Will to Power as the "Primitive Form of Affects"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Making Nietzsche's work productive and appropriate, will to power has often been conflated with mastery over poiesis[4] which was the Greek conception of "making" and "bringing being into existence." This paper is an attempt to argue that this is a misreading of a crucial Nietzschean concept, because in his final unfinished work Nietzsche was drafting a full-length monograph devoted to clarifying his ideas on the will to power.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

immediately after writing as follows: "We need 'unities' in order to be able to reckon: that does not mean we must suppose that such unities exist."[7]

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

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

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

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

[8]Probably the best book to show this is Pierre Klossowki's *Nietzsche and the Vicious Circle.* 1997. London: The Athlone Press.

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

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

"Natural Drives Reinterpreted as Vices"[10]

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

If the will to power is a 'primitive affective form' then it is a return to primal drives, however there is no structural essence to how those drives are formed. The will to power is not the primitive affective form as automatically turned vicious and violent; there is not one unifying type of subject that embodies the will to power. Embodiment of the will to power is inherent to life and the subject emerges after its experiences of affects and its particular way of assembling those affects together.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Will to Power and "Ipsissimosity"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

"Will to Power as Pathos"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

(Nietzsche and Philosophy, pg. 220).

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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