deceive, not even oneself (96; citing GS 344). It is easy to see how belief in truth's unconditional value is life-negating in cases where truth is harmful or illusion is life promoting. But Deleuze further suggests that attributing anything more than instrumental value to truth is ascetic, as this leaves behind *life* as the ultimate arbiter of value. It is difficult to overstate how wide-ranging Deleuze takes such

asceticism to be. The corollary of his view that only reactive forces can be known (39–41, 171–5) is that humanity's subordination of thought to *knowledge* is categorically reactive: 'knowledge gives life laws that separate it from what it can do, that keep it from acting, that forbid it to act, maintaining it in the narrow framework of scientifically observable reaction: almost like an animal in a zoo' (100). Humanity's pursuit of knowledge as an end is symptomatic of an attempt to arrest life's dynamic forces (172–3).

We can now better understand why Deleuze holds that all of human psychology is part of *ressentiment* and nihilism. He claims that 'Nietzsche, in the *Genealogy*, wanted to rewrite the *Critique of Pure Reason*' (Deleuze 1983: 88), by providing a genetic, rather than transcendental, account of reason, the understanding, and understanding's categories out of slave morality's negative will to power (91). Hence why Deleuze insists that the death of God is insufficient to overcome nihilism. Overcoming nihilism further requires the death of Man – replacing the transcendental categories of reason and slave morality's subject of interiority with a genetic account of reason and an understanding of subjects as fields of forces. As Deleuze writes in *Difference and Repetition*, 'Nietzsche seems to have been the first to see that the death of God becomes effective only with the dissolution of the Self' (1994: 58). Following from this, Deleuze insists that the Higher Men who follow Zarathustra but remain reactive must not be confused with the Overman (Deleuze 1983: 164–6, 168–70). How Deleuze explains the *emergence* of the Overman is complicated. At minimum, it involves the will to nothingness breaking with reactive forces and pursuing their destruction (171–5), unlocking a negative power within affirmation (175–80), and the selective ontological principle of eternal recurrence (68–72). For our purposes, though, we can set aside questions about *how* the Overman emerges and remain content with identifying some of its primary features.

In contrast with humanity's essentially reactive and negative character, the Overman is active and affirmative (xiii). This entails a break with *ressentiment* (35), which lies at the origins of consciousness and knowledge. Little wonder, then, that Deleuze claims the Overman differs from 'the ego' and is characterised by '*a new way of feeling*: he is a different subject from man … *a new way of thinking*, … [and] *a new way of evaluating* … a change and reversal in the element from which the value of values derives' (163). As this last difference suggests, the Overman proceeds from an affirmative will to power and is characterised by becoming-active, transmutation and

excessive vitality (175). Perhaps a more helpful way of fleshing out Deleuze's understanding of the Overman concerns the Overman's relation to thought. Unlike humanity's subordination of thought to *truth*, the Overman subordinates thought to *life*. Here, Deleuze appeals to Nietzsche's celebration of art as superior to knowledge insofar as it better promotes life (102–3; citing GM III.25). Emphasising such creativity, Deleuze suggests that the Overman uses thought for '*discovering, inventing, new possibilities of life*' (1983: 101).

B. Appraising Deleuze's Interpretation

In 'Postmodernism's Use and Abuse of Nietzsche', Ken Gemes argues that 'postmodernists who take Nietzsche's disparaging comments about unity as an endorsement of a decentered pluralism have mistaken the target of Nietzsche's polemic' (2001: 354). Analysing the architectural metaphor of self-construction in Nietzsche's early works (344–9), Gemes argues that Nietzsche denies that unity is pre-given but nevertheless champions a self unified by a dominant will (344–9). From this, Gemes concludes that 'the de-centered self celebrated by the postmodernists is for Nietzsche the self-conception of the nihilistic Last Man. The construction of a unified self is the goal of Nietzsche's Overman' (339). It is worth considering how Gemes's argument bears on Deleuze's interpretation, as Deleuze maintains that overcoming nihilism requires the death of Man and insists that 'no one extended the critique of identity further than Nietzsche' (1983: xi; see also Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 21; 1987: 6).[7]

Deleuze's emphasis on the active/reactive distinction as key to the problem of nihilism can mitigate the thrust of Gemes's point. While Deleuze agrees with Gemes that unity is not pre-given in a metaphysical sense, he holds that unity is nonetheless given to subjects by the cultural forces of *ressentiment*. He describes the Last Man, as well as Zarathustra's Higher Men, as unified, but insists that their 'unity is that of the thread tying them together, the thread of nihilism and reaction' (1983: 164). Hence, Deleuze might ask Gemes whether subjects who fashion themselves into a coherent whole by making *all* their forces reactive are *Übermenschlich*. Unity is insufficient to overcome nihilism, for Deleuze. We must also free active forces and create affirmative values.

The active/reactive distinction also implicates Deleuze's understanding of the Overman in way that contrasts with Gemes's view. Regardless of whether the Last Man accepts disorganised chaos, as Gemes suggests, or

reactive unity, as Deleuze thinks, the desubjectivation that the Overman pursues is *not* passive acceptance. 'What Nietzsche calls self-destruction, active destruction, must not, above all, be confused with the passive extinction of the last man' (Deleuze 1983: 174; citing Z P.4, 5, I.21). The Overman's negation is an *active* endeavour that enables the creation of new, affirmative values and a new mode of culture free from reactivity (106). The unity that characterises this project is not that of a reactive substrate, but the unity of an active force, of a vector. This may seem like a minor revision of Gemes's otherwise well-taken point, but if we share Deleuze's view of Nietzsche as primarily concerned with forces, with becoming, then it carries significant consequences. For Deleuze, the Overman cannot be 'a complete construction' (Gemes 2001: 358), because the Overman is not a state but an *activity*. The Overman is not a being – but a type of becoming-active (see also Schrift 1995: 70–4).[8]

This discussion brushes against broader controversies surrounding the Overman. While some argue that Nietzsche ultimately abandons this concept, among scholars who take it seriously there are roughly two classes of interpretation on offer. The first takes the Overman to be some universal character type that everyone should strive towards. As this reading is in tension with Nietzsche's repudiation of universal moral prescriptions (GS 335; BGE 31, 39, 154), the second interpretive approach takes the Overman to be explicated by some other, formal criterion of affirmation – such as the ability to affirm the eternal recurrence of one's life or the ability to create oneself. Deleuze's interpretation is closer to this second approach. He avoids worries associated with the idealist reading insofar as he doesn't posit 'first order' characteristics that might define the *Übermenschlich* type. Nevertheless, Deleuze's reading is original. Although it is common to explicate the Overman by appealing to the eternal recurrence, Deleuze understands this notion not as a mere thought experiment but as a selective ontological principle that ensures the becoming-active of all forces. Moreover, unlike those who understand the Overman as pursuing *self-creation*, Deleuze takes the Overman's creative activity to *undermine* traditional notions of subjectivity. This is fortuitous inasmuch as notions of self-creation are fraught with interpretive questions about how the self can be both the agent and object of creation without being a metaphysical substrate endowed with libertarian freedom, which Nietzsche rejects (BGE 15; GM I.13). The cost of Deleuze's interpretation, though, is that it is not enough for the forces comprising subjects to be organised into a cohesive interior that serves an active

force. To become *Übermenschlich*, subjects must be 'opened' so that they resonate with and amplify active forces in the world.

III. Revisiting the Will to Power: Desiring-Production

A. The Connection

Throughout *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, Deleuze and Guattari suggest resonances between their claim that desire is productive and Nietzsche's notion of the will to power. The most overt of these suggestions takes the form of a shared enemy. Deleuze and Guattari's thesis that desire is productive is a fundamental rebuke of the psychoanalytic understanding of desire as issuing from lack. It is therefore telling that they repeatedly describe psychoanalysts as *priests*. They claim that 'the most recent figure of the priest is the psychoanalyst' (1987: 154) and insist that, 'as Nietzsche put it, there never was but one psychology, that of the priest' (1983: 111). These otherwise obscure claims take on depth when read against *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, where Deleuze argues that our entire psychology belongs to *ressentiment*. Consider parallels between priests' and psychoanalysts' methods.[9] Priests convince others that the pain they experience from internalising their instincts is evidence of their guilt; psychoanalysts convince subjects that their psychic frustration is evidence of their unconscious desire to kill their father and sleep with their mother (64–5). Deleuze and Guattari criticise the Oedipus complex by describing it as 'the double direction given to *ressentiment*, the turning back against oneself, and the projection against the Other: the father is dead, it's my fault, who killed him? it's your fault'. They go on to write: 'this whole *priest's psychology* – there is not a single one of these tactics that does not find in Oedipus its land of milk and honey', before describing psychoanalysis as 'the new avatar of the "ascetic ideal"' (269). Another parallel concerns the way priests and psychoanalysts increase others' reliance upon them. Priests appeal to the sense of guilt they create to motivate Christianity's promise of redemption; psychoanalysts appeal to the way the libido is trapped within the family to motivate psychoanalysis's promise of psychological liberation. But just as the Christian God's self-sacrifice produces an infinite sense of guilt, a debt that cannot be repaid, so psychoanalysts' notion of inexhaustible transference makes analysis interminable (64–5). All of this is predictable insofar as Deleuze, in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*,

suggests that priests' fiction of a force separated from its expression forms the basis of the subject of interiority.

Deleuze and Guattari situate their critique of the Oedipal subject by comparing it to Kant's critical project. Just as 'Kant intended to discover criteria immanent to understanding so as to distinguish the legitimate and illegitimate uses of the syntheses of consciousness', so Deleuze and Guattari 'are compelled to say that psychoanalysis has its metaphysics – its name is Oedipus. And that a revolution – this time materialist – can proceed only by ... denouncing the illegitimate use of the syntheses of the unconscious' (75). To this end, they identify paralogisms that make illegitimate use of the connective, disjunctive and conjunctive syntheses of the unconscious: paralogisms of extrapolation, the double bind and application (110–11). Without treating the intricacies of this portion of *Anti-Oedipus*, we can appreciate how these paralogisms involve the illegitimate projection of consciousness's experience of desire (as based on lack, law and the signifier) onto desire in the unconscious.[10] These paralogisms therefore rely on another, more fundamental paralogism treated in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* – 'the paralogism of *ressentiment: the fiction of a force separated from what it can do*' (1983: 123). This paralogism produces the conscious subject of interiority and its beliefs in the 'insufficiency of being, guilt, [and] signification' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 111). Lest Deleuze and Guattari's alignment with Kant be overstated, recall that Deleuze considers Nietzsche's *Genealogy* an advancement beyond Kant's first *Critique*.[11] Whereas Kant appeals to 'conditions [transcendental principles] which still remain external to the conditioned [reason, the understanding, and understanding's categories]', Nietzsche posits 'a principle of internal genesis' that enables a genuinely immanent critique of reason (Deleuze 1983: 91). This principle is the will to power. Not only does the paralogism of *ressentiment* subtend Oedipal metaphysics, the genetic and plastic principle of the will to power enables an immanent critique of reason and of consciousness's projection of lack, law and the signifier onto desiring-production.

Desire is not primarily a property of conscious subjects, for Deleuze and Guattari, but a non-anthropomorphic force that *produces* subjects. This view of desire is unsurprising when read against *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. There, Deleuze claims that *will* is fundamental to reality and that willing contains an irreducible *evaluative* dimension (54). Expressed in active and reactive forces, as well as their interaction, the will to power is a non-anthropomorphic principle that produces all phenomena. Deleuze and Guattari's analysis of desire proceeds similarly. When they

claim that 'desire is part of the infrastructure' (1983: 348, 104), their point is not merely that desire is at work in the social infrastructure that produces the commodities subjects want. More fundamentally, desire literally produces objects. Correspondingly, they analyse desiring machines, instead of desiring subjects, to emphasise that the subject is produced by a field of desires (17). Like the will to power, desire produces objects and subjects alike.

The claim that desire is productive must not be understood as a denial that lack is experienced. Rather, Deleuze and Guattari argue that lack is not *constitutive* of desire, such that when lack is consciously experienced, this is produced by desire at a more fundamental, unconscious level. They write: 'needs are derived from desire; they are counterproductions within the real that desire produces. Lack is a countereffect of desire; it is deposited, distributed, vacuolized within a real that is natural and social' (27). Beneath conscious experiences of lack are complex series of unconscious machinations that produce investments in objects and modes of subjectivation. Herein lies another parallel with Nietzsche. Nietzsche's suggestion that 'life itself is will to power' (BGE 13) must address obvious counterexamples – especially ascetics who make an ideal of denying life. Nietzsche addresses such counterexamples by showing that they are merely apparent. The ascetic ideal expresses the will to power of a particular, albeit unhealthy, mode of life (GM III.11). What seemed like a denial of the will is, in fact, proof of its ubiquity, is proof that 'man would rather will *nothingness* than *not* will' (GM III.28). Similarly, Deleuze and Guattari set out to prove that desire is fundamentally productive – but they must address cases of repression: 'Hence the goal of schizoanalysis: to analyse the specific nature of the libidinal investments ... and thereby to show how, in the subject who desires, desire can be made to desire its own repression' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 105). Desire may turn against itself, but it is not any less productive for that.

In light of Deleuze's suggestion in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* that humanity is essentially reactive, it is fitting that the productive character of desire escapes consciousness's attention. Consciousness attends only to reactive forces; we cannot consciously capture desire without arresting part of its production. But beneath reactive forces and repressed desires, Deleuze posits an active, creative principle – the will to power or desiring-production. These are only some of the ways that Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche influences his collaboration with Guattari. But they suffice for us to appreciate a statement Deleuze makes shortly before publishing *A Thousand Plateaus*: 'Desire: who, except priests, would

call it "lack"? Nietzsche called it "will to power"' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 91; see also Schrift 1996: 341–2; Holland 2012: 316, 325).

B. *Appraising the Connection*

One might detect a tension between Deleuze's suggestion in *Nietzsche and Philosophy* that reactive forces operate in the unconscious and his later view of desire as fundamentally productive. That Deleuze reads Nietzsche alongside Freud at this point might make matters worse, as Freud is a principal target of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Perhaps this indicates that Deleuze breaks with Nietzsche upon collaborating with Guattari.

Addressing this somewhat shallow worry further bolsters the case for understanding desiring-production as a post-Freudian expression of the will to power. If we return to the relevant portions of *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, we find that Deleuze does not claim that, for Nietzsche, the unconscious is reactive; rather, he claims that part of 'the reactive apparatus' is unconscious (Deleuze 1983: 112). Deleuze attaches a note to this statement, warning against the very worry under consideration. He writes: 'there are several kinds of unconscious in Nietzsche, but this unconscious must not be confused with that of reactive forces' (211, n.3; citing GM II.11, I.10). Here, Deleuze makes room for an active unconscious in Nietzsche's philosophy. At the end of this section, we find a second note that further mitigates the present concern. Deleuze writes: 'We can imagine what Nietzsche would have thought of Freud: once again he would have denounced a too "reactive" conception of psychic life, an ignorance of true "activity," and inability to conceive and provoke the true "transmutation"' (211, n.5). Not only does Deleuze foreshadow his later criticisms of the Freudian unconscious here; he suggests that Nietzsche provides an alternative model of the unconscious that is pluralist and active.

In *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze has yet to develop the notion of desiring-production. He seems to assume that desire refers to some lack. But if we keep this in mind, his emphatic contrast of the will to power with desire becomes revealing. A representative passage asks, 'What does "will to power" mean?' before answering, 'Not, primarily, that the will wants power, that it desires or seeks out power as an end, nor that power is the motive of the will. The expression "desiring power" is no less absurd than "willing to live"' (1983: 79; citing Z II.12; see also 1983: xi, 80–2, 84–7). In contrasting the will to power with desire in such passages, Deleuze insists that '*the will to power is essentially creative*

and giving: it does not aspire, it does not seek, it does not desire, above all it does not desire power. It *gives*' (85). Throughout *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze stresses that the will to power is productive.

IV. Revisiting the Overman: Nomadism

A. *The Connection*

Capitalism and Schizophrenia aims to synthesise the insights of Marx and Freud into a theory of desiring-production. Asked whether individuals' psychological investments reduce to ideological structures or the reverse, Deleuze and Guattari reply that question presents a false choice. The libidinal and political economies are identical, even if this economy is expressed under different regimes (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 31–3, 54, 119–20, 336–7). Departing from Marxist and psychoanalytic vernacular alike, they analyse the libidinal-political economy in terms of 'flows' and 'codes'. These nominal notions cannot be defined apart from one another (Deleuze 2002: 291). There are flows of water, goods, ideas, populations and money – only on the condition that these flows are codified (Smith 2012: 160–1). And 'desire is present wherever something flows' (Deleuze and Guattari 1983: 105). As the codification of flows defines libidinal-political structures, Deleuze and Guattari hold that 'the general theory of society is a generalized theory of flows' (262). They also analyse the codification of flows in terms of processes of de- and reterritorialisation.

With this theory of flows, Deleuze and Guattari offer a typology of social formations (33). Territorial societies trace flows to the earth (140–1) and codify them as territories, allocating flows according to lines of alliance and filiation (147). Despotic societies, or states, decodify territorial societies' flows, before recodifying them as abstract notions of property, labour and money – which redirect flows to a ruling despot (197–9). Capitalist societies decodify flows further still, generating abstract and self-replicating flows of capital, untethered from states' notions of property, labour and money (226–8). The last type of social formation is nomadic. Unlike territorial, despotic and capitalist societies, which decodify and deterritorialise flows before recodifying and reterritorialising them, nomadic societies pursue absolute decodification and deterritorialisation (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 229–30; 422–3; see also Patton 2000: 110).

The name 'nomad war machine' is something of a misnomer. The social formation has little to do with empirical cases of nomadism and

Deleuze and Guattari insist that the nomad war machine '*in no way has war as its object*' but instead aims to produce 'mutations' (1987: 229; see also Patton 2000: 117–19). A more illuminating means of characterising this mutation machine is by noting that it is 'exterior to the state apparatus' (Deleuze and Guattari 1987: 351). The war machine's other aspects – its relationship to space, number and affect – are explained through this exteriority. In fact, the nomad war machine actively *combats* the apparatus of capture that Deleuze and Guattari call 'the State'. Several scholars suggest a Nietzschean influence in this celebrated concept (Ansell-Pearson 1994: 178–9; Patton 2012: 202–3; Smith 2012: 403, n.72; Widder 2012: 133; Shapiro 2014: 305). But, to my knowledge, none specify this influence. The foregoing discussion allows us to make headway on this score.

In *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze argues that Nietzsche's critique of reactivity promotes new values and forms of culture, distinct from those that 'benefit the state' (1983: 106). Drawing from 'Schopenhauer as Educator', Deleuze suggests that genuine philosophy and culture, for Nietzsche, combat the state (109; citing UM III. 4, 6, 8). This fits with Deleuze's analysis of culture – in its dominant, historical form – as the production of docile subjects of interiority, or, to use his later terminology, as an apparatus of capture. Deleuze remains committed to this reading of Nietzsche. After *Anti-Oedipus*, he describes traditional philosophy as a project that 'conforms to the goals of the real state, to the dominant meanings and the requirements of the established order', before adding, 'Nietzsche said everything on this point in *Schopenhauer Educator* [*sic*]' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 13). Depending on how much weight we give Nietzsche's early essays, though, Deleuze's contention that Nietzsche is a thorough critic of the state might seem overstated. But Nietzsche's later works also criticise nation-states. He calls state-centred politics 'a politics of dissolution', a mere '*entr'acte* politics' (BGE 256), and insists that states are more fluid than we assume (BGE 251; Z I.11). While Nietzsche's repudiation of nationalism (GS 377; BGE 242, 256) is commonly emphasised, what is less often noted is that he celebrates 'the nomadic life' made possible by 'a weakening and finally an abolition of nations' (HH I.475) and promotes 'an essentially supra-national and nomadic type' (BGE 242). Attentiveness to this dimension of Nietzsche's thinking leads Deleuze to consider Nietzsche one of the few 'nomad thinkers' in the history of philosophy (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 32).

Beyond these thematic resonances between Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche and the nomad war machine, there may be a direct influence here. In March 1968, Deleuze is interviewed about his collaboration

with Foucault on volume 1 of the French edition of Nietzsche's complete works. In that interview, he stresses the importance of pursuing the death of Man after the death of God (Deleuze 2002: 137). Emphasising the political applications of this point, Deleuze states: 'Individuation is no longer enclosed ... This is really important, especially politically ... the forces of repression always need a Self that can be assigned, they need determinate individuals on which they can assign their power' (138). Not only is the Self an effect of forces; it is an effect of the *same type* of forces that produce the State. Deleuze also underscores how Nietzsche's analysis of subjects as multiplicities of forces challenges traditional philosophical writing, stating: 'we get the feeling that we can't go on writing philosophy books in the old style much longer' (141). After May 1968, Deleuze and Guattari release *Anti-Oedipus*: a book that breaks with the 'old style' and criticises the Oedipal subject in favour of desiring-production. In the intervening years before publishing *A Thousand Plateaus*, Deleuze authors another essay on Nietzsche, titled 'Nomad Thought' (1972), where he suggests that Nietzsche's philosophy pursues 'decodification ... in an absolute sense' (1985: 143). Harking back to *Nietzsche and Philosophy*'s critique of interiority, but now reading Nietzsche alongside Blanchot, Deleuze describes Nietzsche as placing thought in 'relation with the outside, the exterior' (144). He describes this procedure as *nomadism*, 'a perpetual displacement of intensities' outside the subject of interiority (146). After recalling Nietzsche's account of the imposition of the state by masters in the *Genealogy*, this essay introduces the 'nomad war machine' for the first time (148) and concludes by describing Nietzsche as providing a counter-philosophy that transforms thought into a battering ram of creative affirmation (149). Years later, amidst Deleuze and Guattari's elaboration on the nomad war machine, we are brought back to Nietzsche. Not only are we told that 'Nietzsche's *Schopenhauer as Educator* is perhaps the greatest critique ever directed against the image of thought and its relation to the state', we also learn that the nomad war machine is 'a strange undertaking whose precise procedures can be studied in Nietzsche' (376–7). The influence is undeniable.

When encountering Deleuze's description of nomads as 'machines of mutation' (Deleuze and Parnet 2007: 132), it is difficult not to recall his earlier description of the Overman in terms of '*transmutation*' (1983: 71). Although Deleuze has not developed the concept of desiring-machines at this time, there is a parallel in the way both concepts actively destroy interiority and enable creative affirmation. In 'Nomad Thought', Deleuze further describes Nietzsche's philosophy in these

terms, as bringing about a 'transmutation' of thought through a critique of interiority (1985: 147). The similarity is not merely semantic. The life of affirmative activity entails continual transformation. Under desiring-production, the process is becoming-Overman, opening the subject to the outside by heightening active forces' intensity. Under social-production, the process is becoming-nomadic, opening a social milieu to the outside by unleashing active forces. Zarathustra asks: 'where the state *ends* – look there, my brothers! Do you not see it, the rainbow and the bridges of the overman?' (Z I.11). Deleuze, as is fitting, answers affirmatively.

B. *Appraising the Connection*

The foregoing analysis might seem to commit a kind of category mistake. Whereas Nietzsche's Overman is a type of individual, the nomad war machine is a type of social formation. In light of myriad differences between individuals and societies, perhaps we should resist transposing Deleuze's reading of the Overman onto his account of the nomad war machine on pain of drawing a false analogy.

While individuals and societies have been analogised since Plato's *Republic*, such comparisons are less strained for Nietzsche and Deleuze than they might be for Socrates. Nietzsche analyses individuals (BGE 12, 19) and societies alike (GM II.18) as comprised of forces. Similarly, Deleuze and Guattari's identification of the libidinal and political economies denies any rigid distinction between individuals and societies. Interactions among active and reactive forces, among flows and codes, produce individuals and societies. Individuals and societies differ not in their constitutive elements but only in relative complexity. Yet this reply is still too deferential. For Deleuze insists that the Overman should not be understood as a subject with interiority but as an *activity* that pursues the subject's exterior. Likewise, the temptation to understand the nomad war machine as a type of society must be resisted. Counterintuitive though it may seem, none of Deleuze and Guattari's social formations exclude the others. When they write that 'war machines have a *power of metamorphosis*, which of course allows them to be captured by States', they do not contradict their definition of nomads as essentially external to states (1987: 437). Rather, they underscore the way each social formation mixes with others in a 'coexistence of becomings' (430). The nomad war machine designates *forces* or *moments* of social transformation when flows are decodified. Granted, states recodify flows in the wake of the war machine, and even when Nietzsche's aphorisms thwart the unity of the text, 'a new type of unity triumphs in the subject'

(6). Nevertheless, the fact that the Overman and the war machine are not *pure* types needn't overshadow their affinity as transformative processes.

Another concern one might have with the foregoing analysis is whether Deleuze's interpretation of Nietzsche remains consistent from *Nietzsche and Philosophy* to *A Thousand Plateaus*. Paul Patton, for example, notes clear differences between Deleuze's early and later readings of Nietzsche: 'the first is a rigorous and systematic thinker who constructed a philosophy of nature around the complex concept of the will to power', whereas 'the second Nietzsche hardly belongs in philosophy at all. He is rather the inventor of a new kind of discourse, a counter-philosophy that is defined by its essential relation to the outside' (2010: 11–12). Such differences lead Patton to conclude that 'Deleuze's successive treatments of Nietzsche present us with a different thinker on each occasion' (12). Perhaps, then, Deleuze abandons his early reading of Nietzsche rather than developing it further with Guattari.

Deleuze's later reflections on Nietzsche as a fragmentary thinker, I submit, do not reflect a change in his *understanding* of Nietzsche but a change in his focus. Deleuze's early work analyses the *content* of Nietzsche's thought, including Nietzsche's criticism of traditional philosophy as dogmatic (1983: 103–10). Later, Deleuze extends this analysis by examining how Nietzsche's *style* facilitates the aims analysed in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. Deleuze praises Nietzsche's use of aphorisms and the distinctively literary style of *Zarathustra* for the way such writing must be subdued, for the way it invites connections with other texts and forces (Deleuze 1985: 144–6). So, in *A Thousand Plateaus*, we read: 'an aphorism always awaits its meaning from a new external force, a final force that might conquer and subjugate it' (1987: 377). Nietzsche's style is commendable, then, because it encourages readers to attend to their interpretative activity. We can avoid reading this as praise of obscurity for obscurity's sake by recalling that, in *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze takes Nietzsche to champion affirmation and activity. Nietzsche's fragmentary style is praiseworthy because it facilitates the very aims that Deleuze attributes to Nietzsche in his early study of him.[12]

V. Conclusion

Nietzsche and Philosophy is an original study of a challenging thinker from the history of philosophy. While Deleuze's interpretations of Nietzsche's concepts of the will to power and of the Overman are innovative, they are not so removed from Nietzsche's texts that they

merit attention only from those interested in Deleuze. Nietzsche scholars might benefit from attending to Deleuze's unique responses to the long-standing interpretive difficulties surrounding these topics. Deleuze scholars might also benefit from revisiting *Nietzsche and Philosophy*. Not only does this work contain nascent versions of Deleuze's later notions of desiring-production and nomadism, as I have argued, it also contains seeds of Deleuze's transcendental empiricism and of his rejection of the dogmatic image of thought.

For those who think such paths of inquiry remain overly committed to the 'old style' of philosophy, though, there is still something to be gleaned from this discussion, which suggests that the most innovative aspects of Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche lie elsewhere than in his interpretations of the will to power and the Overman. In particular, Deleuze's interpretation of the eternal recurrence as a selective ontological principle is highly creative, as is his contention that 'the whole of Nietzsche's philosophy' is an attack on Hegel's dialectic (1983: 196). But even here, there is a sense in which Deleuze remains faithful to Nietzsche. For Deleuze takes Nietzsche's 'greatest lesson' to be that 'to think is to create' (xiv). Deleuze carries this motif into his last works, acknowledging Nietzsche's influence on his definition of philosophy as the discipline of concept creation (Deleuze and Guattari 1994: 5–7). This suggests that we needn't choose between appreciating Nietzsche's impact on Deleuze and appreciating Deleuze's own conceptual creations. When he is most creative, Deleuze is arguably most Nietzschean. Attending to Nietzsche's influence on Deleuze might therefore shed light on Deleuze's creative engagements with *other* thinkers, revealing how he selectively mutates their thought into something more active and affirmative.

Acknowledgements

Notes

1. Citations to Nietzsche use abbreviations listed below in the references. Roman numerals refer to major divisions within works. Arabic numerals refer to section numbers. It is difficult to overstate how widely Nietzsche's notebooks apply the concept of force (*Kraft*). Force is used to analyse the world in general (KSA 11:35[54–5], 36[15]; 12:2[143]; 13:14[188]), organic life (10:24[14]; 12:2[63], 7[25]; 13:14[81–2, 174]), human life (11:26[231], 40[42]; 12:2[76]; 13:11[111]), phenomenology and psychology (10:24[9]; 13:11[114], 14[93]),

value judgements (10:24[15]; 12:10[127, 133, 164]; 13:15[78–9], 18[16]), social phenomena (11:25[349], 34[164]; 12:9[119], 10[57, 82]) and aesthetic activities (12:9[119], 10[168]; 13:14[61, 119], 23[2]).

2. Deleuze calls KSA 11:36[31] 'one of the most important texts which Nietzsche wrote to explain what he understood by will to power' (1983: 49). Unfortunately, the translation of this passage that he uses – taken from *La volonté de puissance* vol. 2 aphorism 309 (Nietzsche 1942) – contains an error. It reads: 'The *victorious* concept "force," by means of which our physicists have created God and the world, still needs to be *completed:* an *inner* will must be ascribed to it, which I designate as "will to power."' What is rendered as 'inner will' (*innere Wille*) is, in fact, 'inner world' (*innere Welt*). I do not think this vitiates Deleuze's interpretation, however, as the will to power remains an internal complement of force.

3. This feature of Deleuze's interpretation cannot be fully explained without his reading of the eternal recurrence as subordinating all negation to affirmation (Deleuze 1983: 69–71). As I cannot treat Deleuze's interpretation of the eternal recurrence here, I merely note this in passing. For criticism of Deleuze's reading of the eternal recurrence, see Woodward 2013.

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

5. Deleuze will break with Nietzsche, as he understands him here, in pursuing a metaphysics of difference. Nevertheless, there are strong resonances between Deleuze's differential metaphysics and his interpretation of the will to power. Thus *Difference and Repetition* appeals to the will to power as a pre-individual field of intensities (1994: 41, 200, 243, 258).

6. In fairness to Ward, he raises the foregoing methodological concern en route to criticising Deleuze's interpretation of the eternal recurrence for assuming that forces form a closed system (Ward 2010: 103). Still, I think his methodological concern begs the question against Deleuze's reading.

7. Gemes's target is not Deleuze, but Foucault's reading of Nietzsche. Nevertheless, Deleuze seems *more* susceptible to Gemes's point insofar as Foucault analyses subjects in terms of individual, human bodies, whereas Deleuze suggests that all relations of force – including social and political forces – form a subject (see also Schrift 2006: 191).

8. This suggests that Deleuze might countenance *Übermenschlich* forces *within* individuals, similar to the way that Nietzsche describes modern individuals as containing noble and slavish tendencies (BGE 260).

9. Here, I owe much to Schrift 1996: 342–3.

10. For helpful treatment of these paralogisms, see Holland 2012: 327–30.

11. On this aspect of Deleuze's Nietzsche, see Marsden 1998.

12. To be fair, Patton's aim is to rebut the suggestion that Deleuze's philosophy revolves around a single motif by demonstrating how Deleuze places thought in motion. This point is well taken. But, in the case of Nietzsche, I think this movement is more continuous than Patton suggests.

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

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

KSA *Kritische Studienausgabe*, 15 vols, ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari, Berlin: De Gruyter, 1999.

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

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

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