Nietzsche on the Value of Suffering

A dissertation submitted to the University of Reading
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Department of Philosophy

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July 2016

Abstract

As early as in *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche perceived the "sole ground of the world" to be characterised by inescapable suffering. For Nietzsche, the "terror and horror of existence" (*BT*, §3) put what he termed a "great question mark over the value of existence" (*BT*, 'Attempt', §1). Whereas Schopenhauer answered this question with the pessimistic assertion that it would be better never to have existed, for suffering only detracted from one's wellbeing, Nietzsche eventually came to vehemently oppose this conclusion. Later in his philosophical career, Nietzsche held that suffering is necessary for the 'highest value' to be realized in life; for great and heroic achievements to occur. As he writes in a familiar passage from *Beyond Good and Evil*, "The discipline of suffering, of great suffering" has "created all enhancements of man so far" (*BGE*, §225). In this thesis I explore the kind(s) of value that Nietzsche can be said to attribute to suffering, given the status he gives it as a necessary condition of greatness. This question has been largely overlooked in contemporary Nietzsche scholarship, which often assumes the relation between suffering and greatness to be merely instrumental. However, I draw upon contemporary debates in axiology in order to shed light on this issue, with a view to assessing the nature and value of achievement in ethics more broadly.

Declaration of Original Authorship

I confirm that this is my own work and the use of all material from other sources has been properly and fully acknowledged.'

Signed: Patrick Hassan

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Acknowledgements

I have been lucky enough to be a part of a thriving and supportive philosophical community at the University of Reading. I would like to thank all members of the department, faculty and graduates alike, for their support academically, professionally and socially. I am particularly indebted to my various supervisors at one stage or another over the last four years: Severin Schroeder, David Owens, Max de Gaynesford and Bart Streumer, who have always provided me with useful and honest guidance with my work and ambitions.

A number of additional people provided comments on one or more of the chapters in this thesis. Others have provided helpful and stimulating conversation or suggestions on aspects of the project. I'd like especially to thank: Jonathan Dancy, Simon Robertson, Andrew Huddleston, and everyone from the Birkbeck Nietzsche Seminar.

I am also grateful to audiences at the universities of Southampton, Sheffield, Manchester and Essex where I presented material from this thesis. The insightful questions raised at these conferences directly contributed to making this thesis the best I could make it. Lastly, I would not have been able to complete this thesis without the unconditional support and continued encouragement from my friends and family.

Suffering ennobles a man,
Enduring the oyster-shell's prison makes a pearl of a water drop.

- Omar Khayyám

Introduction

As early as in *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche perceived the "sole ground of the world" to be characterised by inescapable suffering. For Nietzsche, the "terror and horror of existence" (*BT*, §3) put what he termed a "great question mark over the value of existence" (*BT*, 'Attempt', §1). Whereas his 'educator' Schopenhauer answered this question with the pessimistic assertion that it would be better never to have existed, for suffering only detracted from one's wellbeing, Nietzsche eventually came to significantly distance himself from this assessment. Nietzsche took seriously the significance of suffering for the concept of a well-lived life, and increasingly as he progressed in his philosophical career, took suffering to be necessary for the 'highest value' to be realized; for the cultivation of excellence. In a familiar passage from *Beyond Good and Evil*, he writes that "The discipline of suffering, of great suffering" has "created all enhancements of man so far" (*BGE*, §225). The good life does not consist in a tranquil existence free from suffering, rather, it is one of creative achievement and successful struggle. However, throughout his corpus, but explicitly from his *Untimely Meditations* onwards, Nietzsche's concern is that contemporary 'morality' (in which he includes Schopenhauerian pessimism) enshrines a set of values that are inimical to the cultivation of greatness, in particular: the relentless attempt to alleviate all suffering. Increasingly in his works of the 1880s, this perceived problem becomes a more dominant theme, hence the value of suffering is emphasised.

The idea that suffering is in some way needed for great achievement is by no means unique to Nietzsche's thought. The concept is deeply embedded in the work of Homer, which incidentally bears (both implicitly and often explicitly) upon Nietzsche's critique of contemporary values, and places him within a distinguished 18th and 19th century German tradition of philhellenism alongside the likes of Goethe, Schiller and Hölderlin. While Nietzsche is perhaps best known for his typically provocative and dramatic style of writing, offering familiar slogans such as "what does not kill me makes me stronger" (*TI*, 'Maxims and Arrows', §8), to conclude that this is *all* that Nietzsche is doing when he explores the

value of suffering—an over-romanticising and possibly insensitive nostalgia for the concept—would be naive, and exegetically careless.[1]

In this thesis, I use Nietzsche's departure from Schopenhauer as a point from which to explore a central and under-appreciated theme in his work: identifying the kind(s) of value that suffering can have in virtue of its relation to greatness. This value relation has often previously been assumed to be merely instrumental; that suffering is valuable insofar as it is a stimulant to greatness. I draw upon contemporary axiology in order to shed light on whether this interpretation is (or can be) plausible. Crucial to such a project is a clarification of four major ambiguities: (a) how Nietzsche construes suffering in this context, and if this construal differs in other contexts; (b) if and how Nietzsche might think suffering can be graded (e.g. by its intensity, duration, or both); (c) what Nietzsche considers 'greatness' to consist in: as purely a matter of achievement of certain goals, or as purely a matter of admirable character traits, or some combination of both; (d) how to distinguish between something being non-instrumentally necessary, and something being necessary-but-instrumental. These ambiguities and their associated controversies will be the focus of the chapters to come.

While my aim is primarily exegetical—to elucidate what Nietzsche's actual view is regarding the value of suffering and how it differs from the views of his opponents—I do so with a view to extracting some of his more independently plausible claims regarding the nature and value of achievement, which will be of interest to ethicists more broadly. Moreover, I defend the claim that insofar as Nietzsche is interested in the good life and questions of value surrounding it, he deserves to be taken seriously as an ethicist.

There is a wider question regarding how Nietzsche's response to suffering fits in to his larger project of life-affirmation and responding to the threat of nihilism. Many commentators interested in Nietzsche's attitudes towards suffering approach the question within this context, often only indirectly addressing suffering's specific value. I do not deny that life-affirmation is one of Nietzsche's major projects. However, in this thesis I focus on the much more narrow issue of how suffering is thought to be valuable in the context of

[1] This is not to say that this Goethe, Schilller and Hölderlin were guilty of this, just that the figure of Nietzsche that is unfortunately often presented in this way is certainly a false one.

achievement and the production of greatness, drawing upon how Nietzsche understands the status of intrinsic and extrinsic value.

I begin, in Chapter One, by explicating what Nietzsche understands suffering to consist in by interpreting his conception of 'the will to power' in light of Schopenhauer's 'will to life'. In particular, I argue that Nietzsche accepts at least three major aspects from Schopenhauer's descriptive account of the will:

(1) All willing springs from want or deficiency.
(2) The will is never 'satisfied'. That is, even if a particular determinate goal is attained, the will manifests itself by pursuing a new goal.
(3) At least one form of suffering can be understood as 'resistance to the will'.

In doing so I endorse a particular interpretation of the doctrine of the will to power defended by Bernard Reginster, and more recently Paul Katsafanas, who in my view are exceptions in the secondary literature insofar as they rightly place Nietzsche's persisting and mature views firmly within a Schopenhauerian framework. This is advantageous because, as I shall draw out, it has great explanatory power in elucidating controversial Nietzschean concepts—including the ambiguities (a) and (b) above—from his early as well as later periods. In doing this, I also distinguish suffering from the phenomenon of pain, as well as other ways Nietzsche uses the term 'suffering' which are not relevant to my investigation regarding the pursuit of noble achievements. I then provide a critique of Nietzsche's evaluative disagreements with Schopenhauer, and his motivation for rejecting the hedonism which underpins his pessimism.

In Chapter Two I consider in detail what Nietzsche understands 'greatness' to consist in, for without doing so, one is unlikely to comprehend why and in what way suffering could have value in relation to it. While Nietzsche's veneration of individuals such as Beethoven and Goethe typically centres on qualities of character or their executive virtues—pride, strength, perseverance, 'nobility', and so on—I argue that character, broadly construed for now, is only a necessary condition for greatness and not a sufficient condition. While Nietzsche does care deeply about how one *is*, he also cares about what one *does*. In

establishing that achievements contribute to the concept of greatness in Nietzsche's view just as much as character, I explore the distinctions to be made between talent, taste, and luck, and their degree of interrelation in genuinely great individuals. I also draw two further distinctions which have received relatively little attention in the secondary literature on this topic. The first is the question of whether greatness, on Nietzsche's view, requires one to *actually* carry out great deeds, or merely that one has the *potential* to do so. I argue that there are good reasons to support the former interpretation. The second is the question of how much extrinsic conditions matter for greatness. In other words, does greatness have to be considered in relation to a particular cultural backdrop or not? I argue that while there is some evidence that Nietzsche thought so, he may have changed his mind in different periods of his work, and I ultimately remain open to this possibility.

Chapter Three discusses Nietzsche's broader claims about the nature of value and valuing. After establishing what Nietzsche understands greatness to consist in, I argue that he considers greatness as valuable for its own sake or 'as an end'. I then proceed to distinguish this concept from 'intrinsic value' in order to clarify how some interpreters are using the terms. By drawing upon contemporary value theory, I argue, following Christine Korsgaard and others, that 'intrinsic value' is properly contrasted with 'extrinsic value', and not 'instrumental value'. The reason why this is significant is that there are numerous forms of extrinsic value, and making them explicit may help elucidate Nietzschean concepts with greater precision insofar as they provide us with a wider range of interpretive tools. Moreover, once we take into account the multiple ways something might be valuable based on its extrinsic or relational properties, we can begin to ask which kind of evaluation can be appropriately be attributed to Nietzsche's views on suffering.

I move on in Chapter Four to considering the case for attributing instrumental value to Nietzsche's account of suffering. I explore the arguments for such a view in light of the textual evidence Nietzsche provides, but ultimately argue that the instrumental reading, insofar as it treats suffering as *only* instrumentally valuable, is not sufficiently representative of Nietzsche's view. I provide support for this contention by drawing attention to and explicating two claims:

(1) The instrumental view is compatible with the Christian or 'moral' evaluation of suffering.

(2) Nietzsche proposes a *radical* revaluation [*Umwerthung*] of values at least partly on the grounds that the Christian or 'moral' system fails to appropriately value suffering.

I do so by firstly considering what an achievement is, and how it differs from merely satisfying a desire. I then move to discussing what is valuable about an achievement: the *product* reached or the *process* of reaching it. I argue that Nietzsche is in fact committed to a hybrid view in which the process of reaching a goal gives an achievement its value, but given his elitism, there likely must be substantive constraints on what these goals are. Unfortunately however, Nietzsche does not provide an account of what these constraints will be. While I aim to attribute this view to Nietzsche, I also argue that it is an independently plausible view, and that Nietzsche can contribute to the ethics of achievement just as much, if not to a greater degree, than typical Aristotelian accounts.

In the final Chapter, Chapter Five, I consider a plausible alternative to the instrumental view that is defended by Reginster: that suffering has value in virtue of forming part of a valuable whole. I first clarify how Reginster understands this evaluative claim to follow from his interpretation of the will to power, and then provide support for his view that what he calls 'contributory value' is distinct from instrumental value. Reginster argues that because suffering is an *essential* feature of Nietzschean achievement, we must also value suffering in such a way that it cannot be a regrettable feature. I argue that, as it stands, this argument is open to an objection, namely: that by taking advantage of the principle of organic unities—a principle that Nietzsche heavily engages with—there can be an essential part of a valuable whole which we nonetheless deplore. At work here is a distinction between two ways a part can have value in virtue of its relation to a whole. The first way is as an enabling condition, where a part retains its badness but allows for the production of a compensating good (X enables Y, which has value). The second way is as a contributor, where the part positively contributes to value to a whole (X contributes value to Y). I explore this distinction, and argue that if Nietzsche's revaluation of values is to be as radical as he claims, he must consider suffering to be valuable-as-a-part in a particular way, that is: as a contributor and not

an enabling condition. This interpretation, I claim, can be supported by drawing upon a broader theme of Nietzschean aestheticism; paying particular attention to the concept of the 'hero' which features heavily from *The Birth of Tragedy* up to and including *The Gay Science*. By addressing what Nietzsche perceives as a tension between moral and aesthetic value, we may provide the tools to respond to the objection Reginster faces.

One potential exegetical complication one needs to be aware of in carrying out this project concerns how to proceed in determining, and often reconstructing, Nietzsche's thought. While Nietzsche never uses formal arguments himself, it is nonetheless sometimes permissible, appropriate, and even required, to employ them when presenting his views. The reason being that, as we shall see, he often makes several distinct claims within one passage. Together with his aphoristic style, this can make exegesis peculiarly difficult. Using formal arguments familiar to analytical philosophy is a useful tool in clarifying Nietzsche's thought on the specific point at hand, and I shall utilize them periodically throughout this thesis.

A second exegetical complication is that Nietzsche is a figure whose philosophy is generally considered to have significantly changed and developed in important ways over the course of his writing.[2] Taking this into account, claims such as: Nietzsche 'argues for *X*'; '...develops an account of *Y*'; '...rejects all forms of *Z*', and so forth, have to be considered as at least potentially only relative to a particular period of Nietzsche's philosophy. Of specific relevance to my investigation is that Nietzsche's claims about the *value* of suffering become increasingly prevalent in his latter writings as a result of his amplified immoralism. Consequently, I more frequently discuss his works from 1881 onwards. However, I hope to demonstrate that in order to fully grasp the relationship between suffering and greatness, one must look to both Nietzsche's 'positivistic' period and his early period, not least in order to comprehend the perceived problem he is responding to in his 'great teacher' Schopenhauer.

[2] A common view of the developmental phases of Nietzsche's philosophy divides his work into three stages: an early period (1871-1878), a 'positivistic' period (1878-1881), and a mature period (1881-1889).

A Note on the *Nachlass* and *The Will to Power*

Before I begin, there is a third complication of a philological nature that needs to be made explicit: the use of the *Nachlass* as a reliable textual source for interpretation of Nietzsche's position. It is first prudent to address the status of *The Will to Power*, which was constructed from portions of the *Nachlass*. After addressing the most problematic aspects of this text, I shall then identify competing traditions of thought that pertain to the appropriateness of referring to the *Nachlass* from which it was formed.

After Nietzsche's death in August 1900, and under the organisational supervision of his sister Elizabeth, Nietzsche's editors (primarily Heinrich Köselitz—otherwise known as Peter Gast—Ernst Horneffer and August Horneffer) collected his 1880's notebooks and assembled selected passages under the title of what was claimed to be his intended magnum opus: *The Will to Power*. This was published first in 1901 as 483 selected and arranged notes, and then again in two volumes in 1906 as 1,067 notes, which has become the most familiar edition.

There are three reasons to approach this text with caution, each of which has been developed in more detail than I can give here by Bernd Magnus in his 1988 paper "The Use and Abuse of The Will to Power".[3] Firstly, although Nietzsche certainly at one stage had a "work in progress" entitled "The Will to Power: An Attempt at a Transvaluation of Values" (*GM*, III, §27), he later abandoned the idea altogether in 1888,[4] with segments of texts that were evidently early drafts ending up forming parts of other published material, notably *The Anti-Christ* and *Twilight of the Idols*.[5] While not providing a sufficient reason to reject *The Will to Power* altogether, this should motivate an initial suspicion over its legitimacy.

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[3] This paper builds on much of the work done on the status of the *Nachlass* in Mazzino Montinari, "Nietzsche's Nachlaß von 1885 bis 1888 oder Textkritik und Wille zur Macht" in *Nietzsche lesen*, (de Gruyter, 1982).

[4] Bernd Magnus, "The Use and Abuse of The Will to Power" in *Reading Nietzsche*, (eds.) Robert Solomon and Kathleen Marie Higgins, (Clarendon Press, 1988), pp. 225.

[5] For a more expansive account of Nietzsche's intention and eventual abandonment of the project, see Wayne Klein, *Nietzsche and the Promise of Philosophy*, (State University of New York Press, 1997), pp. 181-199.

A second reason concerns the order and the headings of the text. The notes from which Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche and the editors collected their material for *The Will to Power* were chaotic and unorganized. The order, numbering and arrangement of the book were not Nietzsche's, and the text was comprised of notes Nietzsche made at significantly different times. With this in mind, that unrelated passages have been grouped together under broad topic sections, although giving the impression of a coherent and ironed-out position, should raise suspicion. Moreover, notorious sections entitled '"Discipline and Breeding' [*Zucht und Züchtung*]", in which concentrated passages describe the "annihilation of the decaying races" (*WP*, §862; *KSA*, 1884, 25[211]), must be approached with caution. Indeed, Nietzsche had drafted plans for headings when he still intended to write the book, but 'Discipline and Breeding' occurred in only one (very early) draft out of a total of twenty-five.[6] The question then becomes: why is it that the notes occur in their particular order?

This question cannot reasonably be considered aside from Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche's own motivations and political sympathies. She was an anti-Semite, avid German nationalist, and later a member of the Nazi party. Together with her husband Bernhard Förster, who in 1881 founded the far right political organisation *Deutscher Volksverein* (German People's League), Elizabeth travelled to a site in Paraguay where they intended to set up a 'racially pure' and 'aryan' colony called *Nueva Germania*. After the limited success of the colony and the suicide of Bernhard Förster, Elizabeth returned to Germany in 1893 to find Nietzsche's writing beginning to stir interest across Europe. Considering her sympathies towards far right parties and proto-fascism emerging in Germany at the time, and her new control over Nietzsche's notes, one cannot rule out the idea that the particular compilation of *The Will to Power* was directed at least in part by a desire to colour Nietzsche's philosophy in a certain shade.

Thirdly, and perhaps this is the most pernicious point of all, notes were included in the text which Nietzsche had earlier discarded. These are more than enough grounds to call into question the credibility of *The Will to Power* as a text representative of Nietzsche's philosophy. One example Magnus focuses on is the text's final passage, which ends with:

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[6] Walter Kaufmann, "Editor's Introduction" to *The Will to Power*, (Vintage Books, 1968), p. 18.

> This world is the will to power — and nothing besides! And yourselves are also this will to power — and nothing besides! (*WP*, §1067; *KSA*, 1885, 38[12])

As Magus notes, this was written by Nietzsche in July 1885 but later set aside (by February 1888) as unusable.[7] Nevertheless, this discarded passage forms a large part of the foundation for a tradition in the secondary literature, largely due to Heidegger's work on Nietzsche,[8] that interprets the doctrine of the 'will to power' as an all encompassing ontological/cosmological doctrine. Little evidence can be found of the 'will to power' being discussed in this context in Nietzsche's published work. There are primarily two aphorisms in which this *may* occur: *GM*, II, §12 and *BGE*, §36. Nevertheless, as Magnus points out, even *if* these passages reflect a clear enough intention in the direction, they would constitute "two slender reeds out of more than 8,000 words of text on which to hang an ontology or cosmology" of the will to power.[9]

The concern over the inclusion of discarded notes, in addition to the section headings and general ordering of *The Will to Power*, suggest that it should not be taken to be on par with works Nietzsche approved for publication. However, the notes contained within the text are nonetheless his own. There are roughly three traditions in the secondary literature which differ as to the importance of this. I shall now briefly address them, and explicate the extent to which I consider making use of the notes from the broader *Nachlass* to be interpretatively appropriate for the purposes of this thesis.

One tradition of thought is that even though the *Nachlass* is at least partially formed of drafts for an essentially unfinished project, they represent Nietzsche's most up-to-date and refined philosophical views. Consequently, one should consider them of at least equal status to the published texts.[10] A stronger view is that this entails that one should *prioritize* the views they express over Nietzsche's earlier, published material. This appears to be the approach favoured by Heidegger, who claimed that:

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[7] Bernd Magnus, (1988), p. 226.

[8] For an excellent discussion of Heidegger's interpretation of Nietzsche and his own reasons for emphasising a metaphysical reading of his key concepts, see Michael Zimmerman, "The Development of Heidegger's Nietzsche Interpretation", *Heidegger-Jahrbuch*, Volume II, (2005).

[9] Magnus, (1988), p. 227.

[10] Scholars who hold something at least close to this view and heavily quote from the *Nachlass* include Richard Schacht, *Nietzsche*, (Routledge, 1983), and John Richardson, *Nietzsche's System*, (Oxford University Press, 1996).

> What Nietzsche himself published during his creative life was always foreground [...] His philosophy proper was left behind as posthumous, unpublished work.[11]
>
> If our knowledge were limited to what Nietzsche himself published, we could never learn what Nietzsche knew perfectly well, what he carefully prepared and continually thought through, yet withheld.[12]

More recently, Richard Schacht claims something similar (though in a more restricted form) when he writes that "these unpublished writings...contain much more of his expressed thinking on certain important matters than do his finished work".[13]

This view has been challenged, rightly in my view, by scholars from a contrary tradition that take the very fact that the notes were not authorized by Nietzsche for publication to invite scepticism about Nietzsche's investment in, and intention for them. R.J. Hollingdale, a proponent of this view, claims that aside from the notes that Nietzsche didn't explicitly discard, the *Nachlass* represents a process of testing out thoughts and developing potential ideas and extensions of his philosophy.[14] One method of interpretation thought to follow from this is that a complete repudiation of *Nachlass* material is appropriate. There are grounds for supporting such a view. For example, as well as there being some philosophical ideas which appear almost exclusively in the *Nachlass*,[15] the literary style of these notes is generally significantly different from that of the published works. This might indicate the notes serve more as experimental exercises or trials of philosophical ideas rather than anything close to a 'philosophy proper'.

Between these two contrary positions of prioritisation and complete rejection, there is a more modest middle ground, which although it treats the *Nachlass* entries as ongoing thought

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[11] Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche Volume One: The Will to Power as Art*, (Harper and Row, 1979), p. 9.

[12] Heidegger, (1979), p. 15.

[13] Schacht, (1983), p. 12.

[14] See R.J. Hollingdale, *Nietzsche: The Man and His Philosophy*, (Cambridge University Press, 1999).

[15] As well as the doctrine of the will to power as an ontological thesis, the same might possibly be said of the shift from Nietzsche's treatment of the 'eternal recurrence' as a hypothetical thought experiment intended for assessing one's psychology in *The Gay Science* and *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, to a scientific thesis in the *Nachlass*. See Magnus, (1988), p. 228.

experiments, does not advocate a wholesale rejection of them. Rather, this middle position places firm confidence in Nietzsche's published work, and draws additional textual evidence from the *Nachlass* only as a supplement to them. This is the view I endorse: that the *Nachlass* can be used to assist in interpreting passages from the published texts when necessary, but should not be given equal station with them. For any references to the *Nachlass* notes which appear in *The Will to Power*, I shall quote from the latter for purposes of translation, but with an additional reference to their original form from the Colli and Montinari edition of the *Kritische Studienausgabe* (KSA).[16]

[16] *Kritische Studienausgabe*, ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzio Montinari (de Gruyter, 1967), and are cited by year, notebook number, note number. Taken from www.nietzschesource.org

Chapter One

The Nature of Suffering — Nietzsche's Debt to Schopenhauer

Nietzsche often uses the term 'suffering' to refer to different phenomena. He also sometimes switches between a pejorative connotation associated with the term and a positive one. Both of these practices are very much implicit. To make matters more complex, Nietzsche also uses the term 'suffering' [*Leiden*] interchangeably with both 'pain' [*Schmerz*] and 'displeasure' [*Unlust*/*Unmut*]. The purpose of this chapter is to disentangle these issues and to establish which form of suffering I shall be focusing on in the thesis, that is: the suffering experienced in the pursuit of one's goals. I argue that following Bernard Reginster, this form of suffering is best understood by considering Nietzsche's conception of the will to power in light of Schopenhauer's will to life. Moreover, that once this is achieved, many of the ambiguities regarding terminology dissipate. Once I identify the extent of what Nietzsche adopts from the Schopenhauerian framework, I consider their most significant point of departure, namely: the evaluation of the will, the issue of hedonism, and its underpinning of Schopenhauer's pessimism. I suggest that grasping this point will inform Nietzsche's claims about the value of suffering and human greatness which appear well into the 1880s.

1. Nietzsche's Terminology

Before we begin to assess how Nietzsche thinks suffering can be valuable, it is necessary to first comprehend what he means by the term. In *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche claims that "the sole ground of the world" is an "eternal, primal suffering" (*BT*, §4). Human existence is one in which we are forced to endure "the terrible destructions of world history and nature's cruelty" (*BT*, §7).[17] Similar claims persist into Nietzsche's later works. In *Beyond*

[17] Nietzsche's aim in this early work is at least in part a celebration of Hellenic culture, which he viewed as accurately perceiving the true "horror and absurdity of existence" (*BT*, §7) and successfully grappling with pessimism (though he does not yet use the term), up until Socrates, through aesthetic creativity, specifically tragedy. As I shall argue, while Nietzsche is still heavily influenced by Schopenhauer's descriptive and evaluative views in this period, his later rejection is only of the evaluative dimension of pessimism.

Good and Evil, for example, he writes that nature is "boundlessly indifferent, without purpose or consideration, without pity or justice" (*BGE*, §9), and derides those who think it possible and hope to "abolish suffering", for "there is no more insane 'if possible'" (*BGE*, §225). Further, in *The Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche states that:

> Life operates essentially—that is, in terms of its basic functions—through injury, violation, exploitation, and destruction, and cannot be conceived in any other way. (*GM*, II, §11)

I shall not review all of his arguments here,[18] but I take these passages to be at least partially representative of a view Nietzsche consistently endorses,[19] namely, that suffering is a fundamental feature of the human condition. Nietzsche may also endorse the view that it is a fundamental feature of *all* sentient life—a claim I consider later in this Chapter. However, for the purposes of clarity, my focus for now will be narrowly restricted to the human domain.

But, of course, more needs to be said for this claim to carry weight. In what way is suffering 'fundamental' to human existence, and is that distinct from its being essential or necessary? Does 'suffering' refer to a particular experience, or a family of distinct phenomena? I aim to answer these questions throughout this chapter, beginning with what Nietzsche understands suffering to consist in.

We commonly use 'suffering' as a blanket term to characterise a variety of mental states: depression, fear, loss, anxiety, loneliness, anguish, grief, distress, rejection, failure, hopelessness, stress, boredom, and so forth; as well as various physical states: hunger, exhaustion, fatigue, enduring extreme temperatures, persisting aches, bruising, and so forth.

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[18] Nietzsche heavily relies upon both empirical and apriori arguments made by Schopenhauer to support these claims. For a helpful insight into just how much Nietzsche relies upon Schopenhauer's arguments, see Ivan Soll, "Pessimism and the Tragic View of Life: Reconsiderations of Nietzsche's Birth of Tragedy" in Robert Solomon and Kathleen Marie Higgins, *Reading Nietzsche*, (Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 112-114. Soll's view is that Nietzsche accepts Schopenhauer's descriptive pessimism (i.e. that life is essentially suffering), but rejects his evaluative pessimism (i.e. that the value of life is overwhelmingly negative). This view is also well defended by Daniel Came. See Daniel Came, "The Aesthetic Justification of Existence" in Keith Ansell Pearson, *A Companion to Nietzsche*, (Blackwell, 2005), especially pp. 42-45. I discuss this in the final section of this chapter. For a discussion of further evidence that this is Nietzsche's descriptive view of human existence, see Phillip Kain, "Nietzsche, Eternal Recurrence, and the Horror of Existence" in *The Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, Issue 33, (Pennsylvania State University, 2007) pp. 49 - 63.

[19] A possible exception to my claim would be Nietzsche's thought in 1878-1881, often referred to as his 'positivistic' period.

Each of these experiences admits of degrees, with perhaps some borderline cases.[20] For instance, for someone who has a fear of heights, the distress and anxiety they may experience on top of a diving board will likely be less intense than they may experience at the summit of a mountain. Moreover, while we may conceive of the intensity of various forms of suffering in this way, the duration of suffering is also significant. An intense but week-long feeling of loneliness, for example, may not be strictly commensurable with a lifetime of mild loneliness. However, Nietzsche nowhere provides an explicit definition of the phenomenon of suffering, or what in particular unifies all of these experiences as instances of 'suffering'.

On the one hand, we might think that a lack of a strict definition here is not troubling. Instances of suffering may be obvious, at least to the sufferer. If this is the case, it is perhaps unsurprising Nietzsche does not give an explicit definition, and we shouldn't expect to find one in his work. Identifying suffering may be a case of 'I know it when I see it'. However, there are two problems that with this particular approach. The first problem is that Nietzsche often uses the term 'suffering' [*Leiden*] interchangeably with both 'pain' [*Schmerz*] and 'displeasure' [*Unlust*/*Unmut*]. This can make it difficult to accurately interpret Nietzsche's use of the term. The reason, I shall shortly argue, is because these terms may refer to importantly different concepts.

A second problem is that Nietzsche often uses the term 'suffering' in a variety of seemingly incompatible ways in different contexts, and so it is important to distinguish what these are. This is crucial in order to be clear about which phenomenon I am discussing in this thesis and which I am not. Nietzsche frequently refers to suffering in a manner of approval. For example, he writes "Profound suffering ennobles; it separates" (*BGE*, §270), and: "How deeply humans can suffer almost determines their order of rank" (*BGE*, §270). Further still in the same work, Nietzsche tells us that the "highest type" of man has "hitherto almost always been the type that has suffered most" (*BGE*, §62). Nietzsche's Zarathustra, the paradigm 'higher type', refers to himself as "the advocate of life, the advocate of suffering" (*Z*, III, §13).

[20] For example, rejection may plausibly be all or nothing in some circumstances.

On the other hand, Nietzsche also repeatedly uses suffering in a pejorative sense. He describes the "surplus of failures, of the sick, of the degenerate" among humankind as "those who are bound to suffer" (*BGE*, §62). Moreover, a consequence of the historical prominence of Christian morality is, in Nietzsche's view, that "everything sick and suffering has been preserved" (*BGE*, §62). In *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche provides part of his account of how it has done this: the 'ascetic priest' engineered a 'slave revolt in values', in which "only those who suffer are good, only the poor, the powerless, the lowly are good; *the suffering*, the deprived, the sick, the ugly..." (*GM*, I, §7; emphasis mine). The ascetic's realm, we are told, is "*the dominion of the suffering*" (*GM*, III, §15).

There is a *prima facie* contradiction in the way Nietzsche uses the term 'suffering'. On the one hand Nietzsche appears to closely associate suffering with what he considers to be the 'highest' type of individuals, and on the other he appears to closely associate suffering with the mediocre 'herd'. In order to make it clear that this contradiction is only apparent, we must single out and differentiate Nietzsche's uses of the term. I shall now distinguish just two ways Nietzsche conceives of suffering which are separate from the form I will focus on in this thesis.[21]

1.1. Suffering as Existential Malaise

One way Nietzsche understands suffering concerns the justification of perceived ills and misfortune in the first place. In section 28 of the third essay of *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche writes that "the meaninglessness of suffering, *not* suffering as such, has been the curse which has hung over mankind up to now" (*GM*, III, §28). He makes two important claims in this familiar passage. Firstly, the various misfortunes which may befall a person, such as those psychological and physical conditions mentioned above, can often be endured, and perhaps even desired if they are a necessary means to an end—for example, enduring a trip to the dentist for the sake of one's health. But what makes the human condition distinctly

[21] Brian Leiter identifies at least five forms suffering can take that Nietzsche pays attention to, which are broadly: (1) a "human instinct towards cruelty"; (2) "internalizing cruelty via bad conscience"; (3) "existential *angst*"; (4) "brute facts of physiology"; (5) that humans are "endlessly striving". See Brian Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, (Routledge, 2002), p. 257. I explain just two for the present moment, but I shall return to Leiter's claim in Chapter Three.

problematic, according to Nietzsche, is that we are in the peculiar position of being able to question what the *meaning* behind suffering is. Nietzsche holds that the lack of an answer to this question leads to an existential malaise, which is itself a kind of suffering. It results from there being "no answer to the crying question '*why* do I suffer'?" (*GM*, III, §28).

Nietzsche's second claim in this passage is that this feeling of meaningless suffering can also be a consequence of asking a more fundamental question, namely: "why does man exist at all?" (*GM*, III, §28). Not only does misfortune give rise to existential suffering, but so does the "gaping void" which results from man not knowing how to "justify, explain, affirm himself": man "*suffered* from the problem of his meaning" (*GM*, III, §28).[22]

This phenomenon is part of why Nietzsche takes the 'slave revolt' in values through the medium of Christianity to have been so successful: it gave a meaning to suffering: "it explained suffering; it seemed to fill the gaping void" (*GM*, III, §28). I shall shortly explain how he takes it to have done this, but in spite of this, Nietzsche claims that this meaning "brought new suffering with it, deeper, more internal, more poisonous, more gnawing suffering" (*GM*, III, §28). This leads me to discuss a second conception of 'suffering': that of the character and constitution of the 'ascetic priest'.

1.2. Suffering as Internalized Cruelty

A second way Nietzsche comprehends suffering directly results from his understanding of suffering in existential terms, and how Christianity sought to remedy it. He proposes a third component to the story, and starts by proposing that human psychology is such that when we are harmed (or at least perceived to be harmed) we have a tendency to seek someone or something to blame for it:

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[22] Ultimately, Nietzsche believes this problem, if unanswered, leads to what he calls "suicidal nihilism" (*GM*, III, §28)—a possibility which again raises its head in light of Nietzsche's diagnosis of the 'death of God' (i.e. the collapse of belief in the bedrock of human meaning) (see *GS*, §125). This is at least one significant theme in Nietzsche's work that I take later philosophers of the 'existentialist' tradition to be drawing upon and elaborating (specifically with regard to the emotion of angst).

> For every suffering man instinctively seeks a cause for his suffering; more precisely, for a culprit [*Thäter*], even more definitely, a *guilty* culprit who is receptive to distress—in short, something living on which he can upon any pretext discharge his feelings either in fact or in effigie. (*GM*, III, §15)

This psychological insight—though in a less precise form—is entertained by Nietzsche six years earlier in *Daybreak*: "man sees in every feeling of indisposition and misfortune something for which he has to make someone else suffer", and explicitly links this to a form of "satisfaction [*Befriedigung*]" (*D*, §15). Nietzsche explicitly contrasts this with the typical human reaction to feelings of pleasure, which he perceives to not require justification: "pain always raises the question about its origin, while pleasure is inclined to stop with itself without looking back" (*GS*, §13).

Nietzsche makes an additional claim: that one's drives or instincts have to discharge themselves somehow, be it externally (i.e. upon another person or object) or internally (i.e. upon oneself): "Every instinct which does not vent itself externally *turns inwards* — this is what I call the *internalization* of man..." (*GM*, II, §16). This is a significant part of Nietzsche's story because according to him, if there is no guilty culprit (i.e. no meaning) for one's suffering, the sufferer can give it meaning by blaming himself — this is precisely what Nietzsche argues the ascetic priest orchestrated:

> "I suffer: someone must be to blame for it" — thus thinks every sickly sheep. But his shepherd, the ascetic priest, tells him: “Quite so, my sheep! Someone must be to blame for it: but you yourself are this someone, you alone are to blame for it — you alone are to blame for yourself!" (*GM*, III, §15).

Nietzsche interprets this internalization of blame as a form of 'cruelty' towards oneself, which he understands in terms of guilt (*GM*, II).[23] Adherents to this 'ascetic ideal' are consequently, on Nietzsche's view, those who suffer from themselves: "the greatest and most sinister

[23] Nietzsche holds this view because of his analysis of the origins of the institution of punishment in terms of a debtor-creditor dialectic, whereby those who were wronged had their 'debt' paid back to them via taking pleasure in the guilty offenders' suffering (i.e. cruelty). This morbid practice culminates, in Nietzsche's view, in Christianity: the wrongdoer is *perpetually* in debt (and hence 'guilty') to God in virtue of being inherently 'sinful', and therefore perpetually punishes himself through a certain form of asceticism. (*GM*, III, §20).

sickness which still affects man even today, man's suffering from man, from himself" (*GM*, II, §16; cf. *A*, §22).

1.3. Suffering as Striving

The two uses of the term discussed so far are importantly different from what I will be focusing my attention upon: that is, the suffering endured in the pursuit of, or striving [*Streben*] for, noble goals. In order to (1) understand what Nietzsche means by this third instance of suffering; and (2) disentangle his interchanging use of 'pain', 'suffering' and 'displeasure', it is crucial to assess Schopenhauer's account of 'the will' from which Nietzsche implicitly appropriates aspects into his own account. I now turn my attention to presenting Schopenhauer's view.

2. Schopenhauer and the Will to Life

In *The World as Will and Representation*, Schopenhauer attempts to demonstrate that we can philosophically understand the essence of all organic life as various manifestations of one general principle.[24] For Schopenhauer this principle is the *Wille zum Leben*—or 'will to life'—a mindless, 'blind', non-rational urge at the foundation of every living thing.

2.1. Motivation

Sentient beings are manifestations of the will, and to exist means constant striving [*streben*] towards a goal, or to be persistently directed towards some end. The fundamental goal or end that bears on all others is ultimately the perpetuation of life: the survival of the

[24] The standard interpretation of Schopenhauer's account of the will is that it is analogous to the Kantian 'thing in itself'. Although highly critical of aspects of Kant's metaphysics, Schopenhauer accepts the transcendental idealist distinction between the world of phenomena: how we experience the world as it appears to us; and the noumenal world: how the world really is in itself. For Schopenhauer, everything within the phenomenal world (the world of representation) is a manifestation of the will. Individual human and non-human animal wills are local manifestations of the same will. For a different interpretation to this traditional approach, see Julian Young, *Willing and Unwilling: A Study in the Philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer,* (Martinus Nijhoff, 1987).

material manifestation of the will. Crucially, the will operates within rational and conscious forms of life but is *not* rational or conscious itself. As Christopher Janaway remarks, it acts more as an "organizing principle" in the sense that, common to humans, dogs, spiders, trees and so forth, all *tend* towards self-preservation and reproduction.[25] As organisms in this world, all are driven towards "the maintenance of the individual and the propagation of the species" (*WWR*, I, §60, p. 327).

However, the nature of the will is internally contradictory in the sense that various manifestations of it are in vicious competition, often motivated to feed upon each other. Paradoxically, this conflict is instigated precisely by the fact that we are all manifestations of the same will. Schopenhauer presents a paradigm example of this proto-Darwinian view of natural strife and struggle with the case of the bull-dog ant:

> But the bulldog-ant of Australia affords us the most extraordinary example of this kind; for if it is cut in two, a battle begins between the head and the tail. The head seizes the tail in its teeth, and the tail defends itself bravely by stinging the head: the battle may last for half an hour, until they die or are dragged away by other ants. This contest takes place every time. (*WWR*, I, §27, p. 147)

2.2. Insatiability

The nature of the will to life frames existence in terms of willing and attaining. However, the will is never eradicated, even when a particular goal or end is achieved. The will in this sense is perpetual and insatiable:

> at all grades of its phenomenon from the lowest to the highest, the will dispenses entirely with and ultimate aim and object. It always strives, because striving is its sole nature, to which no attained goal can put an end. Such striving is therefore incapable of final satisfaction; it can be checked only by hindrance, but in itself goes on forever. (*WWR*, I, §56, p. 308)

For example, we may have a desire to eat an apple, but if we achieve this aim of eating an apple, the will does not dissolve upon satisfaction, but instead manifests itself in a new

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[25] Christopher Janaway, "Schopenhauer's Pessimism" in *The Cambridge Companion to Schopenhauer*, (Cambridge: CUP, 1999), p. 325-326.

desire. Because "every satisfied desire gives birth to a new one" (*WWR*, II, p. 573), we are caught in an endless cycle between willing and attaining. This structure of willing shall resurface below.

2.3. The Will as a Source of Suffering

But how does this relate to suffering? Here I shall sidestep the scope of 'the will' in relation to non-sentient life, and focus solely on the striving of human beings, as is relevant to my thesis.[26] Schopenhauer defines suffering as the will's "hindrance through an obstacle placed between it and its temporary goal" (*WWR*, I, §56, p. 309). In other words, suffering is the non-attainment of goals, or resistance to the will. Schopenhauer explicitly presents suffering in direct contrast to happiness, which he defines as the attainment of goals or satisfaction [*Befriedigung*] (*WWR*, I, §56, p. 309).

Because the will never ceases willing, when happiness is achieved it is something temporary and fleeting. Moreover, it is nothing of the significance we want happiness to be; that is, according to Schopenhauer, a kind of enduring end state. 'Happiness', Schopenhauer argues, is illusive: it is always "located in the future, or else in the past" (*WWR*, II, p. 573). He concludes; "so long as we are the subject of willing, we never obtain lasting happiness or peace" (*WWR*, I, §38, p. 196). But it is not obvious that unsatisfied desires constitute suffering. We must look at Schopenhauer's claims in detail to understand his argument and its ambiguities.

If existence means constant and unrelenting striving, then life will include many unsatisfied desires. This is because Schopenhauer defends the following claim:

> All striving springs from want or deficiency, from dissatisfaction with one's own state or condition (*WWR*, I, §56, p. 309).

[26] Though, much of what I shall present in this section as representative of Schopenhauer's view is intentionally applicable to animal life as well. Schopenhauer's attention to animal suffering and the relatively wide scope of his moral community at the time was innovative, and a direct result of his thoughts on common experiences of striving and satisfaction.

The assumption here appears to be that if in principle a being was in a state of satisfaction where they lacked nothing, then this state would go on continuously. Schopenhauer does not think that this state is in fact possible, given the nature of the will, or indeed (as I shall discuss shortly) desirable for the agent. But the idea is that any instance of striving involves (or the agent believes it to involve) a need [*Bedürftigkeit*] or lack [*Mangel*]: "all willing as such springs from lack" (*WWR*, I, §65 p. 363). As a result, striving, by nature, implies an unsatisfied desire.

From here, Schopenhauer quickly makes a second claim: that striving, in involving an unsatisfied desire, "is therefore suffering so long as it is not satisfied" (*WWR*, I, §56, p. 309).[27] This claim is much more controversial, for it is not the case that an awareness of one's unsatisfied desires alone necessarily constitutes a sufficient condition for one to suffer. Schopenhauer must also endorse the idea that this lack, or unsatisfied desire, is a painful experience.

Schopenhauer does precisely this. He explicitly holds that desire implies pain: "the basis of all willing, however, is need, lack, and hence pain..." (*WWR*, I, §57, p. 312). In the same passage, he writes that "of its nature the desire is pain" (*WWR*, I, §57, pp. 313; cf. §65, p. 363). The model examples Schopenhauer gives to support this view are that of hunger and thirst. When one is hungry, for instance, one is in need of sustenance. This lack of sustenance is made aware to the organism via the signal of a corresponding pain: dehydration, headaches, stomach pain, fatigue, and so forth. The hope for absence of this pain serves as a means to motivate the required action to satisfy the need. In this example, the degree of pain experienced is inseparable from the degree of hunger experienced.

Because we constantly will, we constantly strive. Because we constantly strive, we constantly lack or are in need. Because this lack is inherently painful, we suffer as long as we

[27] Also: "all willing as such springs from lack, and *hence from suffering*" (*WWR*, I, §65 p. 363; emphasis added).

strive. Schopenhauer provides many examples to capture this bleak picture, but it is perhaps best captured by his use of the myth of Tantalus:

> [S]o long as our consciousness is filled by our will, so long as we are given up to the throng of desires with its constant hopes and fears, so long as we are the subject of willing, we never obtain lasting happiness or peace...Thus the subject of willing is constantly lying on the revolving wheel of Ixion, is always drawing water in the sieve of the Danaids, and is the eternally thirsting Tantalus. (*WWR,* I, §38, p. 196)

2.4. Boredom

Before I discuss the many objections to these controversial claims, Schopenhauer makes an important additional claim about the nature of the will. That is, that the nature of the will is such that if one lacks objects of willing, for example if objects of willing are constantly attained too easily, then one falls victim to an additional torment: boredom. He writes:

> If, on the other hand, it [any animal] lacks objects of willing, because it is at once deprived of them again by too easy a satisfaction, a fearful emptiness and boredom come over it; in other words, its being and its existence itself become an intolerable burden for it. (*WWR*, I, §57, p. 312)

Schopenhauer claims that "Boredom is anything but an evil to be thought of lightly; ultimately it depicts on the countenance real despair" (*WWR*, I, §57, p. 313). He was committed to this claim about the seriousness of boredom to the human psyche—perhaps more than any other philosopher before or after him—to the extent that he cites as evidence the "strict penitentiary system of Philadelphia" as making "mere boredom an instrument of punishment", resulting in bringing "convicts to suicide" (*WWR*, I, §57, p. §313).

Schopenhauer also refers to boredom as a type of lack or "empty longing" (*WWR*, I, §58, p. 320).[28] The idea being that even though we suffer in striving, we *need* to strive in order to avoid the pain of boredom.[29] His famous example to demonstrate this point is in an imagined 'utopia' where "everything grew automatically and pigeons flew about ready roasted...then people would die of boredom or hang themselves" (*PP2*, p. 293).

The need for something to strive towards in order to keep us occupied is, in Schopenhauer's view, what drives people in extreme cases to acts of violence and cruelty, and hence more suffering. How might this happen? Schopenhauer refers to a process of 'internalisation' that is remarkably close to the Nietzschean theme of the "internalization of man" (*GM*, II, §16) that I discussed in section 1.2. If the "excessive pressure of the will" cannot express itself because there are no goals to pursue or the goals available are achieved to easily, then in order to avoid the "frightful desolation" and "inner torment" of boredom, one "tries to mitigate his own suffering by the sight of another's" (*WWR*, I, §65, p. 364). This purports to do two things. Firstly, it is an attempt to escape from suffering because Schopenhauer is committed to the plausible psychological view that "The calling to mind of sufferings greater than our own still their pain; the sight of another's suffering alleviates our own" (*WWR*, I, §65, p. 364). Secondly, the task of inflicting pain upon another gives the agent something to strive towards, and thus alleviates boredom for a short time. Schopenhauer takes this to be "revealed by history" (*WWR*, I, §65, p. 364), for example: Nero's cruelty and his burning of Rome.

Schopenhauer concludes that, ultimately, “life swings to and fro like a pendulum between pain and boredom, and these two are in fact its ultimate constituents” (*WWR*, I, §57, p. 312). This reveals that Schopenhauer's conception of the will has a particular structure.

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[28] As Julian young points out, Schopenhauer identifies three forms of boredom: (1) Perceptual: when interaction with the world fails to stimulate the will, the world becomes "dreary" (*WWR*, I, §57, p. 314); (2) Conative: the frustration of lacking a goal and the resulting feeling of 'inner torment'; (3) Metaphysical: an existential malaise stemming from viewing the cycle of willing as arbitrary and not of an agents choosing (what later 'existentialists' would refer to as 'the absurd'). I mainly focus upon an aspect of (2) and how Nietzsche, as we shall see, also engages with the concept. See Julian Young, *Schopenhauer*, (New York: Routledge, 2005), pp. 141-142.

[29] Interestingly, Schopenhauer refers to the middle class of affluent societies as, ironically, particularly susceptible to boredom; what he calls "the problem of leisure" (*PP*1, p. 331; cf. *WWR*, I, §57, p. 314; §60, p. 327).

With the observation about our susceptibility to boredom, we can see that Schopenhauer's understanding of the will takes the form of a second-order desire to have first-order desires. We have a variety of first-order desires—to eat, marry, progress in our careers, watch films, and so forth—but we become bored, not when we lack these particular determinate ends, but when we lack "objects of willing" in general. Bernard Reginster has put this in the following way: "When we are bored, we are not lacking the determinate objects of particular desires, but we are rather lacking objects *to* desire".[30] In other words, the will to life is in essence a will to will; a desire to have desires. This is what Schopenhauer means when he says that "willing and striving are its [life's] whole essence" (*WWR*, I, §57, p. 312).

2.5. Types of Displeasure: Suffering, Pain, and Boredom

One of the many merits of Reginster's interpretation of the Schopenhauerian framework is that it makes use of clear terminological distinctions between forms of what we might broadly label displeasure.[31] Reginster draws out three concepts from the view outlined above: (1) Suffering; (2) Boredom; (3) Pain.[32] Schopenhauer appears to reserve the term 'suffering' [*Leiden*] for the experience of frustration or resistance to the will. When we lack what we strive for, we experience suffering. Suffering therefore requires the existence of determinate ends. A second form of displeasure that has just been discussed is that of boredom. Boredom occurs when desires are satisfied too easily, and temporarily "no new desire appears on the scene" (*WWR*, I, §57, p. 314). Hence, boredom is a type of lack: the absence of striving.

However not all displeasure in life will arise from a frustration of desire. Some are independent of our desires in that they come unbidden. For example, getting stung by a wasp, losing a loved one, getting frightened suddenly, and so forth, are all things which can be experienced at any time, *regardless* of one's pre-existing desires. Reginster identifies these

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[30] Bernard Reginster, *The Affirmation of Life: Nietzsche on Overcoming Nihilism*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2006), p. 122.

[31] For his detailed account of the nature of the will, see Reginster, (2006), pp. 106-123.

[32] Reginster, (2006), pp. 113-114.

experiences in the Schopenhauerian framework as 'pain [*Schmerz*]'. Importantly, however, these pains may spawn immediate desires. When the wasp stings me, I develop a desire for the pain to stop. We might categorise the two phenomena by saying that suffering is *active* in the sense that it requires the existence of some determinate end for an agent to desire—it is constitutive of striving. In contrast, pain is *passive* because, although it may also be experienced while striving towards a certain goal, it can also be experienced regardless of the existence of such a desire—it is forced upon an agent. The role of pain as a *stimulant* to the will, and of suffering as *constitutive* feature of willing will later show its significance in Schopenhauer's, and respectively Nietzsche's, evaluation of the will.

Now that I have presented the Schopenhauerian picture of willing, I shall present a selection of standard objections to it which I take to be the strongest, and offer potential replies on Schopenhauer's behalf.

2.6. Objections

We have just seen that Schopenhauer's a priori argument for pessimism centres upon the claim that unsatisfied desire constitutes a state of suffering; that instances of resistance to the will are inherently painful. Because we constantly have unsatisfied desires in our striving, we constantly suffer.

The first and perhaps most intuitive counter argument to Schopenhauer's view as I have presented it is that it is implausible that *all* instances of unsatisfied desire are painful. Schopenhauer holds that the 'willing' that is characteristic of human life ought to be understood on the model of thirst or hunger; that is, as need-based desire where an awareness of a perceived lack is inseparable from the corresponding pain. However, there appear to be at least three relevant counter examples to this model.

Firstly, one might point to the fact that some desires do not require a lack, rather, they depend upon having something already, where there is a wish to retain it. For example, I may

desire to retain my friendship with someone, or to continue living in the particular area I reside in. In both cases, I *have* rather than *lack*, and am 'satisfied' in the Schopenhauerian sense of attainment. Here, it is unclear how pain might be implied by my desire. This is precisely the objection made by David Cartwright, who argues that Schopenhauer presupposes that desiring involves a lack.[33] Cartwright's own example is that of desiring to retain one's health: like the cases above, there is a desire yet no (obvious) dissatisfaction or lack.

There is a second type of case, closely related to this first example, which undermines the assumption that all desire indicates a painful lack. It might be thought that having a variety of unsatisfied desires constitutes a positive feeling rather than a negative one. Consider the concept of ambition. Many people have a variety of desires they hope to fulfil during their lifetime: to start a family; climb a mountain; swim with Dolphins; see the Great Wall of China; and so forth. Unlike the previous counter example in which there is no apparent lack, this second type of case acknowledges a lack of some kind, yet, it does not seem appropriate to regard it as a state of pain. Rather, they are desires one may look forward to fulfilling. In these sorts of cases it seems plausible that there is *pleasure* in this anticipation; many relish their future goals and ambition.[34] In fact, Schopenhauer himself explicitly recognises this type of pleasure when he asserts that achieving a long awaited desire usually leaves us without much of an improvement in how we feel; that possessing something long sought after, while perhaps providing momentary pleasure, deprives the object of its initial charm (*WWR*, I, §57, p. 316).[35]

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[33] David E. Cartwright, "Schopenhauer on Suffering, Death, Guilt, and the Consolation of Metaphysics", in E. von der Luft (ed.), *Schopenhauer: New Essays in Honor of his 200th Birthday,* (Edwin Mellen Press, 1988), pp. 51–66.

[34] In places, Schopenhauer characteristically points to the fact that the anticipation humans experience, while sometimes providing pleasure, is also often a source of suffering in the form of *anxiety*. He makes this point by drawing a comparison with animals, who he claims because only live "in the present" (*P2*, §153, p. 294), are not subject to the distinctively human predicament of being *aware* of our bleak and arbitrary situation. This is a salient point, but that pleasure in anticipation at least *sometimes* occurs is all that is needed to undermine Schopenhauer's claim that pain and dissatisfaction are *necessarily* related.

[35] Schopenhauer emphasises this psychology in the context of sex, writing that "everyone who is in love will experience an extraordinary disillusionment after the pleasure he finally attains" (*WWR*, II, p. 540).

A third objection to the principle that desire implies pain has been raised by Jordi Fernández.[36] He draws attention to the relevance of a distinction that Thomas Nagel makes between motivated and unmotivated desires. According to Nagel,[37] there is a difference between the *thing that motivates you* and your *being motivated by that thing*. The former relates to 'unmotivated desires', such as hunger, which are closer to an impulse and are not explained in terms of an agents rational reasons. In contrast, the latter ('motivated desires'), such as the desire to eat a particular kind of food, or to catch the bus to work rather than drive, come about from the rational recognition that there is a reason for pursuing them. Schopenhauer heavily focuses on examples of unmotivated desires such as thirst and hunger, as these naturally and more obviously are associated with various forms of pain. However, the desire implies pain principle does not have the same intuitive pull regarding motivated desires. The worry then, is that Schopenhauer is using the term 'desires' too broadly, and carrying over the often accompanying pain of *some* desires onto all desires.

However, these objections conflate two concepts that ought to be clearly distinguished. As Christopher Janaway has pointed out in response to Cartwright, it is true that simply having a desire does not imply being in misery. But this is to mistake Schopenhauer's argument by equating desiring with striving.[38] There are two important differences between these concepts. The first is that while striving, by definition, involves a commitment to making an effort in achieving a certain goal, this is not true of merely desiring. For example, I may have a desire for England to win the next World Cup, while at the same time acknowledging that nothing I do will affect the outcome whatsoever. I could also have this desire without ever knowing the eventual outcome. This is not true of a goal, which, in virtue of simply having it, commits one to pursuing or intending to pursue it. In short, to have something as a goal is, in part, to desire it, but it seems that you can desire something without having it as a goal (as in the World Cup case).

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[36] Jordi Fernández, "Schopenhauer's Pessimism" in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, Vol. 73, No. 3, (2006), p. 656.

[37] Thomas Nagel, *The Possibility of Altruism*, (Oxford University Press, 1970).

[38] Janaway, (1999), p. 329.

The second and crucial difference between desiring and striving is that while desiring does not necessarily involve a deficiency or lack, as the counter examples above suggest, striving appears to. As Janaway remarks:

> part of what distinguishes striving from mere wanting is that I regard the prior state of affairs (the state of affairs minus my striving) as deficient in whatever it requires to ensure my goal.[39]

Consider again the examples of desiring to retain or maintain one's friendship, residence, or health. *Desiring* to retain these things does not demand a change of any sort. But *striving* does aim at bringing about a change in situation. If the state I was in prior to striving involves no deficiency or dissatisfaction, then, Janaway suggests, it "becomes unintelligible" to describe myself as striving or trying to retain my friendship, residence, or health. Yet, as Julian Young points out, it *does* make sense to talk of striving to maintain one's health. As one gets older, one has to work harder to stay healthy, and this can appropriately be described as striving. This is because in this example there is already a conception of a lack, that is, the *security* of possessing health.[40] Health is something actively undermined during the aging process, and therefore we have to work towards maintaining it and avoiding its deficiency. All of this considered, it seems correct to assert that all striving involves a lack, or at least the danger of a lack.

With this in mind, we must emphasise that it is striving or 'willing', not merely desiring, that Schopenhauer is concerned with: "All *striving* springs from want or deficiency, from dissatisfaction with one's own state or condition (*WWR*, I, §56, p. 309; emphasis mine); "all *willing* as such springs from lack" (*WWR*, I, §65 p. 363; emphasis mine). Schopenhauer's use of the term 'desire', then, should be thought of in the stricter sense pertaining to having a goal one strives towards. I shall refer to this sense of 'desire' from here on.

I agree with Janaway that making explicit this distinction between desiring and striving, and attributing the latter to the real focus of Schopenhauer's argument, undermines the initial objection that dissatisfaction doesn't necessarily imply pain or 'suffering'. Nevertheless, there

[39] Janaway, (1999), p. 329.

[40] Young, (2005), p. 209.

is a significant rebuttal to consider: Schopenhauer appears to be guilty of ignoring the positive feelings experienced in striving to achieve one's goals. The objection regarding ambition made earlier against the idea of mere *desires* necessarily implying pain is also relevant in a more subtle manner concerning *striving*. A number of activities human beings routinely take part in—sports, crossword puzzles, video games, mountaineering, and so forth—are designed specifically to draw out a struggle; to prolong attaining a goal. The reason for this is that pleasures are not simply experienced in terms of attainment, but often also in the activity leading to attainment.[41]

At least part of the reason Schopenhauer does not account for this kind of experience is that he seems to present, or at least overwhelmingly focus upon, each instance of striving as an isolated event. We strive for one goal, and if it is attained we strive for something else or face boredom. If on the other hand we fail to attain our goal, we suffer in continuing to strive for it or suffer striving for a new goal. This is not to say that Schopenhauer holds that we only strive towards one thing at a time, but that the model he provides fails to take into consideration that there might be pleasurable experiences to be found in the particular arrangement of one's goals: striving for each goal as part of an overarching life project. Take the example of a politician who has to achieve a vast amount of subordinate goals in order to reach his or her ultimate aim of becoming head of state. After each goal is realized, the politician is one step closer to attaining their ultimate goal. When one's goals are intentionally organised in this kind of way, Schopenhauer's picture of endlessly being driven by desires which induce painful lacks becomes less forceful to our intuitions.

2.7. Qualifications

Schopenhauer may respond to these objections by making an important qualification to his characterization of suffering as unsatisfied desire or resistance to the will. Instead of holding that desire implies pain, it might be more plausible to suppose that unsatisfied desires

[41] This was precisely the point that Georg Simmel made in his critique, arguing that Schopenhauer failed to recognise that the will's progress towards achieving a goal is "attended more by a pleasurable sensation than a painful one". See Georg Simmel, *Schopenhauer and Nietzsche*, (University of Massachusetts Press, 1986), pp. 55-56.

that *persist for too long* imply pain, and that is what is properly understood as suffering. The following is an example to demonstrate this point. When waiting at a restaurant for one's meal, the desire to eat can be increased by the anticipation of the meal to come. The smell of the ingredients being prepared, instead of causing a painful awareness of a lack, may be a source of pleasure. Nevertheless, if this anticipation goes on for too long and the desire remains unsatisfied, one can become frustrated. Waiting further still, it seems more plausible to regard this as a painful state of hunger.

This point may be equally applied to other cases of striving given above. Consider the example of a Sudoku puzzle. While puzzles which are too easy make no demand on the player's skill or perhaps even sustained attention, puzzles which are too difficult for a particular agent and therefore take a very long time to complete (or worse still: cause the agent to get stuck) often become exasperating. Schopenhauer might best be interpreted to take striving to be analogous to this or the dining experience case: if we spend *too long* on an activity without achieving its aim, it is a source of painful frustration.

However, while this strategy may provide a more plausible account of the phenomenon of suffering, this characterization of willing loses much of the power that Schopenhauer intends it to have. This is because Schopenhauer's account of the will is one of his major arguments to support his pessimism; a view that famously characterizes his world view or *Weltanschauung*. There are at least four possible variants of the meaning of pessimism:

> (1) The psychological tendency to believe in the worst possible outcome in any given situation.[42]
>
> (2) A historical-philosophical claim: that mankind tends to grow worse as time goes on.

[42] Brian Magee argues that all other forms of pessimism can be reduced to this form; as matter of Schopenhauer's temperament. See Brian Magee, *The Philosophy of Schopenhauer*, (Oxford University Press, 1983), p. 14. However, I disagree with this view. The reason being that Schopenhauer argues against this sort of reductionism: belief in our sorry situation is explicitly not merely a matter of temperament and "one-sidedness" (*WWR*, I, §59, p. 323), rather, it is the result of the careful articulation of a number of detailed *arguments*; of "perfectly cold and philosophical demonstration" (*WWR*, I, §59, p. 323). The arguments Schopenhauer provides, while perhaps not ultimately successful in their aim, warrant consideration enough to motivate a possible defence of pessimism in the vein of at least (4).

(3) Our world is the worst of all possible worlds.

The fourth use of the term is a combination of two claims;

(4): (a) Suffering is a fundamental condition of sentient life;
(b) Non-existence is preferable to existence.[43]

While Schopenhauer explicitly accepts (3),[44] the form most relevant for my purposes here is (4).[45] If we accept the claim that striving necessarily involves pain, and the additional claim that the nature of the will is such that we perpetually strive, then we can see how one might arrive at (4): we are perpetually in pain as a consequence of our own essence (the will). However, if Schopenhauer has to concede that only a *particular kind* of unsatisfied desire—the one that persists for too long—is what constitutes a painful lack, then the argument loses much of its force as a motivation for pessimism. Consequently, Schopenhauer's model of suffering as unsatisfied desire would not successfully do the work he wants it to do.

There is a deeper objection regarding how Schopenhauer's argument that striving is suffering is intended to support (4). Claim (4) is a combination of two components, a descriptive component and an evaluative component. The evaluative component is that *as a result* of the descriptive component, (a) life is fundamentally suffering, (b) non-existence is preferable to existence. But how does Schopenhauer make the move from (a) to (b)? His implicit argument looks something like the following:

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[43] It is important to note that Schopenhauer seems to offer his own arguments which count against this view by emphasising the great joy in aesthetic contemplation (*WWR*, I, Book 3). In *WWR*, II, Ch. 46, Schopenhauer talks of exceptional individuals who live happy existences, and also pleasures which can come unbidden (*WWR*, I, §58, p. 319). I will not have time to assess his aesthetics and its relation to pessimism here, and I think Schopenhauer may have good responses to this tension, but it is worth raising. Of course, it matters little for the crucial claim relating to my thesis and for Nietzsche's position: that *striving* is in some sense suffering.

[44] See *WWR*, II, §46, pp. 583-588, and Schopenhauer's rejection of the opposing Leibnizian view—that this world is the 'best of all possible worlds'—as a "bitter mockery" (*WWR*, I, §59, p. 325).

[45] Schopenhauer only begins to use the term 'pessimism' in the second edition of *The World as Will and Representation* in 1844. However, the essential claims of the concept are clearly adopted in the first edition in 1818.

(1) Suffering is a fundamental condition of sentient life.
(2) If suffering is a fundamental condition of sentient life, then existence involves more negative value than non-existence.
(3) Therefore, existence involves more negative value than non-existence [modus ponens].

But:

(4) If existence involves more negative value than non-existence, then non-existence is preferable to existence.
(5) Therefore, non-existence is preferable to existence.

What is particularly problematic about the argument above is premise (2). There is an undefended assumption, and this assumption is the truth of hedonism: the view that only pleasure is intrinsically good, and only pain is intrinsically bad. On a simple hedonistic conception of well-being, it is defined in terms of pleasure, or at least the absence from pain. Broadly construed, the best life is the most pleasurable life, or the life in which pain is minimized.[46]

If hedonism is true, and *if* Schopenhauer is right about unsatisfied desires implying pain, then it is easy to see how he reaches his pessimistic conclusion: one is continually kept in a state of negative value via perpetual striving or boredom. But Schopenhauer gives no argument to support this hedonistic assumption. I shall return to this objection in detail in the final section, as Nietzsche, while accepting premise (1), attacks Schopenhauer precisely on this evaluative issue, and it is the most significant point in their divergence. For now, I will set aside the evaluative aspects of suffering and remain focused upon the descriptive claims about the nature of the phenomenon.

We have just seen how there are a variety of objections to Schopenhauer's understanding of resistance to the will as necessarily constituting suffering. If we are to understand 'suffering' as striving which involves 'dissatisfaction', then Schopenhauer appears to be using the term as a verbal slider. The idea being that some cases of dissatisfaction will no doubt be

[46] There will be more complex forms of hedonism which take pleasure to be only a necessary condition of goodness. For example, some may claim that the goodness of pleasure is conditional upon its experience through certain things (e.g. beauty, poetry). Schopenhauer's hedonism appears in its traditional, simpler, form: pleasure (of any kind) is a good.

appropriately described as a state of suffering, however in a number of cases this 'dissatisfaction' will not carry the significant negative weight Schopenhauer intends it to. As Cartwright puts it, Schopenhauer's use of 'dissatisfaction' "lacks the vital tone which is associated with misery".[47]

I shall now present Nietzsche's position with regard to the will, determining which elements of Schopenhauer's account he endorses. Moreover, I will also demonstrate that a number of the objections mentioned in this section are explicitly raised by Nietzsche.

3. Nietzsche's Appropriation of the Will

It is uncontroversial that Schopenhauer profoundly influenced Nietzsche's philosophy, even if Nietzsche eventually came to position himself as diametrically opposed to the Schopenhauerian worldview. The controversy lies in the extent to which this influence plays a part in Nietzsche's thought: which aspects of Schopenhauer's philosophy did he jettison, and which persist in his work. Now that we have an understanding of Schopenhauer's conception of the will, in this section I argue that Nietzsche accepts at least three significant elements of it: (1) The will is never 'satisfied'; (2) the will has the basic structure of a second order desire; and of the most importance to the concerns of this chapter: (3) at least one form of suffering can be understood as 'resistance to the will'.

3.1. Will to Power vs. Will to Life

Nietzsche's theory of the *Wille zur Macht* or will to power is first and foremost a psychological theory about what motivates human beings, and indeed all organic life, to act.[48]

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[47] Cartwright, (1988), p. 59.

[48] There is a tradition in Nietzsche scholarship following Heidegger that views the will to power as a metaphysical and cosmological thesis. Much of this interpretation relies almost exclusively on passages from the *Nachlass*. Ultimately, I think these interpretations cannot be sustained. However, it is irrelevant for the purposes of this thesis whether the will to power can be anything more than a psychological thesis. I only have to show that the will to power has a certain psychological structure that tells us about the nature of suffering. To avoid overcomplicating the concepts at hand, I will focus solely on the will to power as manifested in humans.

Nietzsche explicitly presents his theory of the will as a competing and more plausible account than Schopenhauer's. His argument appears to be that the will to life mistakenly takes the primary motivation for action to be to perpetuate and preserve existence.[49] On the contrary, what people really seek, according to Nietzsche, is the accumulation and exercise of power. He writes that it is the aim of all living things "to grow, spread, seize, become predominant" (*BGE,* §259). Nietzsche's argument to demonstrate the strength of his thesis as opposed Schopenhauer's is best found in two passages:

> The wish to preserve oneself is the symptom of a condition of distress, of a limitation of the really fundamental instinct of life which aims at *the expansion of power*, and, wishing for that, frequently risks and even sacrifices self-preservation. (*GS*, §349; cf. *TI*, 'Skirmishes', §44)

> Physiologists should think twice before putting down the instinct of self-preservation as the cardinal instinct of an organic being. A living being seeks above all to discharge it strength - life itself is will to power; self-preservation is only one of the indirect and most frequent results. (*BGE*, §13)

In the passage from *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche appears to suggest that empirical evidence contradicts the idea that humans are motivated by self-preservation, for it is the case that people are frequently motivated to act in a way that endangers their survival in order to achieve something they value higher than themselves, or perhaps even their species. Moreover, he claims that many cases will involve an agent ruining their life or perhaps even perishing in this pursuit. Particular cases of this nature, which do not appear to cohere with self or species preservation, will be of actions undertaken for the sake of 'power', according to Nietzsche:

> The living creature values many things higher than life itself; yet out of this evaluation itself speaks — the will to power! (*Z*, II, §12)

> even if we offer our lives, as martyrs do for their church, this is a sacrifice that is offered for *our* desire for power, or for the purpose of preserving our feeling of power (*GS*, §13)

The passage from *Beyond Good and Evil* makes a subtler but related point. Because, according to Nietzsche, people seek to increase their power and discharge their strength, this

[49] As Reginster points out (2006, p. 124), it is unclear whether this attack is aimed *solely* at Schopenhauer. It is equally plausible that Nietzsche aims this argument at Darwin, or perhaps Spinoza.

will often involve increasing their chances of survival by becoming stronger. This may therefore *appear* to look like an intention towards self-preservation, but is merely a *result* of the desire for power. In this way, Nietzsche suggests that the will to life confuses the consequence with the cause. Nietzsche rejects this aspect of Schopenhauer's conception of the will on these grounds.

It is important to distinguish between two different positions regarding the will to power as a theory of human motivation, both of which have at some stage been attributed to Nietzsche. These claims concern the scope of the will to power as a theory about agent motivation and action:

> (C1) A desire for power is what motivates all action.
>
> (C2) A desire for power motivates far more human actions than we have previously thought, even among those that do not obviously appear to be so motivated.

The first claim, (C1), is altogether a much bolder position insofar as it aims to include all human action as reducible to a desire for power.[50] The more modest claim, (C2), stems from doubts about whether there is enough textual support for attributing something like (C1) to Nietzsche, and doubts about its independent plausibility. For my purposes in this thesis, which is to investigate the value relation between suffering and 'greatness', I can remain neutral on this controversial issue.

[50] This claim has found its most sophisticated defence—both exegetically and philosophically—in Paul Katsafanas, *Agency and the Foundations of Ethics: Nietzschean Constitutivism*, (OUP, 2013). Some interesting challenges to this view have been raised by Andrew Huddleston, who in light of these challenges defends (C2). See Andrew Huddleston, "Normativity and the Will to Power: Challenges to a Nietzschean Constitutivism", *Journal of Nietzsche Studies* ((Pennsylvania State University Press, forthcoming).

3.2. The Nature of Power

The nature and extent of the will to power, and of power itself, in Nietzsche's philosophy is highly contested.[51] According to an influential interpretation propounded by Bernard Reginster, and more recently Paul Katsafanas, the will to power is to be understood as "a desire for the overcoming of resistance in the pursuit of some determinate first-order desire".[52] We can help elucidate this claim with the following example. Imagine an Olympic athlete that genuinely desires to win a particular event at the games. This athlete, like many, not only wants to win, but wants to win *in a particular way*, namely: by skilfully triumphing over worthy opponents. Their worthiness, on this view, would be determined by how much 'resistance' they may provide the agent.[53]

In this way, the athlete (1) desires a certain end, and also (2) desires opposition to the satisfaction of that end. So in other words, the will to power is a desire for a *challenge*: the overcoming of obstacles, and the experience of growth in obtaining power over something which one previously lacked power over. In Nietzsche's words, it is "a desire to overcome, a desire to throw down, a desire to become master, a thirst for enemies and *resistances and triumphs*" (*GM*, I, §13; emphasis mine). Daniel Came phrases this conception of the will to power in the following helpful way:

> We experience a growth in power in relation to phenomena over which we previously lacked power, phenomena which previously obstructed our willing. The experience of power therefore depends on the overcoming of obstacles.[54]

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[51] A number of different interpretations have been influential in the secondary literature. For instance, Maudemarie Clark understands power as a *capacity* to achieve ends, and the will to power as a second order desire for the capacity to satisfy our first order desires. See Maudemarie Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 211ff. Walter Kaufmann has a different approach, and interprets the will to power as a will to self-control. See Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), pp. 213-216. A further interpretation has come from John Richardson, who argues the will to power should be understood as the domination and 'mastery' of one's competing drives. See John Richardson, (1996), pp. 18-39.

[52] Reginster, (2006), p. 132.

[53] This is not to say all resistances in this case, and others, must be external. It could be that the agent has to overcome many internal resistances, such as fear, self-doubt, embarrassment, and so forth. I return to this particular point about which types of resistances one aims at, and their respective value, in Chapter Four.

[54] Daniel Came, "The Themes of Affirmation and Illusion in The Birth of Tragedy and Beyond" in Ken Gemes, John Richardson, *The Oxford Handbook of Nietzsche*, (OUP, 2013), p. 210.

Before I explicate the details of this view, a distinction must immediately be made here that Reginster unfortunately does not make explicit. He claims that "Power, for Nietzsche is not a state or condition but an activity, the activity of confronting and overcoming resistance".[55] But this seems to conflate power [*Macht*], and the *feeling* of power [*Machtgefühl*]. The *will to power* concerns the desire to increase the feeling of power. The desire for this feeling provokes the agent into seeking out challenges, giving them the opportunity to overcome them and to be consciously aware of their causal efficacy.[56] But it would be odd to think of the concept of power itself as an activity or experience, rather than a *capacity* which enables certain actions. Power, for Nietzsche, is not necessarily what might be typically equated with the term—wealth, material possession, tyranny, control over others (i.e. what *gives* you power)—instead, power is the capacity to perform certain deeds, and to successfully engage with certain activities, but is not identical with those activities. This is precisely the objection raised by Ivan Soll, who claims that "A power is what enables various sorts of actions; it is not the actions themselves".[57] Like Soll, I additionally want to keep 'power' and the 'feeling of power' separate in order to grasp the differences, as well as the similarities, between Schopenhauer's account of human motivation and Nietzsche's.

Reginster recognises that the will to power appears to be paradoxical in its structure. This is so in two ways. The first way is that it would have us strongly desire to be unsatisfied. As Nietzsche claims: "[A strong nature] needs resistance; hence it *seeks* resistance." (*EH*, II, §7). Reginster explains that the will to power "insofar as it is a will to the overcoming of resistance, must necessarily also will the resistance to overcome".[58] Hence, on this view, the athlete not only desires to win the tournament, but also desires opponents who will give them

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[55] Reginster, (2006), p. 136.

[56] It is salient that the feeling of power may also be attained by the mere *belief* that one has triumphed. Nietzsche recognises this point in his analysis of the Christian concept of eschatological punishment: the strong nobles are humiliated in hell in the afterlife, while the weak are valorised in heaven. Although this does not change the actual *power-as-capacity* of the Christians, their envisaging of this fantasy gives them the *feeling* of power (see *GM*, I, §14).

[57] Ivan Soll, "Nietzsche's Will to Power as a Psychological Thesis: *Reactions to Bernard Reginster*" in *The Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, Volume 43, Issue 1, (Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012).

[58] Reginster, (2006), p. 133.

a challenge, for "an easy prey is something contemptible for proud natures" (*GS*, §13). The second way the structure of the will to power seems paradoxical is that, like Schopenhauer, Nietzsche repeatedly emphasises the *perpetual* nature of willing, to the extent that he similarly defends the claim that there is no state that provides lasting satisfaction.

To elucidate this claim, we might consider the following contrast. Psychological hedonism is the view that human actions ultimately aim at the experiential state of pleasure. Although many competing theories have disagreed with hedonism about what humans seek, they have endorsed the idea that our actions are solely orientated to achieve and abide in certain states that provide satisfaction. This is precisely the view that Nietzsche (and before him, Schopenhauer) rejects. In Nietzsche's view, when we achieve a certain goal, we immediately have a need to strive towards a new and greater one. He claims that “whoever reaches his ideal transcends it *eo ipso*” (*BGE*, §73), and much later on that "Every growth betrays itself in the search for a mightier opponent or problem" (*EH*, II, §7). The will to power is, in this second sense, paradoxical in that "its satisfaction brings about its own dissatisfaction".[59]

Consider again the athlete: after successfully overcoming the challenges of one particular event, the feeling of power that accompanied this activity will often wane after a certain period of time. This diminishing feeling of power, according to Nietzsche, not only provokes a renewed hunger for greater obstacles to overcome, but also a fading esteem for one's previous accomplishments. Nietzsche presents this idea of perpetual willing in explicitly Schopenhauerian terms:

> Whatever I create and however much I love it—soon I must oppose it and my love; thus my will wills it…Only where there is life is there also will: not will to life but—thus I teach you —will to power. (*Z*, II, §12)

[59] Reginster, (2006), p. 247.

In the same text, Nietzsche's Zarathustra refers to himself as "the advocate of life...the *advocate of the circle*" (*Z*, III, §13; emphasis mine).[60] On this point, Alexander Nehamas writes that:

> willing as an activity does not have an aim that is distinct from it; if it can be said to aim at anything at all, that can only be its own continuation. Willing is an activity that tends to perpetuate itself, and this tendency to the perpetuation of activity…is what Nietzsche tries to describe by the obscure and often misleading term 'will to power.[61]

Heidegger makes a similar observation in his interpretation of the will to power when he writes that "will to power is will to will".[62] At times, Nietzsche expresses a view very similar to this. For example, he claims that "In the end one loves one's desire and not what is desired" (*BGE*, §175), and that "*wanting* to have always comes to an end with *having*" (*GS*, §363). While I think this view is correct in so far as it emphasises the perpetual nature of the will, it overlooks another important claim Nietzsche is committed to: willing requires a determinate goal that the subject cares about.

In *Agency and the Foundations of Ethics: Nietzschean Constitutivism*, Paul Katsafanas invites us to consider the structure of the will to power in contrast to psychological hedonism in order to make this point explicit.[63] With simple forms of psychological hedonism, the final end of each goal-directed act aims at pleasure. In other words, the particular goals one pursues are ultimately a means to attaining pleasure. For example, in reading a novel, in playing football, in learning a new language, and so forth, the psychological hedonist will seek to reduce the explanation of this behaviour to the belief that these pursuits are

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[60] It is ambiguous whether "the circle" refers to the perpetual nature of the will or perhaps the eternal recurrence. While both are plausible, I interpret Nietzsche to mean the former here given his mention of "life" and "suffering" in the same sentence: 'life' being another term he uses interchangeably with will to power — "the will to power…is just the will of life. (*GS*, §349; cf. *Z*, II, §12, *BGE*, §259) — and 'suffering', as we shall see, being a necessary component of power. Nietzsche uses the phrase in a later passage which adds weight to the interpretation relating it to a Schopenhauerian conception of willing: "This, my Dionysian world of the eternally self-creating, the eternally self-destroying....without goal, *unless the joy of circle is itself a goal*..." (*WP*, §1067; *KSA*, 1885, 38[12]).

[61] Alexander Nehamas, *Nietzsche: Life as Literature*, (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press), 1985, p. 79.

[62] Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche—Vol. I: The Will to Power as Art*, (HarperCollins, 1979), p. 37.

[63] Katsafanas, (2013), p. 160.

instrumental to experiencing pleasure. It is perhaps tempting to read Nietzsche's view of the desire for power in an analogous way: that all goals are pursued as a means to power. This would suggest that it would be plausible for me to pursue writing a thesis for the sake of overcoming resistance, without caring about the goal of completing the thesis.

Both Katsafanas and Reginster are right that there is a significant error in this reasoning. Firstly, if the will to power is understood as the experience of overcoming resistance to our desires, then resistance presupposes a determinate goal that one can face obstacles in trying to achieve. As Katsafanas writes: "The very concept of resistance is unintelligible except in relation to a determinate end: resistance is always resistance to the achievement of some end".[64] For example, if winning a game of football is my end, the relevant form of resistance that needs to be overcome will be the opposing team. If writing a dramatic novel is my end, the relevant form of resistance will be in utilising a rich vocabulary and developing an engaging and complex storyline.[65] If the feeling of power lies within the activity of overcoming resistance, it is difficult to separate it as an end independently of the activity.[66]

Secondly, and more importantly, for the concept of resistance to make sense the determinate first order end has to actually be desired by the agent for its own sake. If he or she does not care about achieving it, the obstacles to it will not count as resistance for them. Reginster defends this point by making an analogy between the will to power and participating in games. In contemplating playing a game, he claims, it may well be that all that matters is participation. But to actually engage in the game, winning must matter to the agent, since this motivation is what constitutes playing a game.[67] If I do not want to win, then I cannot experience an increase in the feeling power from winning, for I never experienced a lack that needs to be satisfied. As Nietzsche claims:

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[64] Katsafanas, (2013), p. 161.

[65] In chapter three I discuss this point in more detail, particularly regarding different types of resistance that the will to power is manifested in, and their differing value.

[66] This view is also defended by John Richardson, who puts it the following way: “power, as something willed by every drive, ‘lacks content,’ requiring a contingent filling out from some given case”. See John Richardson, (1996), p. 24.

[67] I later discuss game playing in detail in Chapter Four when considering the value of achievement.

> That I must be struggle and a becoming and *an end and an opposition to ends*—alas, whoever guesses what is my will should also guess on what *crooked* paths it must proceed. (*Z*, II, §12; first emphasis mine)

One's will to power then, as a descriptive thesis, will not be satisfied unless three conditions are met: (1) there is some first-order desire for a determinate end; (2) there is resistance to the realization of this end (the content of which will vary depending on what the end is); (3) this resistance is successfully overcome by the agent. We can now see that for Nietzsche, like Schopenhauer, 'the will' is a second order desire to have desires; for continual activity. Nietzsche explains this activity in terms of a desire for an increase in the feeling of power; to meet with and overcome resistance in satisfying first order desires. Both Reginster and Katsafanas converge on this point. They claim that the will to power:

> ...has the structure of a second-order desire:..a desire for the overcoming of resistance in the pursuit of some determinate first-order desire.[68]

> ...has a certain structure. It consists not only in the aim of achieving some end, but also in the aim of encountering and overcoming resistance in the pursuit of that end.[69]

Nietzsche does not offer an explicit list of substantive goals in connection to the pursuit of power. Rather, he presents a formal account regarding the structure of willing that is compatible with striving for a number of different goals.[70] For example, the politician manifests the will to power in overcoming the obstacles and opposition in getting an important bill or law passed; poets and novelists overcome the difficulties involved in cleverly utilising language to represent or incite emotions; the warrior overcomes resistance to winning the battle by facing an opponent of significant ability. In these cases, one is already inclined to pursue a goal due to whatever motivating drive, and the will to power motivates one to pursue it in a particular way. John Richardson rightly draws attention to this

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[68] Reginster, (2006), p. 132.

[69] Katsafanas, (2013), p. 161.

[70] I shall return to this point in the next chapter where I consider what *value* Nietzsche associates with power, and what constraints there might be on the determinate ends.

point, claiming that Nietzsche does not view the will to power as a thesis about *what* we will; rather, it is a claim about *how* we will.[71]

We have so far seen that Nietzsche's conception of the will is similar to Schopenhauer's in two respects: (1) the will is never 'satisfied': we perpetually strive; (2) the will has the basic structure of a second order desire. At this point we must explain the concept of 'resistance', and determine how far Nietzsche understands the term to reflect Schopenhauer's use of it to refer to suffering.

3.3. Resistance as a Form of Suffering

Earlier we established that Schopenhauer defined suffering as the will's "hindrance through an obstacle placed between it and its temporary goal" (*WWR*, I, §56, p. 309). For Schopenhauer, resistance to the will is inherently painful, and striving is therefore a form of suffering. We also established that this claim is deeply problematic, for not *all* instances of resistance to the will, or unsatisfied desire, plausibly constitute suffering. For example, the mountain climber who wants to reach the top of the mountain does not do so via the easy option of a helicopter, but by choosing the significantly difficult route of climbing. While the resistance for this activity is extremely high, it is not immediately obvious that difficulty in this case is synonymous with suffering. Since Nietzsche adopts at least two components of Schopenhauer's account of the will to life—(1) the will is never 'satisfied': we perpetually strive; (2) the will has the basic structure of a second order desire—the question is whether he also accepts the third claim that resistance is (or necessarily involves) suffering, and in doing so inherits the same problems Schopenhauer faces.

Reginster claims that "suffering is defined by resistance".[72] There are two ways one might interpret this claim: (a) All resistance is, in some degree, suffering; (b) Suffering is one possible form of resistance. Reginster regards Nietzsche as firmly under Schopenhauerian

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[71] Richardson, (1996), p. 21.

[72] Reginster, (2006), p. 177.

influence on this matter, and explicitly attributes the stronger claim, (a), to him. He continues that:

> The will to power, insofar as it is a will to the overcoming of resistance, must necessarily also will the resistance to overcome. Since suffering is defined in terms of resistance, then the will to power indeed "desires displeasure".[73]

In defending Reginster's interpretation of the will to power, Katsafanas makes the same claim, that "in willing power we will a certain kind of displeasure or suffering".[74] Similarly, Soll also explicitly associates Nietzsche's conception of striving for power with suffering: "it is only in overcoming difficulty, pain, and suffering, in successfully struggling and striving, that one experiences power".[75] Janaway and Gemes equally detect this characteristically Schopenhauerian conception of suffering in Nietzsche's doctrine of the will to power, and write that:

> ...in willing power we will resistances. But resistances are experienced as suffering, so in willing power we are willing suffering, or at least willing something that necessarily involves suffering.[76]

Nietzsche himself appears in places to endorse the stronger claim that resistance necessarily involves suffering. For example, Zarathustra claims that he is "the advocate of life, the advocate of suffering, the advocate of the circle" (*Z*, III, §13; emphasis mine), and he refers to those suffering who are "unsatisfied and insatiable" (*GM*, III, §13). But apart from terminological similarities with Schopenhauer, it is unclear whether Nietzsche endorses the stronger claim that resistance *equates* with suffering. The passages in which Nietzsche does explicitly claim this reside almost exclusively in the *Nachlass.* As one of many examples:

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[73] Reginster, (2006), p. 133.

[74] Katsafanas, (2013), p. 193.

[75] Soll, (1988), p. 124.

[76] Christopher Janaway and Ken Gemes, "Life-denial Versus Life-affirmation: Schopenhauer and Nietzsche on Pessimism and Asceticism" in Bart Vandenabeele (ed.), *Companion to Schopenhauer: Blackwell Companions to Philosophy,* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), p. 297.

> ...driven by that will it seeks resistance, it needs something that opposes it — Displeasure, as an obstacle to its will to power, is therefore a normal fact...man does not avoid it, he is rather in continual need of it... (*WP*, §702; *KSA*, 1888, 14[174])

Reginster heavily relies on such passages to draw this parallel with Schopenhauer. As I have claimed earlier in the thesis, this is exegetically problematic. But we might explain Nietzsche's possible endorsement of the claim in another way. Reginster argues that Nietzsche's philosophical exercises take place within a Schopenhauerian context, and can't be adequately grasped without acknowledging this point. I agree with Reginster, and hold that his interpretation is particularly admirable in distinctively taking seriously the depth of this influence. The following move might be made from here. Soll argues that Nietzsche, particularly in his early period, often takes for granted the plausibility of arguments earlier made by Schopenhauer. Although Nietzsche does not explicitly mention them, Soll writes that "unquestionably, he was aware of these arguments and agreed with their conclusion that life is predominantly suffering".[77] Came comes to a similar conclusion, arguing that in light of Schopenhauer's a priori and empirical arguments:

> Nietzsche accepts that human existence is chiefly characterized by an ineluctable and all-pervasive suffering, and that life offers no real opportunity for lasting satisfaction or happiness.[78]

Nietzsche's acceptance of the Schopenhauerian claim that striving necessarily involves a painful lack may be one of these implicit endorsements, and hence, why he does not explicitly defend the claim (at least in the published works). Perhaps more significantly—given that I have agreed with Reginster and Katsafanas that Nietzsche accepts the Schopenhauerian framework of willing—Nietzsche does not explicitly *deny* the claim. While constituting a much weaker reason to attribute the claim to Nietzsche, it nonetheless strengthens Reginster's case.

Reginster seeks to add weight to his interpretation by defending the following claim:

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[77] Soll, (1988), p. 118.

[78] Came, (2007), p. 42.

> I cannot have a desire for some determinate object and be indifferent to its possession. In other words, I cannot have a desire and not suffer from its frustration. Hence, the desire to desire cannot be satisfied without causing the agent significant displeasure, for its satisfaction requires that the agent have an unsatisfied desire.[79]

However, I argued in section 2.6 that there are good reasons to hold that there are many ways in which one *can* have an unsatisfied desire (or more appropriately a goal) which one does not suffer from, and can in fact derive pleasure from. Moreover, that the desire implies pain principle is plausible in cases of *unmotivated* desires, but does not have the same strength when considering *motivated* desires. The reason, I argued, is that while unmotivated desires —for example, hunger—are intuitively associated with suffering, this is not obviously true of motivated desires—for example, the desire to travel on the bus and not the train—which are explained in terms of an agents rational reasons.

One reply that Reginster could make here is to claim that resistance and suffering are both a matter of degree. Low resistance means a minimal amount of suffering, and great resistance means great suffering. The claim may only be that the will to power necessarily involves at least *some* degree of suffering.

My reply is twofold. First of all, using terms such as 'frustration' and 'dissatisfaction' in cases of low resistance appears to run into the same problem of equivocation. Being 'frustrated' or 'dissatisfied' at experiencing difficulty in completing a puzzle lacks the connotation associated with pain and agony that would accompany the frustration or dissatisfaction of a starving person. Furthermore, if suffering is only being referred to in this highly restricted and qualified way, it is questionable whether it is the appropriate term to be using to identify resistance. My second reply considers the problem from the opposite direction. Some instances of extremely high resistance—such as the climbing of a mountain —still do not seem to appropriately be described as suffering. Reginster is right to suggest that people choose to do activities such as these in virtue of the fact they provide a challenge and won't easily be achieved (thereby satisfying the will to power), but it would be a further

[79] Reginster, (2006), p. 134.

claim to suggest that these people desire or seek out 'suffering' in doing so, or that their unsatisfied desire of getting to the top—unless it persists for too long—is in itself painful.

Because the principle that desire implies pain is implausible for the reasons I have discussed, we have reason to avoid attributing it to Nietzsche, and interpret him to defend the weaker claim that (b) suffering is one possible form of resistance. Like the qualification I suggested in my discussion of Schopenhauer, resistances to the will are perhaps best understood as suffering when they persist for too long. For example, when the goal of my activity—reaching the top of a mountain, writing a novel, composing a symphony, winning a battle—is drawn out for a significant period of time, it is then plausibly a type of 'dissatisfaction' that is associated with suffering. It is plausible, because many forms of resistances and challenges, such as these, may provoke a number of emotions associated with the term: frustration, anxiety, fear, depression, and so forth. They may also provoke physical forms of suffering: exhaustion, fatigue, broken bones, and so on. For the purposes of my thesis, which is to identify the type of value that suffering has in relation to greatness, I only have to defend this weaker claim, and this is certainly a claim Nietzsche defends. The distinction between non-painful resistance and suffering is only problematic for my thesis if non-painful forms of resistance and suffering make different contributions in *value* once overcome, other than in degree. I shall argue later that this is not the case.[80]

The answer to this question is significant for the following reason. If the feeling of power consists in the overcoming of resistance, and not all resistance is suffering, then it follows that suffering is only contingently related to power, and it is really resistance felt as *difficulty* that is at issue. The result being that one could be a creative genius and, at least in

[80] Furthermore, accepting a qualified form of the principle that desire implies pain is not as much of concession for Nietzsche as it is for Schopenhauer. Schopenhauer explicit employs the principle as the main argument for his descriptive pessimism, using it to demonstrate its plausibility *a priori*. However, Nietzsche makes no such explicit move.

theory, never suffer (at least in the way under consideration).[81] As I shall argue in the next chapter, this may conflict with subsequent claims Nietzsche makes about the relation between suffering and greatness.

So far, I have presented Reginster's interpretation of the will to power as the overcoming of resistance, and accepted that Nietzsche endorses the Schopenhauerian claims that (1) the will is perpetual; (2) it has the structure of a second-order desire. Moreover, that because of the implausibility of the principle that desire implies pain, Nietzsche is best interpreted as endorsing a qualified version in which (3) suffering is one possible form of resistance to the will. I have tried to show that this is not just an issue of terminology, but of concepts, arguing that resistance may be best interpreted as difficulty rather than *always* suffering. Furthermore, that Nietzsche can accept that only some resistances constitute suffering, without undermining the view that life fundamentally involves suffering (the descriptive claim of pessimism). One reason is that suffering as resistance to the will is just *one form* of suffering, and as I argued in the first section of this chapter, Nietzsche identifies many more. A second reason is that, due to the argument regarding the perpetual nature of the will, painful resistances are, in Nietzsche's view, likely to be numerous. I shall now address Nietzsche's most significant point of departure from Schopenhauer: his evaluation of the will, and his rejection of the hedonism which underpins Schopenhauer's pessimism.

3.4. Nietzsche's Rejection of (Evaluative) Pessimism

Although Nietzsche understands one form of suffering in this way, he differs radically from Schopenhauer in his perception of what it entails evaluatively (i.e. the value of life) and

[81] Although it is not the focus of this thesis, the consequences of this point are significant for Reginster's wider aim, which is to provide an account of the will to power which serves as a life-affirming alternative to Christian Nihilism. Recall Nietzsche's famous claim that "the meaninglessness of suffering, *not* suffering as such, has been the curse which has hung over mankind up to now" (*GM*, III, §28). Reginster attempts to provide a meaning for suffering in terms of the will to power, placing it as the "the principle of revaluation" (Reginster, (2006), p. 150) in Nietzsche's wider ethical project. While I agree that the problem of suffering is a central feature of Nietzsche's rejection of Christian morality, the worry I am considering is that if overcoming resistance is what is essential for meaningful creative activity, and resistance is really to be understood as *difficulty* rather than always *suffering*, then the 'meaning' that Reginster proposes Nietzsche offers in order to avoid "suicidal nihilism" (*GM*, III, §28) will only extend to very particular and restricted instances of suffering.

normatively (i.e. how one ought to act in light of this value). Earlier in section 2.6, I raised an objection to Schopenhauer's account of the will as an argument for pessimism, which is a commitment to two claims: (a) life is essentially suffering, (b) non-existence is preferable to existence. Schopenhauer makes the connection between the descriptive (a) and the evaluative (b) by assuming the truth of hedonism. His argument for pessimism is valid, but according to Nietzsche it is not sound. Nietzsche writes in a later note:

> "The sum of unhappiness outweighs the sum of happiness: consequently it were better that the world did not exist"—"the world is something which rationally should not exist because it causes the feeling subject more displeasure than pleasure"—chatter of this sort calls itself pessimism today!...I despise this *pessimism of sensibility*: it is in itself a sign of deeply impoverished life. (*WP*, §701; *KSA*, 1887, 11[61])

Nietzsche rejects the evaluative component of Schopenhauer's pessimism by criticising hedonism in at least the following two ways.[82]

Nietzsche's first argument against hedonism concerns the theory's internal coherence as a *descriptive* psychological view about human motivation. The psychological hedonist claims that all human action is directed at experiencing happiness, defined in terms of a favourable balance of pleasure over pain. But this, according to Nietzsche, is to mistakenly construe pleasure and pain as antithetical absolutes, and consequently to fail to grasp the nature of happiness, which he claims involves the intimate relation of both phenomena. A distinction must be made at this point between a superficial account of happiness that Nietzsche attributes to hedonists with a pejorative connotation (what he usually refers to as 'happiness' [*Glück*]), and what Nietzsche understands happiness to properly consist in (what he usually refers to as being 'cheerful' or 'joyful' [*fröhlich*]).

In a number of places Nietzsche espouses a version of what is now commonly referred to as the 'hedonic paradox'. According to the paradox, happiness (in this case defined in terms of pleasure) is unobtainable—or, on stronger versions of the paradox, diminished—when pursued directly. For example, suppose John enjoys playing darts. If we ask John what he is doing when he throws a dart at the target, he is unlikely to respond with "I throw darts in

[82] cf. Came, (2005).

order experience happiness!". Rather, John is likely to explain the causal process of his behaviour by the fact that he simply likes *playing darts*, and therefore acquires happiness indirectly. A stronger version of the paradox might be exemplified by a person who in attempting to seek happiness through a means of friendship with a new group of people, actually ends up pushing those people further away from him or her. The purpose of the paradox is to demonstrate that in order to experience happiness, one's aim in their activity must be directed at something other than happiness itself.

Nietzsche's version of the paradox as an argument against hedonism recurs in a number of his texts. In *The Antichrist*, Nietzsche explicitly defines happiness as "the feeling that power increases — that a resistance is overcome" (*A*, §2). What hedonists misunderstand is that 'happiness' is in fact, in Nietzsche's view, actually a bi-product of the increased feeling of power; of the *activity* of overcoming of resistance. Hence, in attempting to undermine hedonistic conceptions of happiness which define it in terms of pleasure, he refers to pleasure and pain as "attendant and secondary phenomena" (*BGE*, §225) and "mere consequences, mere epiphenomena" (*WP*, §702, *KSA*, 1888, 14[174]). He claims that "pleasure is only a symptom of the feeling of power attained", and continues that "there is no striving for pleasure: but pleasure supervenes when that which is being striven for is attained: pleasure is an accompaniment, pleasure is not the motive" (*WP*, §688; *KSA*, 1888, 14[121]).

Nietzsche is arguing that, in contrast to the "English happiness" of "comfort and fashion" (*BGE*, §228),[83] the "deep sleep" of 'Indian philosophy', as "contentment" (*A*, §2) and "submission" (*D*, §60; *GM*, I, §10), real happiness is an *activity* in which one's level of strength is challenged by an appropriate level of difficulty, which Nietzsche interprets suffering to be a form of. On this view, if an activity is too difficult then the agent is likely to become uneasy or nervous. If the activity is too easy—it does not provide enough resistance —then the agent becomes bored. Nietzsche criticises Schopenhauer specifically in this way:

[83] Nietzsche mistakenly attacks Mill's utilitarianism with his objections to hedonism (BGE, §225, §288). Mill was well aware of the paradox, and his brand of utilitarianism was not the simple hedonistic form Nietzsche attributes to him. However, while Nietzsche's objection may be more readily used against Bentham, it can certainly be used in responding to Schopenhauer's hedonism, which, in being a tacit assumption, takes the most basic of forms.

> It is not the *satisfaction of the will* which is the cause of pleasure (I want to fight this superficial theory — the absurd psychological counterfeiting of the nearest things), but rather the will's forward thrust again and again become master over that which stands in its way. The feeling of pleasure lies precisely in the dissatisfaction of the will, in the fact that the will is never satisfied unless it has opponents and resistance. (*WP*, §696; *KSA*, 1887, 11[75])

Nietzsche at times endorses a stronger version of the paradox in which pleasure or happiness is not possible without pain or suffering, and that pursuing these ends directly actually diminishes them. He specifically aims this stronger criticism at normative theories—Christianity, Utilitarianism, Kantianism, and so forth—which in his view define happiness in terms of "the absence of suffering" (*GM*, III, §17). In a famous passage from *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche attacks the 'compassionate', who always seek to maximise 'happiness' and alleviate suffering, in the following way:

> Ah, how little you know of human *happiness*, you comfortable and benevolent people, for happiness and unhappiness are sisters and even twins that either grow up together or, as in your case, *remain small* together (*GS*, §338)

The claim is that in seeking to avoid suffering, the 'compassionate' deprive themselves and others of what Nietzsche seems to consider a *necessary* condition of happiness. As Nietzsche puts this earlier in the same passage: "the path to one's heaven always leads through the voluptuousness of one's own hell" (*GS*, §338). In addition: "only at this price do we purchase the most precious pearl that the waves of existence have hitherto washed ashore!" (*GS*, §302). Yet again in the same work, he reiterates this point in more explicit terms:

> But what if pleasure and displeasure were so tied together that whoever *wanted* to have as much as possible of one *must* also have as much as possible of the other (*GS*, §12)

This formulation of the paradox reveals Nietzsche's use of the Schopenhauerian framework in his conception of the will to power. In order for the feeling of power to increase, there must first be dissatisfaction. There must also be significant resistance to the satisfaction of this desire. In the process of overcoming this resistance, one's feeling of power increases, and *as a result*, one experiences pleasure or 'happiness' (which Nietzsche commonly refers to as 'joy'). The important component of the stronger formulation of the paradox turns upon Nietzsche's

understanding of 'dissatisfaction' here, which the passages from *The Gay Science* above appear to necessarily associate with painful experience. This supports Reginster's interpretation which I presented above, in which "suffering is defined by resistance". However, it also faces the resistance as difficulty vs. resistance as suffering ambiguity that I raised. If it is possible to increase the feeling of power via overcoming non-painful resistance, then the stronger version of the paradox is not as compelling as the more plausible weaker version.

Nietzsche argues, then, that psychological hedonism fails on its own terms by failing to conceive of happiness as an *activity* rather than a placid state. However, Nietzsche's primary argument against hedonism concerns its evaluative and normative dimensions: that pleasure or happiness is the only intrinsic good, and that (typically) one ought to act in a way that maximises it.

Whereas Schopenhauer took the gratuitous amount of suffering in the world to be a sufficient reason to conclude that life is not worth living, Nietzsche simply refuses to accept pleasure and pain as the sole measures of value. "Happiness" according to Nietzsche "is no argument in favour of something"; and "making unhappy" is similarly "no counter-argument" (*BGE*, §39). In the same work, Nietzsche claims that "hedonism or pessimism or utilitarianism or eudaemonism: all these modes of thought which assess the value of things according to pleasure and pain" are "naiveties" which should be looked down on "with derision" (*BGE*, §225). Nietzsche later makes a similar claim which specifically responds to Schopenhauer's conception of willing as an argument for evaluative pessimism:

> The normal dissatisfaction of our drives, e.g. hunger, the sexual drive, the drive to motion, contains in it absolutely nothing depressing; it works rather as an agitation of the feeling of life, as every rhythm of small, painful stimuli strengthens it (whatever pessimists may say). This dissatisfaction, instead of making one disgusted with life, is the great stimulus to life. (*WP*, §697; *KSA*, 1887, 11[76])

This passage is telling. Nietzsche refers to pain experienced in resistance to the will, which Schopenhauer recognises, but evaluates this phenomenon in a polar opposite way. Where Schopenhauer saw this pain as essentially negative, Nietzsche understands it to be valuable in

virtue of its relation (yet to be specified) to 'life', by which Nietzsche means the overcoming of obstacles; the will to power.

Nietzsche is clear that measuring one's wellbeing purely in terms of pleasure and pain has dire consequences:

> If you experience suffering and displeasure as evil, worthy of annihilation and as a defect of existence, then it is clear that besides your religion of pity you also harbour another religion in your heart that is perhaps the mother of the religion of pity: the *religion of comfortableness*. (*GS*, §338)

The claim is that hedonism in some way "renders man ludicrous and contemptible" (*BGE*, §225). In the preface to *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche similarly speaks of "wretched contentment" (*Z*, Preface, §3) as an ideal of "the last men" (*Z*, Preface, §5). Because these men pursue hedonistic happiness directly and as an end, Nietzsche describes them as the "most despicable men" (*Z*, Preface, §5).[84] Although Nietzsche allows that 'higher men' (discussed in detail in the next chapter) will be 'joyful' or 'cheerful' as a consequence of exercising their will to power—what he refers to as the "happiness of Homer" (*GS*, §302)—it is not *in virtue of* this happiness that they are admirable on Nietzsche's view. This indicates that power, and more importantly the *striving* for power, is valuable for Nietzsche independently of any pleasure it may bring.

Theories of wellbeing typically fall into three categories, of which hedonism is one. A second theory is the 'desire-fulfilment' or 'preference-satisfaction' view, according to which wellbeing is constituted by the fulfilment of one's desires. On this view, some desires may be satisfied which don't necessarily bring pleasure to the agent, for example: the desire to avoid cognitively disabling drugs which would nonetheless alleviate great pain; or the desire to know if one's friend has been disloyal.[85] A third theory of wellbeing holds that pleasure and

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[84] In understanding Nietzsche's conception of happiness in terms of striving and overcoming challenges, one is reminded of Euripides' famous saying: "Danger gleams like sunshine to a brave man's eyes".

[85] It is important to stress that although Schopenhauer's terminology centres on desires and their satisfaction, his view of wellbeing is hedonistic insofar as he reduces dissatisfaction to pain. Incidentally, Schopenhauer's a priori argument for pessimism may be more compelling on a desire-satisfaction account of wellbeing.

the satisfaction of desire *may* be good things, but that there are many things which constitute wellbeing independently of them. This theory has been labelled the 'objective list' view by Derek Parfit, who argues that other things—knowledge of important matters, friendship, autonomy, achievement—can constitute a benefit to an agent for their own sake.[86] This view is sometimes also referred to as 'perfectionism', though strictly speaking perfectionism is a *type* of objective list theory, which seeks to identify which things are good by giving an account of what is distinctive or essential (or both) to human beings.[87]

Nietzsche's claim is that hedonism "renders man ludicrous and contemptible" (*BGE*, §225) in failing to recognise values distinct from pleasure, namely: achievement. Nietzsche, of course, does not frame this objection using this terminology, but his emphasises on the value of power, and of *striving* for power, is the anchor of his rejection of hedonism and his endorsement of some form of objective list theory. Nietzsche's positive evaluations of power are numerous:

> What is good? — All that heightens the feeling of power, the will to power, power itself in man.
> What is bad? — All that proceeds from weakness (*A*, §2)

Moreover, the value of power is a theme which recurs throughout Nietzsche's investigation into what the conditions must be to reach "the highest *power and splendour* actually possible to the human type" (*GM*, Preface, 6). What belongs to "the noble type of man", Nietzsche tells us, is "...the feeling of plenitude, of power which seeks to overflow..." (*BGE*, §260); he "honours himself as one who is powerful" (*BGE*, §260). This characterization of power in accordance with the good persists in a number of Nietzsche's texts from:

> The demeanour adopted by the nobility is an expression of the fact that the consciousness of power is constantly playing its charming game in their limbs (*D*, §201)

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[86] See Derek Parfit, *Reasons and Persons*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984), pp. 493-502.

[87] The most rigorous defence of this view can be found in Thomas Hurka, *Perfectionism*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1993). Hurka also specifically addresses what he takes to be Nietzsche's brand of perfectionism in Thomas Hurka, "Nietzsche: Perfectionist" in Leiter and Sinhabubu (eds.), *Nietzsche and Morality*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007).

> One would have to seek the highest type of free man where the greatest resistance is constantly being overcome. (*TI*, 'Skirmishes', §38)

Because Nietzsche values power and the striving for power, and resistance can be one form of suffering, Nietzsche considers suffering to be valuable in some capacity that Schopenhauer does not allow for. Before I discuss what this value is, it is first necessary to establish in detail what Nietzsche understands a well-lived life to consist in; who are these 'higher men'; and what is it about them which is valuable.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have disentangled one form of suffering from at least two other forms Nietzsche discusses. I elucidated the conception of suffering in the pursuit of goals by interpreting Nietzsche's conception of the will to power in light of Schopenhauer's will to life. I argued both accounts of the will share at least three important aspects: (1) The will is never 'satisfied'; (2) the will has the basic structure of a second order desire; (3) at least one form of suffering is understood as 'resistance to the will'. However, Nietzsche is best interpreted as holding that only some forms of resistance of the will constitute suffering namely: those resistances which persist for too long. These are purely descriptive claims. Where Schopenhauer and Nietzsche significantly disagree—a battle which persists from the beginning to the end of Nietzsche's philosophical work—is with regard to the will's evaluation. Schopenhauer, in assuming the truth of hedonism, makes the jump from (a) human life is fundamentally suffering; to (b) non-existence is preferable to existence. However, while Nietzsche accepts (a), he is able to affirm the converse of (b) by denying that pleasure adds value to one's life and pain detracts value from one's life. Or at the very least, that pleasure is not the *only* good in life. Now that we have an account of what suffering is, I move on to discuss what Nietzsche understands a good life to consist in, and the role power plays in its value.

Chapter Two:

Human Greatness

As early as *Schopenhauer as Educator*, Nietzsche writes that mankind "must work continually at the production of individual great men — that and nothing else is its task", and that mankind "ought to seek out and create the favourable conditions" under which "those great redemptive men can come into existence" (*UM*, III, §6). I take it to be uncontroversial that increasingly into his philosophical career, Nietzsche believed human greatness to be an appropriately valuable goal, at least for certain types of people.[88] Where there is controversy however, cocnerns: (1) what the specific content of greatness is: what does the "highest splendour possible to the type man" (*GM*, preface: §6) consist in?; (2) what type of value greatness has in Nietzsche's broader axiological schema. In this chapter, my focus is on the debate regarding (1).

Nietzsche does not provide an explicit account of what the concept of 'greatness' entails. Broadly speaking, there are two relevant features to consider: what a great agent *is*, and what a great agent *does*. Put another way, there are internal conditions (character) and external conditions (achievements) to consider. Nietzsche's repeated paradigms of greatness include figures as seemingly diverse as Beethoven (e.g. *UM*, III, §3; *HH*, §155; *BGE*, §245), Cesare Borgia (e.g. *BGE*, §197; *TI*, 'Skirmishes, §37), Napoleon (e.g. *HH*, §164; *GM*, I, §16), Julius Caesar (e.g. *BGE*, §200; *TI*, 'Skirmishes', §38), Nietzsche himself (e.g. *EH*, V, §1), and most frequently Goethe (e.g. *TI*, 'Skirmishes', §49; *GS*, §103). But it is unclear whether Nietzsche takes these individuals to be great in virtue of their character traits, or in virtue of their particular achievements. This ambiguity has consequently shaped the terrain of contemporary inquiry into this important concept in such a way that typically consists in either one of these two features as sufficient to account for it. I discuss the arguments for such positions here, with my own view being that both achievements *and* traits of character are necessary for

[88] Nietzsche is often more explicit about the concept of greatness in some works than others—notably *Beyond Good and Evil*. The importance of greatness *may* shift through Nietzsche's broader developmental trajectory between periods of his writing. As I suggest later, there may be some evidence of Nietzsche changing his mind about this from his early to mature period.

what Nietzsche understands greatness to consist in. I then explore whether these features are together sufficient. I shall firstly address traits of character.

1. Great Persons

Nietzsche has a number of different terms and designations for the great individuals whom he venerates. The most frequent being "higher type" (*BGE*, §62; *A*, §4, §5), "free spirit" (*GS*, §347; *BGE*, §44), "hero" (*BT*, §24; *D*, §240; *GS*, §268) and "noble" (*GS*, §55; *BGE*, §287). Perhaps a case may also be made for "Übermensch", discussed almost exclusively in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. It is important to clarify that at least some of these terms are distinct from Nietzsche's use of "great" (e.g. *UM*, III, §6; *BGE*, §212, §225; *EH*, II, §10; *WP*, §957) in so far as they are *technical* terms; they have a (relatively) consistent meaning in his schema.[89] 'Greatness', on the other hand, is a broader term which does not have a stable usage in the texts. While a claim that, for example, 'Beethoven is a free spirit', would tell us that the author believed Beethoven to *challenge prevailing social norms*, a claim that 'Beethoven is the pinnacle of greatness' does not indicate precisely what it is about Beethoven that is being referred to, only that he is 'good'; 'exceptional'; or 'exemplary'.

However, my focus is not upon what Nietzsche means by the *term* greatness, but what he thinks is *conceptually* distinctive about those he admires the most: "the greatness of man, the concept 'greatness'" (*BGE*, §212). By paying attention to the relevant passages from the primary sources, and by assessing how 'greatness' is approached in the secondary literature, I shall argue that the concept of greatness involves a synthesis of (at least some of) the technical terms mentioned above, and that therefore it is possible that one may qualify as, for example, 'noble', but not 'great'.

Alexander Nehamas has argued that Nietzsche "refuses to offer any descriptions of what an ideal person or an ideal life would be like".[90] However, I think this is too strong. In a

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[89] I will not have time to elucidate each concept in detail here, but as the Chapter progresses I shall attempt to distinguish at least some of them from each other, and how they may only form a part of the concept of greatness.

[90] Nehamas, (1985), p. 8

number of places, Nietzsche describes at least some of the distinguishable features of these individuals. Typically, they centre on qualities of character which make up a "noble soul" (*BGE*, §287), rather than their specific achievements.

Before discussing what these qualities are, there is an ambiguity, both in Nietzsche's work and also in much of the secondary literature, that needs to be made explicit. This concerns what is entailed by the term 'character'. It is standard practice for commentators to interpret greatness of 'character' to refer exclusively to a number of executive virtues, by which I mean those traits that are manifested in controlling, deciding upon, guiding, and bringing about action. This appears to be how the term 'character' is understood by Brian Leiter,[91] Simon Robertson,[92] Andrew Huddleston,[93] and Bernard Reginster.[94] However, it is important to be aware of a potential distinction between two other aspects of a person which may fall under the umbrella term of their 'character', all of which are relevant in some way to Nietzsche's understanding of greatness: (1) one's skill or ability; and (2) one's taste (i.e. which goals one chooses to pursue). As we shall see, these three properties may come apart in various ways. I shall return to this point later, but for the purposes of structure I shall hereafter, following Leiter, refer to character traits as just those executive virtues Nietzsche venerates. I will now present a representative, but not necessarily exhaustive, list of these identifiable character traits.

In a variety of places, Nietzsche presents these higher types of people as being solitary by nature. The higher man "...is always in his own company, whether he associates with books, human beings, or landscapes" (*EH*, II, §2). Moreover, this is something the great individual actually desires: he "strives instinctively for a citadel and a secrecy where he is

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[91] Leiter uses the terms "characteristics" and "traits" to refer to what Nietzsche associates with greatness. See Leiter, (2002), pp. 116-122.

[92] Robertson uses the term 'character' to refer to what he calls "self-orientated qualities". See Simon Robertson, "Nietzsche's Ethical Revaluation" in *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, Issue 37, (Pennsylvania State University, 2009), p. 78.

[93] Huddleston also refers to "character traits" or, the more Nietzschean, "quality of soul" to describe these executive virtues. See Andrew Huddleston, *Nietzsche on the Decadence and Flourishing of Culture*, (Princeton: Doctoral Thesis, 2012), pp. 37-44.

[94] Like Huddleston, Reginster retains Nietzsche's concept of the condition of the "soul" to describe these features. See Reginster, (2006), pp. 190-192.

saved from the crowd, the many, the great majority..." (*BGE*, §26). Nietzsche is even more explicit about this condition when he writes that the concept of greatness entails "being noble, wanting to be by oneself, being able to be different, standing alone and having to live independently" and that "he shall be the greatest who can be the most solitary" (*BGE*, §212).

A related quality that Nietzsche considers is how one is "able to be different" (*BGE*, §212). Truly great individuals, Nietzsche argues, go against the grain and challenge the norms of their cultural environment: "the higher man courts opposition, and provokes it" (*GS*, §297; cf. *BGE*, §211). The idea is that there is some value to be found in the individuality and rarity of certain persons. As Nietzsche puts it, "what can be common has ever but little value", and that "great things are for the great...and, in sum, rare things for the rare" (*BGE*, §43, §62; cf. *GS*, §3, §55). This point will resurface later in the next chapter.

Another quality of character that Nietzsche presents as a constitutive feature of greatness is a certain kind of "pride in oneself" (*BGE*, §260). He writes that "the noble soul has reverence for itself" (*BGE*, §287), and that "perhaps the effect of selfishness is precisely at its greatest in the noblest persons" (*GS*, §55). In other places, Nietzsche appears to make a stronger claim by endorsing a form of ethical egoism—the view that one ought to do only what is in one's self interest—for higher types of people: "egoism pertains to the essence of the noble soul" (*BGE*, §265).

A fourth important condition of greatness is that individuals exercise their will to power to a high degree. Since the pursuit of power necessarily involves struggle, great individuals actively seek it out: "[A strong nature] needs resistance; hence it *seeks* resistance." (*EH*, II, §7). The relevance of this point will be discussed in detail in the next chapter. But Nietzsche emphasises that since great individuals seek out struggle and perhaps suffering, they must have a fifth quality: the psychological strength and discipline to endure and be resilient to it; a "hardness and capacity for protracted decisions" (*BGE*, §212).

Yet another important quality of character great individuals have on Nietzsche's view is a capacity for self-control or 'self-mastery' in organising strong yet diverse drives. Broadly construed, Nietzsche understands a drive [*Trieb*] as a disposition that generates or provokes a

certain pattern of activity.[95] Certain interpretations have Nietzsche claim that human beings have a number of different drives, including (but not limited to) a drive associated with knowledge (*GM*, III; *WP,* §423; *KSA*, 1888, 14[142]); sex (*GS*, §14); hunger (*D*, §119; *WP*, §702; *KSA*, 1888, 14[174]); and most notoriously: power (*GM*, III, §18; *HH*, §142 and *passim*). Furthermore, that each of these drives constantly seeks expression: they aim to discharge themselves through a particular end, and as such are in competition with one another. For instance, Nietzsche talks of their "play and counterplay among one another" (*D*, §119), where every drive is “tyrannical” in so far as they want to be “the legitimate *master* of all the other drives" (*BGE*, §6).[96] Leslie Paul Thiele, a proponent of this kind of interpretation, puts it in the following way. He argues that each drive “has its will to dominate and exploit its competitors…" and that the individual is therefore "a battleground of competing drives, each with its own perspective”.[97]

In a number of places, Nietzsche identifies great individuals to the extent to which they manage, control and organise these *strong* yet *varied* drives in a *unified* way to a high degree. In the case of Caesar and da Vinci, he writes that:

> ...in addition to their powerful and irreconcilable instincts, they have also inherited and cultivated into them a proper mastery and subtlety for carrying on the conflict with themselves (that is to say, the faculty of self-control and self-deception). (*BGE*, §200)

And of Shakespeare:

> The highest man would have the greatest multiplicity of drives, in the relatively greatest strength that can be endured. Indeed, where the plant "man" shows himself strongest, one

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[95] Nietzsche uses Drive [*Trieb*] seemingly interchangeably with Instinct [*Instinkt*]. I shall adopt this assumption for my purposes here.

[96] I will not have time here to assess Nietzsche's conception of drives and their wider relevance to his ethical evaluations in any detail. For an in-depth discussion of these issues, see Katsafanas, (2013), Chapter 6; Maudemarie Clark, and David Dudrick, “Nietzsche on the Will: An Analysis of BGE 19,” in Ken Gemes and Simon May (eds.), *Nietzsche on Freedom and Autonomy*, (OUP, 2009), pp. 247–68; Ken Gemes, "Freud and Nietzsche on Sublimation" in *Journal of Nietzsche Studies*, Issue 38, (Pennsylvania State University, 2009), pp. 38-59; Richardson, (1996), especially pp. 44-48.

[97] Leslie Paul Thiele, *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of the Soul*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 57-58.

> finds instincts that conflict powerfully (e.g., in Shakespeare), but are controlled. (*WP*, §966; *KSA*, 1884, 27[59])

Similar views are expressed elsewhere in Nietzsche's work: he recognises a "fundamental will of the spirit" in higher men that seeks "to be master internally and externally". Moreover, this 'spirit' "has the will of a multiplicity for a simplicity, a binding, taming, imperious, and essentially ruling will" (*BGE*, §230). The paradigm example of this capacity in Nietzsche's view is, unsurprisingly, Goethe, whom we are told "disciplined himself to wholeness". (*TI*, 'Skirmishes', §49).[98]

While Nietzsche acknowledges these qualities, there may be others I have not mentioned here. Furthermore, it is not obvious whether Nietzsche intends *all* of these qualities to be necessary for greatness, or just various combinations. The crucial point, however, is that all of them up are qualities of a person's *character*: they concern what an agent is like. It is these properties that Nietzsche frequently associates with the concept of nobility.

One view is that 'noble' qualities of character are *all* that Nietzsche understands the concept greatness to entail: that being great is being a certain way, regardless of a person's particular achievements. This appears to be the view taken by Brian Leiter, who states that certain traits, including most of which discussed above, are "plainly sufficient" for greatness.[99] Let us call this view (i.e. the view that greatness resides in individuals solely in virtue of exercising certain qualities of character, irrespective of the content of the goals they pursue) the *Pure Character View*.

Supporters of the *Pure Character View* may point to Nietzsche's repeated emphasis on character traits, and apparent silence on particular accomplishments, as sufficient to support their view. In describing individuals he venerates, Nietzsche repeatedly associates their value with the traits mentioned, and almost never with their effects or achievements.

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[98] For more detailed discussion on 'self-mastery' and its specific relation to greatness, see Christopher Janaway, "Nietzsche on Morality, Drives and Human Greatness" in Christopher Janaway and Simon Robertson, *Nietzsche, Naturalism and Normativity*, (OUP, 2012). I discuss the role of organic unity in Nietzsche's ethics in detail in the final chapter.

[99] Brian Leiter, (2002), p. 116.

But I think there are strong reasons to reject the *Pure Character View*, both as an interpretation of Nietzsche and as a position in and of itself. Here I invoke an argument given by Andrew Huddleston. Huddleston first responds to the fact that Nietzsche generally does not refer to great particular achievements, instead almost exclusively describing the great individual in terms of his personal qualities. According to Huddleston, the reason for this is that it is "*so* obvious" that *to be great is to accomplish great things* that "Nietzsche never sees fit to mention it explicitly".[100] In other words, that great achievements form a necessary part of the concept of greatness is a 'background assumption' in Nietzsche's understanding of the concept.

This is a reasonable assumption on Nietzsche's part. The motivation for this line of thought is that Huddleston argues, plausibly, that the *Pure Character View* "risks admitting underachievers, however sedulous, into the pantheon of great individuals".[101] The point is that there may be cases where someone retains all the traits of character Nietzsche frequently venerates—self reverence, solitariness, toughness in the face of suffering, and so forth—yet underachieves.

Building upon Huddleston's point, there are several reasons that could lead to these type of cases. Perhaps one such reason may be that this person simply has no goals. Alternatively this person may have goals but never attempts to achieve any of them. However, as Christopher Janaway has recently suggested, merely possessing the virtues mentioned above appears to be incompatible with either not having or never pursuing any goals.[102] Janaway proposes that Nietzsche may hold that no individual who satisfied the internal conditions of greatness could fail to have goals they seek to achieve. If, for example, we accept the condition that all great individuals exercise their will to power to a large degree, then as I

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[100] Andrew Huddleston, *(*2012), p. 30.

[101] Andrew Huddleston, (2012), p. 29.

[102] Janaway, (2012), p. 192. Janaway is strongly committed to the view that 'internal' traits of character are necessary for greatness, which I agree with. He appears open to the view that greatness *could* also be a matter of 'external' achievements, but refrains from commitment to this view. I view my project here to be building on Janaway's important discussion.

have presented the doctrine, they are by definition engaging in the pursuit of goals. The objection is, that if one fails to have and pursue goals, one fails to possess an internal condition necessary for greatness.

But this response does not undermine Huddleston's argument that the *Pure Character View* allows underachievers to exemplify greatness. This is because we might well imagine cases of third variety, perhaps like some interpretations of Don Quixote, where (i) one retains the traits Nietzsche admires *and* (ii) one has many goals, *and* (iii) one pursues them all, yet constantly fails to achieve them due to a lack of talent, ability or skill.

It seems implausible that cases of this nature would qualify as what Nietzsche understands greatness to be. Failures may be honourable and glorious in some instances: perhaps fighting a battle against a significantly stronger opponent, yet with the knowledge that it will inevitably end in defeat. Failures, as Nietzsche acknowledges, are often also instrumentally valuable in that we learn from them: "I do not know whether I do not have more reason to be grateful to my failures than to any success" (*GS*, §303). Nevertheless, if no goals were *ever* achieved, no difficulties were ever overcome, it is unlikely Nietzsche would view them in a similar light to the great individuals he admires.[103]

A related and perhaps more pressing problem with the *Pure Character View* is that it leaves open the possibility that these noble individuals can focus their efforts on and pursue trivial or worthless ends. Robertson points out precisely this worry:

> it seems that individuals may possess and exercise such qualities yet direct their activities toward goals we (or Nietzsche) would deny manifest excellence. If so, they may fail to count as genuinely excellent individuals.[104]

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[103] An important question arises here: does Nietzsche value significant talent or ability merely as a means to, or as an enabling condition of, greatness? Or rather, is significant talent or ability constitutive of greatness? One reason for thinking that it is constitutive of greatness is the following. There may be cases where one retains a noble character, has good taste, and lacks significant ability, yet still manages to achieve one's goals through pure luck. It is unlikely Nietzsche would see this case, where no difficulty was overcome, as a great act. It is important that this case involves *pure* luck, because, as we shall see, Nietzsche credits luck with playing a significant role in the realization of greatness. The role of luck in achievement more generally will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

[104] Robertson, (2009), p. 78.

The following is a typical Rawlsian example to demonstrate the force of this objection.[105] Suppose a person, Andy, does not care for writing novels or plays, composing music or being politically active. Instead, Andy directs his activity at counting blades of grass in large fields. This is an extremely difficult task as it demands not only a very careful and meticulous approach in differentiating each blade, but a very sharp memory of which have been already accounted for. Andy, let us imagine, is solitary in nature, and prefers to pursue his project rather than interact with others. We can imagine him retaining all of the executive virtues mentioned above. We can also imagine Andy being extremely talented, having an extraordinary ability to remember which blades of grass he has counted and which he has not. But upon completion of his laborious task, there is a strong intuition that Andy is not worthy of admiration. Rather, perhaps, like Sisyphus (and perhaps Don Quixote, though for a different reason to Andy—assuming Don Quixote has worthy goals), he is even deserving of pity for having wasted his time on such a trivial project. Regardless, it does not seem plausible that Andy would genuinely figure in Nietzsche's conception of great individuals.

A possible response to this objection might refer back to Janaway's point about the lack of one or more necessary virtues. In the example given, Andy appears to be an over-simplified individual without a multiplicity of diverse drives, and it is on *these* grounds that he fails to count as great. This line of argument is taken by Ken Gemes, who in giving his own example of a person who solely directs their activities at collecting stamps, argues that this person is unlikely to be *expressing* the full range of their drives and so fails to satisfy at least one necessary aspect of the model of greatness Nietzsche propounds.[106] But again, I think this can be surmounted by expanding the grass-counting example. Perhaps Andy has many other diverse, yet equally ludicrous, projects which he unifies under one will, thus giving his drives an opportunity for expression.

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[105] For the original use of the example, see John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 432.

[106] Ken Gemes, (2009), p. 57. Janaway also makes this argument, though differs from Gemes in his characterisation of drives, which he takes to have the potential to dissipate completely. I discuss the implications of this for greatness shortly. See Janaway, (2012), p. 188.

This objection draws attention to the question of whether Nietzsche holds that certain substantive goals have independent value and others do not. Nietzsche's apparent silence on this matter has been taken by some to indicate that he has no explicit or implicit substantive account, but rather only associates valuable achievements with formal properties which are compatible with a number of different goals. This view is defended by Thomas Hurka, who writes that:

> In an early work he [Nietzsche] said the one thing 'needful' is to 'give style to one's character', so its elements are unified by 'a single taste', and that it matters less whether this taste is good or bad than whether it is a single taste.[107]

Hurka continues that "He [Nietzsche] deemed activities good if they involve organizing one's aims around a single goal whatever that goal is".[108] Defenders of this kind of view often point to a familiar passage where Nietzsche notes that "Whether this taste was good or bad is less important than one might suppose, if only it was a single taste" (*GS*, §290). The idea here being that, supposedly, there is no standard of correctness in matters of taste, but value is to be found in organising one's single taste to govern one's variety of diverse projects. While it is certainly true that Nietzsche's higher men are driven towards the completion of a unifying project (what Hurka rightly identifies Nietzsche to mean by 'style'), it is unlikely, and the above passage does not obviously demonstrate, that Nietzsche thinks that the goals one directs oneself towards do not matter *at all*.

In many places, Nietzsche indicates that tastes can be ranked in terms of their value. For example, he clearly thinks that many people have *bad* taste: "One must," as Nietzsche says, "shed the bad taste of wanting to agree with many" (*BGE*, §43). Nietzsche's continues:

> Books for all the world are always foul-smelling books: the smell of petty people clings to them. Where the people eat and drink, even where they venerate, it usually stinks. One should not go to church if one wants to breathe pure air (*BGE*, §30).

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[107] Thomas Hurka, "Games and the Good", *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Supplementary Volumes, Vol. 80, (2006), p. 230.

[108] Hurka, (2006), pp. 230-231.

The use of the pejorative term 'rabble' [*Pöbel*] is repeated frequently to denote those of bad taste (*BGE*, §190, §224; *EH*, I, §4). 'Bad taste' must be clearly distinguished from having *no* taste, which the phrase is sometimes taken to mean. When Nietzsche refers to bad taste, he (also) refers to unworthy ends. For instance, after claiming that one must "shed the bad taste of wanting to agree with many", he writes that "'Good' is no longer good when your neighbour takes it into his mouth. And how could there exist a 'common good'! The expression is a self-contradiction: what can be common has ever but little value" (*BGE*, §43). Here he suggests that if some end is considered good by the majority, then it is *for this reason* not worth much. But this is quite different from having no taste whatsoever. It is not that one has taste or one does not, but rather Nietzsche talks of those with "elevated taste" (*BGE*, §26), indicating that there must be other tastes from which certain individuals' can be elevated relative to.

The claim that Nietzsche is only interested in the formal properties of achievements and not their substantive content is problematic. However, I consider these issues in great detail in Chapter Four when I assess the nature and specific value of achievements. I postpone a detailed defence of these doubts, and Hurka's possible response, until then.

For the reasons given, I agree with the view that it is unlikely Nietzsche holds that there are no standards of correctness in matters of taste, and that therefore he would understand the tastes of 'higher men' to be only *apparently* better than 'sick' and 'inferior types'. The relevant point here is that it is difficult to read Nietzsche as accepting cases such as Andy as genuine instances of human greatness.[109] Because one can retain noble traits of character yet direct oneself towards worthless goals, this indicates that the *Pure Character View* is insufficient to account for the concept of greatness.

Notice that this objection does not necessarily commit one to an interpretation of Nietzsche in which he holds a codifiable standard of taste (i.e. a strong account of precisely which substantive achievements are excellent). Rather, one might follow Nehamas in

[109] Many similar cases to Andy can be thought up. Reginster gives the example of satisfying purely formal properties by managing to eat twenty five pies in one sitting. See Reginster, (2006), p. 181.

sensibly holding that Nietzsche has no codifiable standard of correctness in this respect, but in addition, one may nonetheless hold that there are some things which Nietzsche fairly obviously does *not* think exhibit good taste or excellence (e.g. grass-counter cases).

One possible response that defenders of the *Pure Character View* could make at this point is to draw attention to the ambiguity regarding the content of 'character' that I flagged earlier. The two objections I raised against the *Pure Character View* in this section were that it allows for (i) cases where noble persons lack the ability to achieve their goals; (ii) cases where noble persons pursue worthless goals. However, if one were to adopt a broader conception of 'character' which includes not just executive virtues, but also skill and taste, then it might be thought that these objections dissolve.

On this view, greatness would be a matter of satisfying three necessary traits of character: it requires a *virtuous*, highly *skilled* individual with *good taste*. However, any combination of just two of these elements of character yield insufficient results for what Nietzsche understands as greatness:

(a) A virtuous individual with good taste can constantly fail to meet his goals.
(b) A virtuous and highly skilled individual can direct his efforts towards valueless goals.

and, as I shall argue shortly,

(c) A highly skilled individual with good taste can lack virtue.

This is important because Robertson and Huddleston both suggest that having trivial goals or underachieving due to a lack of ability imply that Nietzsche must value not just character, but also particular *achievements*. However, by making a significant concession and expanding what 'character' includes, it might be said that this move is perhaps too quick. For one still might hold, as the *Pure Character View* does, that particular achievements are *results* of great character, but not what greatness *consists in*. It is important for me to refute this claim, for my thesis is that Nietzsche holds there to be a valuable relation between suffering-in-pursuit-of-achievements and greatness.

Nevertheless, I do not find this proposed response convincing. A conception of character that included all of the above components would be highly stipulative, and would require hard work to establish it's appropriate conceptual parameters. Such parameters are not discussed in detail by defenders of the *Pure Character View*, leaving the concept of character open to *ad lib* expansiveness. Moreover, although I disagree with Hurka's characterization of the way Nietzsche values achievements (i.e. in terms of *purely* formal properties), I agree that Nietzsche determines the content of greatness at least partly by the pursuit of and achievement of goals. The objections raised against the *Pure Character View* involved demonstrating that it allowed for either the lack of achievement or the achievement of worthless goals. I take this to show a commitment to the view that greatness is a matter of, at least partly, *doing* rather than merely *being*. In what follows, I expand upon Nietzsche's emphasis on the importance of achieving worthy goals.

For the reasons so far discussed, I conclude that the *Pure Character View* is implausible. Being great is not simply a case of being a certain way. This conclusion implies the need for another terminological distinction: between 'nobility' on the one hand and 'greatness' on the other. If, as I suggested, 'nobility' is used to refer to traits of character, and greatness is not just a matter of character, then the two concepts come apart. I now turn my attention to the question of just how important traits of character are to Nietzsche's understanding of greatness by considering a competing view.

2. Great Achievements

An alternative interpretation of Nietzsche's understanding of human greatness might be that it is best measured solely in terms of particular achievements or 'external' conditions. For example writing great novels, constructing powerful empires, making scientific discoveries, and so forth. After all, it might be more plausible that while men like Shakespeare, Goethe and Beethoven may have certain character traits in common, their creative output is what really distinguishes them from the rest of humankind. Let us call this view (i.e. the view that greatness resides in purely excellent achievements, regardless of an individual's nature) the *Pure Achievement View*.

One might find the *Pure Achievement View* to be, prima facie, an attractive position. It may be obvious, as Huddleston suggests, that to be great is to accomplish great things. But like the *Pure Character View*, the *Pure Achievement View* also has deeply problematic implications which render it implausible. Perhaps the most effective ammunition that those who want to attack the *Pure Achievement View* can utilize is in §287 of *Beyond Good and Evil*, where Nietzsche asks "...what allows one to recognise the noble human being?", and continues that:

> It is not actions that prove him — actions are always open to many interpretations, always inscrutable — nor is it "works". Among artists and scholars today one finds enough of those who betray by their works how they are impelled by a profound desire for what is noble; but just this need *for* what is noble is fundamentally different from the needs of the noble soul itself and actually the eloquent and dangerous mark of its lack. It is not the works, it is the *faith* that is decisive here, that determines the order of rank — to take up again an ancient religious formula in a new and more profound sense: some fundamental certainty that a noble soul has about itself, something that cannot be sought, nor found, nor perhaps lost. (*BGE*, §287)

In this passage, Nietzsche appears to be explicitly denying that "actions" or "works", including what we might call achievements, are what constitute greatness. The reason being that valuable goals can sometimes be brought about skilfully, but for the wrong reasons: for example as a result of the *desire for* greatness, which stems from a lack, rather than producing works *as a result* of being great.

One of Nietzsche's own examples of valuable achievements brought about by figures he does *not* consider to be great is religious literature, more specifically: Christian religious texts in Germany. Nietzsche considers the "preacher" to be "the only one in Germany who knew what a syllable, what a word weighs, how a sentence strikes, rises, falls, runs, runs to an end..." (*BGE*, §247). In other words, in purely aesthetic terms, certain Christian texts are great works. However, Nietzsche certainly does not consider the Christian preacher to be a 'higher man' or paradigm of greatness.

It is significant that Nietzsche does not simply take these achievements to be attributively good; that is, merely good *as an instance of* a Christian text, in the same way

that we could recognise someone to be a good serial killer. Rather, Nietzsche views these texts as valuable as achievements in themselves.[110] This can be seen in Nietzsche's praise of The Lutheran Bible, referring to it as "the best German book hitherto", and that compared to it, "...almost everything else is merely 'literature'..." (*BGE*, §247). In spite of this, Luther as a person is the target of repeated vicious criticism from Nietzsche, who refers to him as a "peasant apostle" (*A*, §53), a "fanatic" (*A*, §54) who has "...all the vindictive instincts of a failed priest in him" (*A*, §61), and stands as an "antithetical type of the strong, emancipated spirit" (*A*, §54).

A second example of this nature might be found in Nietzsche's later opinion of Wagner. Regarding the opera *Parsifal*, Nietzsche wrote in a letter to Peter Gast: "on purely aesthetic grounds; has Wagner ever done anything better?", and goes on to praise its "clarity of musical description", the psychological effects of which are found "in Dante, but nowhere else" (Letter to Peter Gast, January, 1887, *SL*, pp. 259-260). However, while recognising the value of the work as an aesthetic achievement, Nietzsche also writes that it:

> ...is a work of perfidy, of vindictiveness, of a secret attempt to poison the presuppositions of life — a bad work. The preaching of chastity remains an incitement to anti-nature: I despise everyone who does not experience *Parsifal* as an attempted assassination of basic ethics. (*NCW*, 'Wagner As The Apostle Of Chastity', §3; cf. *GM*, III, §1-4)

While Nietzsche certainly thought that Wagner was significantly talented, even after their relationship broke down (e.g. *BGE*, §256), and that composing operas is a worthy goal to pursue, Nietzsche repudiates Wagner in virtue of, among other things, supposedly sympathising with Christianity, Schopenhauerian pessimism, and German nationalism: all of which, Nietzsche understands, are indicative of a 'sick' character in one way or another.

The proposition is then, that human greatness cannot reside solely in actions or specific achievements for Nietzsche, because sometimes they can be brought about by people who, perhaps on account on their motives, have a bad character: they lack 'nobility'.

It might be thought that *BGE* §287, which was just used as evidence against the *Pure Achievement View*, might be used to support the *Pure Character View*. After all, it explicitly

[110] I am grateful to Simon Robertson for raising this issue.

denounces "works" in favour of the "faith" of the "noble soul". However, it is in no way obvious that Nietzsche is suggesting that "works" do not matter *at all* in determining human greatness. In other words, *BGE* §287 at best claims that noble character traits are *necessary* for greatness, but it does not claim that they are *sufficient*. Nietzsche's intention here, it seems, is simply to urge us to use caution when judging a person to be great purely by their effects, because actions, and the 'achievements' they result in, are "always open to interpretation": there is an epistemological constraint which prevents us from knowing how or why they were brought about.

In setting up the issue of what Nietzsche understands greatness to consist in, I have focused on two characters: the first, which I have just discussed in this section, achieves a variety of excellent things. The second has a number of virtues (e.g. self-reliance, endurance, pride, and so forth). The problem I raised with the first character was that some things can be achieved for reasons Nietzsche considers to be of disvalue (e.g. ressentiment). The problem I raised with the second character was that an individual could retain these virtues yet fail to achieve anything great, either because (i) they have no goals; (ii) they have noble goals but constantly fail to reach them (i.e. Huddleston's objection); (iii) they pursue trivial or worthless goals (i.e. Robertson's objection).

However, there is a third character to consider which is significant here, and that the commentators discussed so far have largely overlooked: those with "talents far beyond their genius" and "virtuosos through and through" (*BGE*, §256) who, for reasons beyond their control, are prevented from achieving. I shall now address this type of case with the hope of further improving the scope of the existing literature on Nietzsche's understanding of greatness.

Let us assume for the moment that Nietzsche holds that building an empire is a noble achievement. Now let's suppose that we have two figures: Alexander the Great and Alexander the Not-so-great. Both excel at their studies at the Macedonian military academy, each developing their capacity for intricate strategy and armed combat. Both Alexanders, let us imagine, are equally talented in the discipline of war and the politics of maintaining an empire. For the sake of argument, let us also assume they both have all the executive virtues

Nietzsche takes the great individual to exercise. Now suppose that whilst Alexander the Not-so-great dies in 334 B.C., just before the campaign to conquer to the Persian Empire — a goal both Alexanders have a taste for, Alexander the Great sets out on the campaign and successfully achieves the of building his own empire. The relevant question is whether, on Nietzsche's view, both Alexanders are appropriate examples of human greatness due to their shared capacity for achievement, or whether only Alexander the Great qualifies on account of his actually carrying out his aim.

A second case that draws attention to this distinction is that of the English composer Thomas Linley the younger. Linley was a precocious composer and performer in the mid to late 18th century who subsequently became known as the 'English Mozart'. Unfortunately, however, Linley drowned in a lake in a boating accident at the age of 22, which was seen as a great tragedy for English music. Mozart himself later remarked that "Linley was a true genius" who "had he lived, would have been one of the greatest ornaments of the musical world".[111] Although there is a clear epistemological constraint on the issue of what one might turn out to be, the relevant question is whether Linley would count as great in Nietzsche's view in virtue of the vast potential he had.

Examples of this nature call for a distinction between (a) a person having noble goals and the ability to achieve them, and (b) a person *actually* achieving these goals. It is, at least, not immediately obvious whether Nietzsche would accept (a)-type cases as genuine instances of greatness.

In cases where a would-be achiever is prevented from doing so due to circumstances beyond their control (e.g. death), Nietzsche explicitly recognises the need to account for luck as a variable which can affect how a person turns out. For instance, in *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche states that to understand the nature of great individuals, one must "gain an insight into their power and its origin", taking into account "what *fortunate circumstances* played a part" (*HH*, §164; emphasis mine). Much later, Nietzsche claims that "the higher the type of a man a man represents, the greater the improbability he will *turn out well*", and continues: "chance, the law of absurdity in the total economy of mankind, shows itself in its

[111] Cited in Linda Kelly, *Richard Brinsley Sheridan: A Life*, (Faber & Faber, 2012), Ch. 8.

most dreadful shape in its destructive effect on higher men, whose conditions of life are subtle, manifold and difficult to comprehend" (*BGE*, §62). Even later in *The Antichrist*, Nietzsche expresses a similar point in emphasising that the higher type is a "*lucky hit*"; that across history and cultures, these individuals are "*chance* occurrences of great success" (*A*, §4; emphasis mine). Section 274 of *Beyond Good and Evil* is where Nietzsche most explicit about the importance of luck with relevance to the emergence of higher men:

> It requires luck and much that is incalculable if a higher human being in whom there slumbers the solution of a problem is to act — 'break out' one might say — at the right time. Usually it does *not* happen, and in every corner of the earth there are people waiting who hardly know to what extent they are waiting but even less that they are waiting in vain. Sometimes the awakening call, that chance event which gives 'permission' to act, comes but too late — when the best part of youth and the strength to act has already been used up in sitting still; and how many a man has discovered to his horror when he 'rose up' that his limbs had gone to sleep and his spirit was already too heavy! 'It is too late' — he has said to himself, having lost faith in himself and henceforth for ever useless (*BGE*, §274).

There are a number of intertwined points being made in this passage, but the significant point that I want to draw attention to is that Nietzsche appears to credit luck with determining, at least some of the time, whether a person is merely *potentially* great or *actually* great.[112] Although Nietzsche draws this distinction, indicating that the vast majority are 'too late' to act on opportunities to achieve great things, there is nonetheless ambiguity regarding the status of potential achievers. The first line refers to them as 'higher human beings', yet the tone of the passages seems to suggest regret that the "strength to act has already been used up".

However, Nietzsche continues:

> Could it be that, in the realm of genius, 'Raphael without hands' is, taking the phrase in its widest sense, not the exception but the rule? — Perhaps genius is not so very rare: perhaps what is rare is the five hundred *hands* needed to tyrannize over the *kairos*, 'the right time' — to take chance by the forelock! (*BGE*, §274)

The phrase 'Raphael without hands' is used by a character in the 18th century play *Emilia Galotti* by Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, and is intended to indicate the incompleteness of genius in a person: that one might lack the means by which one's genius would come to be

[112] I discuss the role of luck in the context of achievement in detail in the following Chapter Four.

realized. For example, if Raphael (understood to be a paradigm of human genius) were to have lost his hands — the very instruments needed for painting — his capacity for creativity would be severely limited. This passage might be taken as evidence that Nietzsche would endorse the mere potential to achieve worthy goals as a genuine instance of greatness, for the suggestion appears to be that 'genius' or the capacity for achievement may be possessed by many, but luck sees to it that only few ever realize it.

But this strategy would fail to take into consideration the distinction between significant talent and 'nobility' that I presented earlier. The above passage suggests that there is something admirable in the genius who lacks the means of achieving his goals, namely his *talent*, but it is not clear that Nietzsche associates him with *greatness* as understood in his frequent examples: Shakespeare, Beethoven, Cesare Borgia, and so forth. Though these individuals all certainly exhibited an extraordinary talent and skill in their respective fields, Nietzsche does not venerate them purely in virtue of this property. As we saw above, one can be talented and lack good taste, or talented and lack noble character. Therefore, this passage does not necessarily support the thesis that Nietzsche endorses (a)-type cases (e.g. Alexander the Not-so-great) as great individuals.

There may in fact be reason for defending the opposing thesis: that Nietzsche holds that greatness is manifested by individuals who exercise certain qualities of character *and* by their *actual* worthy achievements. Nietzsche repeatedly expresses approval of the power of lasting influence and the leaving of one's mark in history through one's achievements. He speaks of the man who can "extend his will across great stretches of his life" (*WP*, §962; *KSA*, 1885, 34[96]) and who forms a part of a new "caste" who will rule Europe with "a long, terrible will of its own that would be able to cast its goals millennia hence" (*BGE*, §208), and "those artists of violence and organisers who build states" (*GM*, II, §18).

But does Nietzsche view the extent of one's achievements as at least part of what greatness *consists in*, or merely an *effect* of greatness? Let us again consider Nietzsche's paradigms of greatness: Napoleon, Shakespeare, Cesare Borgia, Julius Caesar, Beethoven, and so forth. All of these individuals achieved various ends that resonated throughout history, initiated significant cultural shifts, attracted disciples and imitators, and altered international borders. At times, Nietzsche appears to endorse the view that the value of individuals'

achievements is at least partly in virtue of these effects. This is suggested at the start of the fourth essay of *Untimely Meditations* when he writes: "For an event to possess greatness two things must come together: greatness of spirit in those who accomplish it and greatness of spirit in those who experience it" (*UM*, IV, §1). In other words, a virtuous persons' acts must influence others to at least *some* degree to count as truly great. This is perhaps most clearly stated when Nietzsche concludes that "the individual deed of a man great in himself lacks greatness if it is brief and without resonance or effect" (*UM*, IV, §1).[113]

On the contrary, it might be claimed in response that Nietzsche himself is a counterexample to this interpretation. On the one hand, by the time he wrote *Ecce Homo* in 1888, Nietzsche had not attracted a significant readership, let alone had any extended 'effect on history'. But on the other hand, Nietzsche certainly regarded himself as great. This suggestion is that these two points imply that having an impact in the world is not a necessary condition of greatness. However, while Nietzsche's work did not have a profound impact during his active years, he undoubtedly *believed* that it *would* have a profound impact in the immediate future. For instance, he famously writes:

> I know my fate. One day there will be associated with my name the recollection of something frightful — of a crisis like no other before on earth, of the profoundest collision of conscience, of a decision evoked against everything that until then had been believed in, demanded, sacrificed. I am not a man I am dynamite. (*EH*, V, §1)

Of course, Nietzsche's work which had been completed by that time *did* go on to have far-reaching effects in the world. Nonetheless, if one holds that greatness is conditioned upon one's effects in the world, but those effects take place long after the achievements that causes them, one runs the risk of yielding strange results. We would have to say that even though Nietzsche completed his various books, he did not manifest greatness until they had a significant impact in history a number of years later. On this view, there is a 'waiting period' of sorts between an intrinsic feature of greatness (the achievement) and an apparent extrinsic feature of greatness (its impact), with one only qualifying as great when all of these

[113] I am inclined to agree with this interpretation of Nietzsche, yet it is worth noting that other passages may appear to suggest a change in his mind. See *BGE* §285.

conditions have been met. If one wants to avoid this position, a further distinction must be made with regard to one's actual achievements: that even when one's goals are realized, greatness is conditioned upon those achievements having a profound extent in the present, or at some point in the future.

However, there is an epistemological constraint regarding this qualification. It is often difficult to know whether one's achievements will at some point have far-reaching effects in the world. Many artists, philosophers, poets and playwrights were little appreciated in their time, yet turned out to be tremendously influential, sometimes hundreds of years down the line. Another question would be if this impact or recognition is required to persist, for it might be that one's achievements are celebrated in a particular time yet, for whatever reason, are forgotten entirely in years to come. Does one cease to be great in such cases? Moreover, presumably (and as *UM*, IV, §1 appears to suggest) Nietzsche must have in mind the recognition of great achievements by suitable people, and not merely 'the rabble'. That Beethoven's scores are enjoyed by similarly skilled contemporary composers and musicians is what counts, and not the recognition of those who lack "greatness of spirit" (*UM*, IV, §1).

Nietzsche does, at least in one place, explicitly recognise the relevance of temporality, and claims that great achievements are often not experienced or appreciated by the contemporary society or culture in which they take place. He writes:

> The greatest events and thoughts — but the greatest thoughts are the greatest events — are comprehended last: the generations which are their contemporaries do not *experience* such events — they live past them. What happens here is similar to what happens in the realm of the stars. The light of the furthest stars comes to men last; and before it has arrived man *denies* that there are — stars there. 'How many centuries does a spirit need to be comprehended?' — that too is a standard, with that too there is created an order of rank and etiquette such as is needed: for spirit and star (*BGE* §285)

This interesting passage may be in tension with *UM*, IV, §1 that I drew upon earlier, in the sense that it does not claim that events are only great once they have *been* recognised. Rather, it refers to great events *prior to* recognition. If events, or achievements, can be considered great prior to any appreciation of them, then it may be that Nietzsche considers 'effects in

history' of these events later down the line as consequences of greatness rather than conditions. This *may* indicate a change in Nietzsche's mind on the issue at some point between 1876 and 1886.

Huddleston is sympathetic to the view that greatness for Nietzsche is just as much a matter of this extrinsic features as it is of the intrinsic features described so far. He recognises that one may retain noble traits of character that contribute to greatness, and that one may have accomplished a number of worthy goals that Nietzsche typically associates with greatness, but, he writes: "being great also requires being recognized by others as having these features or having done these things that redound to greatness".[114]

On the one hand, it is clear that Nietzsche draws some relation between the greatness of individuals and the impact they have in human history. However, the textual evidence to suggest that Nietzsche considers it a *necessary* condition of greatness is thin. The probable explanation is that Nietzsche did not have a worked out 'theory' of greatness to that extent. For this reason, I do not endorse, but remain open to, the status of this particular extrinsic property as a necessary condition of greatness.[115]

Nevertheless, it is important to emphasise that Nietzsche certainly cannot be committed to the claim that the extent of one's achievements is a *sufficient* condition for greatness, only that it can be at best a *necessary* condition. The reason for this is that Nietzsche of course recognises that the slave revolt in values had widespread effects on human civilisation. Yet, while he acknowledges their cunning [*List*], he does not think its instigators great, nor the aims of the revolt anything to be celebrated. One particular example is Paul the Apostle, who, although he had a tremendous impact upon the world in Nietzsche's view, is referred to as a "hate-obsessed false coiner" and "dysangelist" (*A*, §42) that is characterized by "rabbinical insolence" (*A*, §41). On the other hand, compare this to Nietzsche's view of Napoleon. His achievements certainly had far reaching implications in history, but with him "the ideal of the ancients itself emerged in flesh and blood and with unheard-of splendour" (*GM*, I, §16).

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[114] Huddleston, (2012), p. 42.

[115] Another I consider in the next chapter is that of rarity value.

Nietzsche refers to him as the "incarnation" of "the noble ideal as such" (*GM*, I, §16).[116] Consequently, the value of the extent of an achievement is conditional, at least partly, upon the achiever having a noble character, and the content of the goal.

3. The Compound View

We have so far seen that the *Pure Character View* and the *Pure Achievement View* are both insufficient for what Nietzsche understands greatness to consist in. The implication then, is that a compound view, where both character traits *and* achievements must be necessary components of greatness, is appropriate. The five potential interpretations of Nietzsche's position on the table up to this point are:

> (1) Greatness solely resides in individuals; such individuals are great solely in virtue of exercising certain qualities of character, irrespective of the content of the goals they pursue (the *Pure Character View*).
>
> (2) Greatness solely resides in excellent achievements; individuals who achieve these are mere channels of greatness, not themselves great (the *Pure Achievement View)*.
>
> (3) Greatness resides in individuals who exercise certain qualities of character *and* have the *capacity* for worthy achievements.
>
> (4) Greatness is manifested by individuals who exercise certain qualities of character *and* by their *actual* worthy achievements.

[116] It is worth noting that it could be said Nietzsche's view of Napoleon is at times ambiguous. For example, in the same passage, Nietzsche refers to him as a "synthesis of the *inhuman* and the *superhuman*..." (*GM*, I, §16). This may indicate an understanding of Napoleon as a noble individual whom nonetheless directs his activities towards goals which Nietzsche finds appalling, or, at the very least, unworthy of admiration. I am unsure as to whether this passage can support such a claim on its own.

(5) Greatness is manifested by individuals who exercise certain qualities of character *and* by their *actual* worthy achievements, which must have a significant impact in the world.

I have argued that (1) and (2) are implausible as readings of Nietzsche. I have also argued that Nietzsche likely rejects (3) in favour of (4), which I accept as the most plausible reading.[117] I reserve from commitment to (5) on the grounds of a lack of consistent textual support, but leave the possibility for a defence of the view open. Since the purpose of my thesis is to explore the value that suffering experienced in the pursuit of one's goal has in relation to greatness, it is only necessary that I show Nietzsche to accept that greatness resides *at least partly* in achievement.

It might be said that the view that greatness is a matter of both character *and* achievement is uncontroversial, for perhaps it is implausible to suppose that one's character can be assessed independently of expression of it through one's actions or deeds.[118] For how could one provide evidence of one's character without observing their actions deeds? However, there are two points to be made in response.

Firstly, this chapter has investigated Nietzsche's evaluative position. If it is true that one cannot comprehend character without its manifestation in achievement, the question still remains whether individuals are great *purely in virtue of* their character, or if their substantive achievements have independent value. In other words, it would remain open whether, on Nietzsche's view, character traits or achievements are merely *enabling conditions* for greatness (X enables Y, which has value) or *contributors* to greatness (X contributes value to Y). I have argued for the latter here.

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[117] Though, my project is compatible with those inclined to defend (2).

[118] This claim might be made by defenders of interpretations of Nietzsche as an 'expressivist' about agency, according to which (very generally), what an agent is simply *is* (or is revealed by) what he or she does. In other words, one's deeds are inexplicably linked to, or 'express', one's character. Proponents of this view include Robert Pippin, "Lightning and Flash, Agent and Deed" in *Critical Essays on Nietzsche's On the Genealogy of Morals*, ed. Christina Davis Acampora, (Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), pp. 131-146; David Owen, *Nietzsche's Genealogy of Morality*, (Acumen Press, 2007); Aaron Ridley, "Nietzsche's Intention: What the Sovereign Individual Promises" in *Nietzsche, Self and Agency*, eds. Ken Gemes and Simon May, (OUP, 2008).

Secondly, my interest is in a *particular kind* of action or deed: those worthy of admiration, or what are appropriately designated as 'achievements'. As I have argued in section 1, many character traits Nietzsche values can be expressed through actions or deeds which he would *not* count as worthy achievements. This indicates that Nietzsche considers the two as conceptually distinct. Consequently, my conclusion that Nietzsche regards individuals as great in virtue of both is not undermined.

However, there are two important additional features of greatness that I have not mentioned so far. The reason I have delayed discussion of them until now is that they are contentious for any of the five interpretations outlined above. Firstly, I have assumed up to this point that greatness is a threshold notion: either one is great or one is not (with perhaps some borderline cases). On this view, there is a dividing line regarding the degree to which one satisfies the conditions of achievement and character, beyond which one counts as great and within one counts as not great. But even so, the properties of greatness that I have argued Nietzsche identifies admit of degree. For instance, some may have a greater degree of organic unity among their drives, or satisfy their will to power more than others that count as 'great'. Moreover, some may have further reaching achievements. As result, it seems some can in principle be greater than others, or as Janaway puts it, greatness "is not an all-or-nothing affair".[119]

A second point to consider is that it is plausible that individuals can potentially lose the property of greatness over time: that one could cease to count as great in Nietzsche's view. Nietzsche suggests one possible route to this in his account of human drives, which as we saw in section 1 he understands to be necessary for greatness when diverse yet strong and unified. Nietzsche writes in *Daybreak* that drives can "wither away like a plant without rain" (*D*, §119; *BGE*, §274) if they are not regularly nourished. For example, after a certain time without satisfying a creative drive to paint, that drive in an artist may well "grow faint" (*D*, §119).

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[119] Janaway, (2012), p. 191.

Janaway suggests that this passage from *Daybreak* is evidence that Nietzsche believes a drive can disappear from the agent completely (though not necessarily wilfully).[120] An alternative view, suggested by Katsafanas, is that a drive can never completely leave an agent, rather its affect upon them can just be depleted to a degree to which it no longer influences them.[121] Whether Janaway's stronger claim or Katsafanas' weaker claim is more plausible is an interesting question, but it is not directly relevant for my purposes here. Either view can recognise that greatness requires strong, diverse and unified drives. The relevant point being that if Nietzsche holds both:

(1) Greatness necessarily requires drives be strong, diverse and unified.
(2) Drives can fade over time to the extent that they don't influence an agent.

Then in principle:

(C) One can have the property of greatness at one time *t* and not at another *u*.

One example that captures this line of thought is that of the character Robert Baratheon from the fantasy epic *A Song of Ice and Fire*. At one point, Robert was considered a renowned and fearsome warrior. He had diverse but strong tastes in feasting, romance, in matters of war, and took pleasure in challenges. However, after winning the crown and having no more enemies to battle, Robert became complacent and immersed himself in drink and excessive feasting. As a result, he gained a large amount of weight, and his appetite for contest and achievement diminished. In Nietzschean terms, at least some of Robert's drives diminished in strength while a small number of others began to dominate unchecked and disjointed.

Nietzsche makes another important claim which may lend support to this idea of one's having the property of greatness at one time and not another. In §273 of *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche explicitly distinguishes between the disposition towards others of a person *striving for* greatness, and one *already* great. Regarding the former, he writes that "a human

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[120] Janaway, (2012), p. 190.

[121] Katsafanas, *The Nietzschean Self: Moral Psychology, Agency, and the Unconscious*, (Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 100.

being who strives for something great considers everyone he meets on his way either as a means or as a delay or obstacle — or as a temporary resting place" (*BGE*, §273; cf. *UM*, III, §6). In contrast, he continues: "The lofty *goodness* towards his fellow men which is proper to him becomes possible only when he has reached his height and he rules" (*BGE*, §273). The idea here being that a great individual, one who has complete control and an abundance of power to reach his ends, has no need for treating others instrumentally or perhaps callously. Rather, he is generous and courteous on account of his lack of dependence on anyone. As Nietzsche writes later in *The Antichrist*: "when an exceptional human being handles the mediocre more gently than he does himself or his equals, this is not mere politeness of the heart — it is simply his *duty*..." (*A*, §57).[122]

In making this distinction between the need for cold determination in *striving* for greatness, and the kindness and graciousness of the *already* great individual, Nietzsche emphasises a feature of the *developmental* dimension of greatness. This dimension is additionally relevant to Nietzsche's drawing of attention to the importance of luck (discussed above) as a significant condition for the cultivation of great individuals. If "fortunate circumstances" (*HH*, §164) can lead to the emergence and development of a great individual in realizing their potential excellence, then it seems perfectly plausible to allow for the opposite to occur: that a stroke of bad luck or misfortune could, in some cases at least, deprive a person of the property of greatness at a later point in their life. With these distinct types of cases in mind, we can perceive more sharply Nietzsche's understanding of the contingency of possessing greatness as a property.

[122] In a note one year earlier, Nietzsche appears to perhaps suggest a different view. The *already* "great man", he writes, wants "no 'sympathetic' heart, but servants, tools; in his intercourse with men he is always intent on *making* something out of them" (*WP*, §962; *KSA*, 1885, 34[96]). Leiter (2002, p. 117) quotes this passage, and from only the first half of *BGE*, §273, to support the view that treating others instrumentally is a necessary character trait of the great individual. As I discuss above, the second half of *BGE*, §273 importantly casts doubt on whether the isolated notebook entry can serve the purpose Leiter intends. Nonetheless it is of interest that Nietzsche may have altered his view.

Conclusion

This chapter has not sought to discuss every controversy surrounding the concept of greatness, but it has (I hope) provided clarity on at least three ambiguities and assumptions regarding its criteria. Firstly, and most central to this chapter, I distinguished extraordinary talent, exquisite taste, vast achievement, and noble character traits, and considered their relevance to greatness, resulting in a Nietzschean understanding of the concept as extremely exclusive, hence his emphasis on the rare and exceptional. Secondly, I raised the question of whether greatness is a matter of actually instantiating these properties, or merely having the potential to achieve them. I concluded by suggesting that greatness is a matter for actually having these properties. Thirdly, I considered whether Nietzsche considers extrinsic conditions, such as reception of works or effects in history, as necessary for greatness. This question is significant, yet it has received relatively little direct attention in the secondary literature. I have suggested that these conditions do, at least at one stage of Nietzsche's thought, seem to make some difference. Ultimately however, I remain open on this important issue given the lack of consistent and substantial textual support.

Chapter Three:

Values & Valuation

Now that we have an understanding of (a) what Nietzsche understands greatness to *consist in*, in this section I shall discuss (b) what *type of value* Nietzsche thinks it bears. I argue that Nietzsche takes greatness to be valuable 'for its own sake', but that this should be distinguished from 'intrinsic' value. I distinguish the two concepts by drawing upon contemporary debates in axiology regarding notions of intrinsic and extrinsic value. I use this as a platform to then discuss different forms of the latter in order to expand the philosophical resources needed to fully explain Nietzschean conceptions of value. Finally, I explore the notion of value more generally, and Nietzsche's understanding of it, with a conceptual analysis.

1. The Value of Greatness

At the beginning of the previous chapter I claimed it to be uncontroversial that Nietzsche believes human greatness to be an appropriately valuable goal, at least for certain types of people. We are now in a position to explicate this claim: what does the "highest splendour possible to the type man" (*GM*, preface: 6) amount to? Nietzsche consistently draws a sharp distinction between the value of great individuals' lives and the value of the lives of the majority, or 'the herd'. He makes no secret of his strident elitism:

> How can your life, the individual life, receive the highest value, the deepest significance? How can it be least squandered? Certainly only by your living for the good of the rarest and most valuable exemplars, and not for the good of the majority, that is to say those who, taken individually, are the least valuable exemplars (*UM*, III, §6)

This famous passage makes a number of independent points, but the claim relevant to my investigation is the contrast Nietzsche clearly draws between the "most valuable

exemplars"—i.e. great individuals—and the "least valuable exemplars"—i.e. the common herd.[123] Nietzsche draws this contrast again in his later works:

> The well-being of the majority and the well-being of the few are opposite viewpoints of value: to consider the former *a priori* of higher value may be left to the naiveté of English biologists" (*GM* I, §17)

> *Basic error*: to place the goal in the herd and not in single individuals! The herd is a means, no more! (*WP*, §766; *KSA*, 1886, 5[108])

It is clear that the "single individuals" and the "few" being referred to in these passages are the types of figures of greatness discussed in the previous chapter. Nietzsche frequently describes these great individuals in terms of their being "rare" [*selten*] and an "exception" [*Ausnahme*] (e.g. *UM*, III, §6; *GS*, §3, §55; *BGE* , §43, §62; *GM*, III, §14, and *passim*), while he reserves the pejoratives: "herd" [*Heerde*]; "common" [*gemeinsam*]; "mediocre" [*mittelmässig*], for the contrasting majority: the "rabble" [*Pöbel*].[124] Nietzsche clearly values greatness, but to what extent?

1.1. Greatness as Having 'Intrinsic Value'

One traditional view, defended by Leiter, is that Nietzsche conceives of human greatness to have what he calls 'intrinsic value': "what seems to have intrinsic value for Nietzsche is human excellence or human greatness".[125] There are two issues to flag here. Firstly, Leiter's claim can be read in different ways that have varying strength:

> (1) Human greatness is the *only* thing with intrinsic value; everything else is merely a means to this end.

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[123] It is significant that Nietzsche claims that the least valuable are only so "taken individually", for the implication is that *collectively* the herd has some important value in virtue of its role as part of Nietzsche's conception of culture [*Kultur / Cultur*]. I will not have time to address this important theme here, but an excellent discussion of the importance of the herd and its relation to great individuals can be found in Huddleston, (2012), esp. Ch. 1-3; (2014).

[124] I discuss the significance of rarity later in this chapter: specifically, whether Nietzsche at least partly values great individuals *in virtue of* their rarity, or only as an *indicator* of these individuals instantiating other valuable features.

[125] Leiter, (2002), p. 128.

(2) Human greatness is one intrinsic value among others.

It is unclear whether Leiter is committed to the much stronger claim (1), but given the aims of this thesis, I only have to commit to interpreting Nietzsche to defend the weaker claim (2). The second issue, and more significant for my purposes here, is that there are radically different conceptions of 'intrinsic value' employed by philosophers. It is crucial (as will become apparent) to be clear about what precisely is being referred to if Nietzsche's claims about value are to be properly understood.

In a footnote, Leiter presents what he means by 'intrinsic value' in the following way:

> What has *intrinsic* value has value in-itself; what has *extrinsic* value has value only as a means to something else (e.g. something with intrinsic value).[126]

There are three potential problems with Leiter's claim:

> (1) What has value "in-itself" is vague and needs clarification. This point is particularly pertinent given Nietzsche's complex terminology regarding the types of value he rejects.
> (2) Contrasting what has value "in-itself" (properly understood) with what has value "as a means" involves a category mistake. Strictly, these terms apply to different concepts.
> (3) That *extrinsic* value should be understood as that which has value "only as a means" is deeply problematic, for there are numerous forms of extrinsic value.

The truth of point (3) is crucial for my thesis. This is because I am investigating which types of value Nietzsche can be said to attribute suffering. If it turns out there is only intrinsic value and instrumental value, the project involves little controversy. Points (1) and (2) are likely issues of terminology rather than conceptual disagreement. However, in attempting to draw upon contemporary debates in value theory in order to clarify Nietzsche's position, it is

[126] Leiter, (2002), p. 129.

important to spend some time distinguishing these concepts to avoid confusion. I shall address each point consecutively in an attempt to elucidate what Leiter means by 'intrinsic value', and if this concept is appropriately attributed to Nietzsche's understanding of the value of human greatness.

The traditional account of intrinsic value is associated with G.E. Moore. It can be captured in two claims. Firstly, Moore claims that something's intrinsic value can depend only on its intrinsic properties:

> ...the question whether a thing possesses it, and in what degree it possesses it, depends solely on the intrinsic nature of the thing in question.[127]

A common example of an intrinsic (or 'non-relational') property would be the property of being square. This is a property which something possess 'in-itself', absent of any conditions or contexts. On the contrary, an example of an extrinsic (or 'relational') property would be the property of being feared; the thing possessing the property relies on something outside itself to derive it from (in this case, the attitudes of others).

From his first claim, Moore assumed a second claim to follow: that intrinsic value cannot be affected by changes in context, its value must be the same wherever it appears, as long as its bearer's intrinsic properties remain constant. In other words, what has intrinsic value has essential or unconditional value, according to Moore. He writes:

> it is impossible for what is strictly one and the same thing to possess that kind of value at one time, or in one set of circumstances, and not to possess it at another; and equally impossible for it to possess it in one degree at one time, or in one set of circumstances, and to possess it in a different degree at another, or in a different set.[128]

Nietzsche explicitly rejects both of these claims as indicative of what he pejoratively calls "metaphysical value" (*GM*, III, §24) and a "typical prejudice by which the metaphysicians of

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[127] G.E. Moore, "The Conception of Intrinsic Value" in his *Philosophical Studies*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1922) p. 260.

[128] Moore, (1922), pp. 260-261.

all ages can be recognised" (*BGE*, §2). I shall not review all of his arguments here, but Nietzsche repeatedly repudiates the first claim that Moore later endorsed: that intrinsic value is wholly dependent on a thing's intrinsic properties. For instance, in two passages from the 1880's, Nietzsche makes this rejection explicit:

> There is nothing good, nothing beautiful, nothing sublime, nothing evil in itself, but that there are states of soul in which we impose such words upon things external to and within us (*D*, §210)

> Whatever has value in our world does not have value in itself, according to its nature—nature is always value-less:—but has been *given* value at some time...(*GS*, §301)

Further evidence of Nietzsche's rejection of this claim can be found in the Part One of *Beyond Good and Evil*, where he specifically attacks this very idea that:

> ...the things of the highest value must have another origin *of their own* — they cannot be derivable from this transitory, seductive, deceptive, mean little world... (*BGE*, §2)

Nietzsche attributes a form of this view to Plato, among others, and claims that "the worst, the most wearisomely protracted and most dangerous of all errors" is "Plato's invention of pure spirit and the good in itself" (*BGE*, Preface).

It is worth noting that in two later works, Nietzsche makes claims that may appear to be in tension with this interpretation. He uses the term 'natural value' [*Natur-Werth*], which appears in *Twilight of the Idols*: "*The natural value of egoism*" (*TI*, 'Skirmishes', §33), as well as in two sections of *The Antichrist*:

> On a soil *falsified* in this way, where all nature, all natural value, all *reality*, had the profoundest instincts of the ruling class against it, there arose *Christianity* (*A*, §27)

> *All* the concepts of the church are recognised for what they are: the most malicious false-coinage there is for the purpose of *disvaluing* nature and natural values. (*A*, §38)

Nietzsche here is attacking Christianity on the grounds that it not only undermines an affirmation of this world—the only reality—by postulating an imaginary and non-natural realm, but it is *hostile* to life: "the priest disvalues, *dissanctifies* nature: it is only at the price of this that he exists at all" (*A*, §26). But it is ambiguous what Nietzsche means by *Natur-Werth* in these passages.

Tamsin Shaw, in light of Nietzsche's claims about "natural value", argues that "the primary objects of value for Nietzsche...seem to be held to be valuable in themselves".[129] To support this claim, she points to the same passage, in which Nietzsche later states that in the Christian worldview: "everything valuable *in itself*, becomes utterly valueless, *inimical* to value" (*A*, §26). This phrase—"*was seinen Werth in sich hat*"—certainly appears to be in tension with Nietzsche's apparent earlier rejection of it in the passages above. Shaw translates the phrase as "intrinsically valuable", which would amplify the tension and undermine my interpretation.

There are two ways one might reconcile Nietzsche's seemingly contradictory claims. The first option is to concede that Nietzsche in fact changes his mind about the status of value: that from *Twilight of the Idols* onwards, he holds that there are things which are valuable 'in themselves', or due to their intrinsic properties, and these are 'natural values'. A second option would be to claim that Nietzsche must mean something else by 'natural value', and that §26 of *The Antichrist* is not representative of the view Shaw appears to attribute to him.

Several reasons exist in favour of the latter move. Firstly, if Nietzsche did change his mind on this issue, and understood 'natural values' to be things which are valuable in virtue of their intrinsic properties, then it would be a *very* radical change given his repeated earlier claims that "nature is always value-less" (*GS*, §301; cf. *D*, §38; §210). With this in mind, one would expect Nietzsche to dedicate significant attention to the claim. However, Shaw draws upon very few passages to defend her interpretation. A further reason to push against the reading of Nietzsche Shaw appears to defend is that passages from the *Nachlass* which Nietzsche wrote down in 1888—the same year as *The Antichrist* and *Twilight of the Idols*—suggest that he never gave up on his rejection of intrinsic value. For instance, he notes that the Sophists "postulated the first truth" that instances of a "good-in-itself do not exist" (*WP*, §428; *KSA*, 1888, 14[115]).

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[129] Tamsin Shaw, *Nietzsche's Political Scepticism*, (Princeton University Press, 2010), p. 122.

For these reasons, 'natural value' cannot plausibly be taken to support an interpretation of Nietzsche in which he regards something's intrinsic value to be wholly dependent upon its intrinsic properties. As a result, Nietzsche must be using the phrase 'natural value' in a different way to that which Shaw proposes. I will not have time to discuss what this may be here,[130] but it is sufficient for my purposes merely to distance it from the Moorean conception of intrinsic value under consideration.

Nietzsche also rejects the second component of the Moorean conception of intrinsic value: that what has intrinsic value is valuable *unconditionally*. The value of X is unconditional where it does not depend on the context in which X occurs. For example, one might suppose, contra Kant,[131] that happiness's being good for me does not depend on the value of its object or the context in which it occurs.[132]

Nietzsche expresses his rejection of this view—"the worst of tastes, the taste for the unconditional" (*BGE*, §31)—explicitly in *Beyond Good and Evil*. He claims that "happy distrust, pleasure in mockery are signs of health: everything unconditional belongs in pathology" (*BGE*, §154). Nietzsche here appears to be presenting deliberately provocative examples of states in which something may have negative value in one context but is of positive value in another. 'Pleasure-in-mockery' is cited, explicitly as an example opposed to

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[130] I suggest that the term is plausibly interpreted in light of a particular criticism of Christian morality that Nietzsche repeatedly makes: that it is 'anti-natural' or 'anti-nature' [*Widernatur*]. This particular term, *Widernatur*, first appears in 1887 in the first essay of *On the Genealogy of Morals*, and occurs more than thirty times afterwards. Nietzsche suggests that, in some way, Christian morality is hostile to what is natural, and he objects to it precisely on these grounds: "it is the lack of nature, it is the utterly ghastly fact that *anti-nature* itself has received the highest honours as morality" (*EH*, XIV, §7; cf. *GM*, II, §22). This is not to say that Nietzsche endorses the claim that 'everything that is natural is valuable', but rather that 'whatever is valuable is natural'. *Natur-Werth*, I claim, is best understood as a rejection of the 'other-worldly'.

[131] Kant famously used happiness as an example of a *conditional* value: happiness is only good when it is deserved - it is conditional upon virtue. See Immanuel Kant, *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*, (Prometheus Books, 1988), Section One.

[132] Both Ridley and Leiter identify another form of what they call 'unconditional value' which Nietzsche rejects: what is "valuable no matter what". This includes: (1) if a value cannot be trumped any other; (2) it is not dependent on contingent facts; (3) it is not dependent on their being valuing beings. See Aaron Ridley, "Nietzsche and the Re-Evaluation of Values", *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 105, (2005), p. 157; Leiter, (2002), p. 129. Here I am only concerned with the sense of unconditional that denotes an insensitivity to context and relational features.

the concept of unconditional value. It suggests mockery, something traditionally understood as bad, might for Nietzsche and his audience become good *in some contexts*.

Nietzsche more directly addresses the issue in section two of the same work:

> It might even be possible that *what* constitutes the value of those good and honoured things resides precisely in their being artfully related, knotted and crocheted to these wicked, apparently antithetical things, perhaps even in their being essentially identical with them (*BGE*, §2)

This passage is telling. Firstly, the value of good states of affairs or objects is suggested by Nietzsche to be constituted by their relation to "*apparently* antithetical" (emphasis mine) other states of affairs or objects. Here, Nietzsche is claiming that negative values are only 'apparently' negative in that when they enter relations with certain other values, they gain value and hence, are no longer negative. He then suggests that negative values are perhaps "essentially identical" with positive values, further distancing his theory of value from the Moorean conception in which intrinsic value does not vary depending on circumstance.

So if Nietzsche rejects the traditional conception of intrinsic value, he must have something else in mind when he refers to human greatness as the "highest value". To be clear, I do not suggest that Leiter attributes something like the Moorean conception of intrinsic value to Nietzsche, rather that his terminology is potentially confusing given Nietzsche's own imprecise axiological framework. By referring to 'intrinsic' and 'extrinsic' value, Leiter runs the risk of appearing to conflate the *grounding* of value with *how* things are *valued*. That is to say, it confuses the intrinsic/extrinsic distinction with the means/end distinction.

The need to identify this conceptual difference has been famously emphasised by Christine Korsgaard in her influential 1983 paper "Two Distinctions in Goodness". In this paper, she calls attention to the inadequacy of the traditional contrast between intrinsic value and instrumental value. She presents the issue in the following way:

> One is the distinction made between things valued for their sakes and things valued for the sake of something else — between ends and means, or final and instrumental goods. The other is the distinction between things which have their value in themselves and things which derive their value from some other source: intrinsically good things versus extrinsically good

> things. Intrinsic and instrumental good should not be treated as correlatives, because they belong to two different distinctions.[133]

The proposal is that there is a distinction to do with (1) "things which *have their value*" in some way on the one hand; and a distinction to do with (2) "things *valued*" in some way on the other. While (1) concerns the grounding of something's value by focusing on its properties, (2) concerns the way we value things. Korsgaard's suggestion then, is that the term 'intrinsic value' is used appropriately only when it refers to the value something has on account of (or when it 'supervenes on') its intrinsic or non-relational properties, whereas something 'valuable for its own sake' is appropriate to describe the way we value something as an end, or its *final value*.

To disentangle the terminology clearly, Korsgaard's suggestion is the following:

Ways things have value:	Intrinsic value = the value a thing has in itself (in virtue of its intrinsic properties).
	Extrinsic value = the value a thing has derivatively (in virtue of its relational properties).
Ways we value things:	Final value = for the things own sake (as an end).
	Instrumental value = for the sake of something else (e.g. as a means).[134]

On the Moorean conception of intrinsic value, all final values are intrinsic. In other words, that to value something for its own sake or as an end is simply to value it for its intrinsic or non-relational properties. However, Korsgaard's insistence on this distinction between intrinsic value and final value puts this traditional view under scrutiny. If we separate out these two distinctions — intrinsic vs. extrinsic and ends vs. means — we open up the possibility of things holding final value at least partly on extrinsic grounds.

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[133] Christine Korsgaard, "Two Distinctions in Goodness" in *Philosophical Review*, 92 (1983): p. 170.

[134] The phrase 'valuable for the sake of something else' is confusing. As I will argue shortly, there are more ways than just instrumentally in which something can be appropriately described as this.

This position has recently found increasing support, notably from Shelly Kagan,[135] Toni Rønnow-Rasmussen,[136] Jonathan Dancy,[137] and John O'Neil,[138] all of whom defend the following claim in one way or another:

(C) There are final values that are not intrinsic.

These philosophers defend (C) at least partly because they are prepared to acknowledge more forms of extrinsic value than just the instrumental. In supporting this view, I will now discuss my objection to Leiter's claim that "what has *extrinsic* value has value only as a means to something else...".[139] In doing so, we will gain a clearer understanding of the distinction between intrinsic and final value. Furthermore, we will have more apparatus available to us to interpret Nietzsche's claims about the value of human greatness, and in turn the value suffering can bear in relation to it.

1.2. Non-Instrumental Extrinsic Value

Leiter's claim is problematic. Earlier, I defined extrinsic value as the value something has in virtue of its relational properties, or that when something has extrinsic value, its value is derivative of something else—something either with intrinsic value, or that will itself be further related to intrinsic value. For example, money might be valuable because it enables one to buy a boat. A boat may be valuable because it allows one to travel. Travelling may bring one pleasure. Assuming for the sake of argument that pleasure is intrinsically valuable,

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[135] Shelly Kagan, "The Limits of Well-being", in *The Good Life and the Human Good*, eds. Ellen Frankel Paul, Fred D. Miller, Jr., and Jeffrey Paul, (Cambridge University Press: 1992): p. 184; see also "Rethinking Intrinsic Value" in *The Journal of Ethics*, Vol. 2, No. 4, (1998).

[136] Toni Rønnow-Rasmussen and Wlodek Rabinowicz, "A Distinction in Value: Intrinsic and For Its Own Sake" in *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Vol. 100 (1), (1999): pp. 33-49.

[137] Jonathan Dancy, "Are There Organic Unities?", *Ethics*, Vol. 113, No. 3, (2003), pp. 629-650.

[138] John O'Neil, "The Varieties of Intrinsic Value" in *The Monist*, (1992): p. 124.

[139] Leiter, (2002), p. 129.

then both money and the boat, in this case, have extrinsic value because they are related (at least in part) to pleasure in a certain way.

But the question arises: what *sort* of relation must obtain between a certain thing, *X*, and another, *Y,* if *X* is to be said to be good derivatively of *Y?* The relation which has traditionally attracted the most attention from philosophers is the causal or means-end relation. One school of thought, call them instrumentalists, identifies the means-end relation as the *only* relation, thereby equating extrinsic value with instrumental value, as Leiter appears to do. William Frankena is but one who adopted this view:

> One may also say that something is good on the ground that it is a *means*, necessary, sufficient, or both, to a good end, as when one says, 'It is a good idea to go to the dentist twice a year.' Then it is *extrinsically* or *instrumentally* good, or good as a *means.*[140]

However, assuming the instrumental relation to be the only extrinsic relation would be a mistake. There seem to be strong grounds for acknowledging a number of other ways something might be valuable based on its relational properties, ways which are not in virtue of an instrumental capacity (though they may also retain this capacity). I shall now consider a selection of types of extrinsic value which have received some attention in the literature.

A. Symbolic Value

One possible form of non-instrumental extrinsic value is symbolic value, according to which something might be called good because of what it signifies. Symbolic value has most recently been defended as a distinct form of extrinsic value by Rae Langton,[141] Jonathan

[140] William Frankena, *Ethics*, (Prentice-Hall Incorporated: 1963), p. 65.

[141] Rae Langton, "Objective and Unconditional Value" in *Philosophical Review*, 116 (2), 2007, p. 163.

Dancy,[142] Ben Bradley,[143] and Fred Feldman.[144] The idea in its simplest form can be expressed in the following way.

Suppose a person values *X*, not for its own sake, but for the sake of something else. So *X* is valuable because it is in some way related to something of final value, *Y*. But *X* might not have anything to do with the effect of bringing about *Y*. Rather, this person values *X* because it serves as an indication, or is symbolic, of *Y*. If this formulation is correct, *X* has symbolic value.

Langton gives the example of a wedding ring to illustrate this model. She writes:

> If Rudolph values his wedding ring for the sake of its association with his marriage, he values his wedding ring "for the sake of something else", but he does not value it as a means or instrument.[145]

The idea is that, ordinarily, wedding rings do not act as a means to the marriage (though we could possibly imagine cases where they might), rather they are valuable at least partly as a representation of something taken to be valuable for its own sake: a type of personal relationship. Yet, being symbolic of something is still clearly a relational property. So Langton concludes that

> Rudolph values his ring neither instrumentally, nor as an end; but he does value it extrinsically, for the sake of its association with his marriage.[146]

Here is another example that is more relevant to the focus of this thesis. Athletes often compete in tournaments and competitions in order to achieve various goals. The attainment of some of these goals often result in the awarding of a trophy or medal of some kind to mark their achievement. For instance, when Mike Tyson won the world heavyweight title in Boxing, he was awarded the title belt. Similarly, when martial artists progress to a more

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[142] Jonathan Dancy, "Was Moore Right About Punishment?" in Susana Nuccetelli and Gary Seay, *Themes from G. E. Moore: New Essays in Epistemology and Ethics*, (Oxford University Press, 2007).

[143] Ben Bradley, "Extrinsic Value" in *Philosophical Studies*, Vol. 91, No. 2, (1998), p. 118.

[144] Fred Feldman, *Doing the Best We Can: An Essay in Informal Deontic Logic*, (D. Reidel Publishing Co.: 1986) p. 26.

[145] Langton, (2007), p. 163.

[146] Langton, (2007), p. 163.

advanced level, they are awarded a colour belt corresponding to their rank of skill. Let us suppose for the moment that achievement is valuable for its own sake. In the case of athletes like Mike Tyson or martial arts experts, we might say their trophy belts have symbolic value in virtue of representing their achievements.

Instrumentalists may object that the supposed symbolic value in the examples given is really just instrumental value in disguise. In other words, one might object on the grounds that in the case of wedding ring and the trophy, their supposed symbolic value can be reduced to the value they possess instrumentally.

This counter argument runs in the following way. The wedding ring may symbolise Rudolph's marriage, but we can then ask: why is that valuable? It is valuable, instrumentalists will say, because in reminding the ring bearer of that time, this may be a means to pleasure or some other positive experience. Similarly in the case of the trophy, instrumentalists might say it is valuable because it is a means to some positive cognitive experience (e.g. pleasure or pride): it reminds him or her of their triumph, and is therefore instrumental. In this way, the wedding ring and the trophy both act as a means to something that could be taken to be of further value.

This objection, however, is unconvincing. Defenders of symbolic value as a distinct species of extrinsic value need not deny that in these examples the wedding ring and trophy have instrumental value. This is in fact uncontroversial. They only need argue that they *also* bear another kind of value as well, namely as a representation of something of further value. This point is well observed by Langton. Regarding the wedding ring, she writes:

> To be sure, the ring may have effects, it may remind him of a loved one, it may provoke unease when glimpsed in mid-flirtation, but he [Rudolph] does not value them for (or not *only* for) the sake of these useful effects.[147]

The reductionist strategy employed by the instrumentalist needs to ensure that everything extrinsically valuable about *X* is accounted for in instrumental terms. If the ring or trophy is not valuable purely in virtue of its beneficial psychological effects, or other possible

[147] Langton, 2007, p. 163.

instrumental benefits, then the reductionist strategy fails to fully explain why they are valued. Until the instrumentalist can do this, there seems to be grounds to argue for at least one type of extrinsic value which is not instrumental.

B. Sentimental Value

Another way something might be valuable due at least in part to its extrinsic properties may be in virtue of its personal significance. For example, jewellery, photographs, or even clothing, may have little or no value for their own sake, yet they may become so when they are family heirlooms or have been given as gifts by close friends. We might refer to this as *sentimental* value.

This form of value has received relatively little attention from moral philosophers, however Guy Fletcher has recently discussed the concept in detail, and gives the following account:

> something is sentimentally valuable if and only if the thing is valuable for its own sake in virtue of a subset of its relational properties, where the properties include any or all of having belonged to, having been given to or by, or having being used by, people or animals, within a relationship of family, friendship, or romantic love, or having been used or acquired during a significant experience.[148]

Take the example of a samurai sword. In Japan, it is still practised by some families who have retained them to hand down a samurai sword as a family heirloom. Of course, the sword has value in virtue of its instrumental capacities: it is good for cutting. However, this is not the only reason it is valued. It is also valuable to the family in virtue of a different sort of relational property: the fact that it was given to them by an ancestor. The sword would not have this value if it was simply found by someone on the street. Here, the sword is valuable for its own sake due at least partly to its sentimental properties.

The definition given above is not comprehensive, as Fletcher acknowledges, for two reasons: (1) it leaves out the question of why it is that the relational properties sometimes generate sentimental value and other times do not; (2) it also does not fully address the limits

[148] Guy Fletcher, "Sentimental Value" in *The Journal of Value Enquiry*, 43, (2009), p. 56.

of what can be a *bearer* of sentimental value. Fletcher allows that bearers of sentimental value include objects and places, but is also likely to include a wide range of other possibilities, such as pieces of music.[149] For the purposes of this chapter however, this will not matter a great deal. The issue at hand is whether this relational property is a genuine form of extrinsic value that is distinct from the instrumental.

Often the term 'sentimental' is used in a pejorative sense to mean something like 'excessively emotional', 'soppy' or perhaps 'corny'. It is important to note that this usage is entirely different from the one used in value theory, which instead refers to a particular kind of relation to something that involves emotion or sentiment. It could be that the pejorative sense of 'sentimental' results from something having sentimental value for someone. For example, the film *Spinal Tap* is a 'mockumentary' about an 80's heavy metal band. In one scene, the interviewer is asking the guitarist of the band, Nigel Tufnel, about the guitars in his various collection. They come to one guitar which Nigel describes as very special to him on an emotional level. The interviewer goes to pick up the guitar and Nigel gets extremely upset and irrational, decreeing that the guitar can't be touched, pointed at, or even looked at!

The point of this example is to show that something of genuine sentimental value might, and often does, lead to inappropriate 'sentimental' behaviour, but that these two uses of 'sentimental' are only contingently related. This part of the chapter solely focuses on sentimental value not taken in a pejorative sense.

The objection which was levelled at symbolic value may also be relevant to sentimental value. It might be that sentimental value can be reduced to instrumental value. When someone looks at a photograph of a loved one, it might be said that the photograph is valuable because it brings that person some form of happiness.[150] But one can respond in similar ways. I may value such a photo even though I don’t derive any pleasure from looking

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[149] Fletcher, (2009), p. 56.

[150] Incidentally, the case of the wedding ring might be better explained in terms of sentimental value rather than symbolic value. Yet, this would not harm my argument here, which is merely to identify at least one other form of non-instrumental extrinsic value.

at it. In fact, it may be rather painful for me to look at the picture, for example in the case of a deceased and sorely missed relative.

As with symbolic value, proponents of the view that sentimental value is a genuinely distinct form of extrinsic value need not deny that certain things that will bear it may *also* bear instrumental value as well. Fletcher addresses this issue by making the following claim:

> (C) the sentiments that are necessary for the generation of sentimental value need not co-exist with the value.[151]

Fletcher argues this to be true in two ways. First of all, it is true in a weak sense: sentimental value does not require the continued felt presence of particular conscious sentiments. When one gets into an argument with a family member and feels anger looking at an old photograph of them, it does not seem to be true that this photograph no longer has sentimental value. That person may continue to have a positive sentiment for their family member even while being angry with them.

But there is a stronger sense in which (C) is true according to Fletcher: that sentimental value can outlast the sentiments that generate it.[152] In other words, something may continue to have sentimental value even after the relationship from which its value arose ends. The family photograph, for example, may continue to have sentimental value even if the members of that family now feel indifferent, or perhaps hostile, toward each other.

This stronger claim that Fletcher makes is significant because it provides a response to the instrumentalist claim that things of supposed sentimental value can be reduced to instrumental value. If looking at the photo is not a means to *X* in any way but still retains sentimental value, as could plausibly be the case, then this particular instrumental argument fails.

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[151] Fletcher, (2009), p. 57.

[152] Fletcher, (2009), p. 57.

C. Rarity Value

A third possible form of non-instrumental value is rarity value. There are many kinds of things which at one time existed in abundance, but, for one reason or another, have now significantly decreased in number: 1956 Cadillac Eldorados; minted Roman coins from the time of Nero; Black Rhinos; and so forth. There are also many kinds of things which *emerge* as distinct in some respect: the latest piece of technology; exceptional athletes; an innovative novel; various collector items, and so forth. All of these are unique or rare in a sense, and it is a natural thought that each of them is plausibly more valuable in virtue of this property.

The proposition (so far) is that if *X* is or becomes rarer, then *X* tends to increase in value in virtue of this fact. Uniqueness or rarity is clearly a relational property: it depends upon the limited existence or non-existence of other things of the same kind. But the relation is not (obviously) instrumental. There are a variety of examples that aim to demonstrate the value this type of relational property can have. Dancy gives the example of a book which can become more valuable when the only other copy in existence is burned.[153] The value that is increased, Dancy argues, is neither intrinsic nor instrumental. This is because, firstly, the value is dependent on the fact that that it is now the only book of its kind to exist, which is quite clearly a relational property: it depends on the non-existence of similar books. Secondly, the value added is not necessarily a means to anything.[154]

Monroe Beardsley discusses the case of a rare stamp.[155] Many people collect and sell stamps, with some of the rarest stamps fetching vast sums of money. For example, the British

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[153] Dancy, (2003), p. 633.

[154] Rarity value is engaged with, explicitly and implicitly, in environmental ethics in at least two ways. Firstly, with respect to rare species that are either (1) near extinction; or (2) have unique capacities. For example, Black rhinos are a species which are currently classified as 'critically endangered' by the IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature). Black rhinos, and other species of similar status, have a property which leads various organisations and campaigns to attempt to protect them because they are thought to be valuable in an additional sense that is neither intrinsic nor instrumental. This may be at least partially explained in terms of the species' rarity. A second way rarity value is utilised in environmental ethics concerns human relationships to landscapes. John O'Neill has argued that a natural habitat or wilderness can be valuable for its own sake purely in virtue of the fact that it has not been visited by human beings. See O'Neill, (1992), p. 124.

[155] Monroe Beardsley, "Intrinsic Value", *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, 26, (1965), p. 1.

Guiana One Cent Magenta is one of nine in the world, and was auctioned for £6.4 million. This sum would likely be extremely less if there were hundreds of thousands of the stamp in existence. Here, the British Guiana is made more valuable (tracked in this case by its price) not because of its instrumental properties—it is in fact totally useless for posting these days—but because of its property of rareness.[156]

The issue of rarity value is particularly relevant to Nietzsche. One feature of Nietzsche's 'higher types' or great individuals appears to be that they are, in some capacity, rare; an exception [*Ausnahme*] amongst the majority. It would be difficult to overestimate the frequency with which this association pervades the texts. He repeatedly contrasts the "rarest and most valuable exemplars" (*UM*, III, §6) with the pejorative "herd" [*Heerde*]; the "common" [*gemeinsam*]; the "mediocre" [*mittelmässig*]; and the "rabble" [*Pöbel*]. To take just a few passages, Nietzsche claims in *The Gay Science*, for instance, that the "taste of the higher type is for exceptions (*GS*, §3). In *Beyond Good and Evil*, which as we saw in the previous chapter is incidentally where Nietzsche is most explicit about the content of human greatness, he writes plainly that "what can be common has ever but little value", but that "great things are for the great...and, in sum, rare things for the rare" (*BGE*, §43). Shortly after in the same work, Nietzsche claims that in contrast to the "surplus of failures, of the sick, the degenerate, the fragile" and so on, the "successful cases, among men too, are always the exception" (*BGE*, §62). The same sentiment is found in later works: "Great and fine things can never be common property: *pulchrum est paucorum hominum* [beauty is for the few]" (*TI*, 'What the Germans Lack', §5).

For these higher types, rarity will involve maintaining either or both of the following two facets: (a) instantiating distinctive features or distinctive combinations of features; or (b) instantiating particular features to a relatively high degree. We can distinguish at least two ways Nietzsche considers great individuals to do so.

The first way concerns the rarity of social dissent. In the last chapter I claimed that one necessary character trait for greatness is a person's aversion to traditions and established values: a "hostility towards those influences, habits, laws, institutions" that surround them

[156] Kagan gives the similar case of a rare classic car: its instrumental value may be significantly lacking, yet it might be tremendously valuable on account of its rarity. See Kagan (1992), p. 184.

(*UM*, III, §6). He claims that "the ability to contradict, the attainment of a good conscience when one feels hostile to what is accustomed, traditional, and hallowed — that is still more excellent and constitutes what is really great, new, and amazing in our culture" (*GS*, §297). Similarly, that "today the concept of greatness entails being noble, wanting to be by oneself, being able to be different" (*BGE*, §212). From a later note, Nietzsche again asks "What is noble?" and answers that "one knows how to make enemies everywhere... That one constantly contradicts the great majority not through words but through deeds" (*WP*, §944; *KSA*, 1888, 15[115]).[157] Great individuals instantiate this property to a distinctively high degree.

A second way great individuals can satisfy (a) is by achieving a tremendous and distinctive amount. Nietzsche mentions Beethoven, Goethe, Shakespeare, and so forth, at least partly because their achievements are particularly exceptional. We can translate this into the conceptual scheme of the will to power which I outlined in Chapter One: the feeling of power corresponds to the amount of resistance to the will that is overcome. The achievements of great individuals involved an exceptional amount of resistance: "One would have to seek the highest type of free man where the greatest resistance is constantly being overcome" (*TI*, 'Skirmishes', §38). Hence, one can be considered rare in virtue of exercising their will to power to a high degree.

One can also be considered rare in (b)-type cases. For Nietzsche, this concerns the relation between the two constituents of greatness I identified in the previous chapter: virtue and significant achievement. I argued that great individuals are those who satisfy *both* of these conditions and, as a result, are particularly exceptional human beings. Perhaps many people are high achievers, and many others have Nietzschean virtues, but having both of these properties, the thought goes, is especially distinctive.

However, in all of the cases I have discussed so far, it is ambiguous whether Nietzsche values exceptional individuals *in virtue of* their rarity (at least in part), or whether rarity is merely a consequence or *indicator* of (a) and/or (b). Remarkably little has been written about

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[157] These are but a few of the passages in which Nietzsche emphasises the value of digression from norms. For others, see: *D*, §297; *GS*, §55; *A*, §54; and particularly Nietzsche's attention to the 'free spirit' [*Freigeist*], who is at least in part defined by this trait: *HH*, Preface, §7; §225, *D*, §56; *GS*, §347; *BGE*, §44.

this issue. Ivan Soll, one of the few commentators who at least acknowledges it, claims in a footnote:

> [Nietzsche] sometimes seriously considers the idea that what is common in the sense of being widespread is for that reason alone less valuable than things that are rare, that rarity in itself not only is prized by us, but deserves to be. Nietzsche argues that what is common in the sense of common place may often be, and deserve to be, for that reason, considered the opposite of what is noble, exceptional, and valuable. To the extent that Nietzsche is developing a non-moral criterion of valuation based on the notion of nobleness, he often tends to treat what is common, even in the sense of widespread, as lacking value. Or at least he argues that rarity has been and still is prized for its own sake. He points out that there has been an equation of what is rare with that is valuable or noble, and even sometimes seems to condone this equation.[158]

There are a number of interesting yet separable points Soll makes here. The first is historical: that things which are unique, rare, or exceptional, have often been taken to be valuable in virtue of this feature. The second point is that Nietzsche endorses this practice as legitimate: it *ought* to be the case. I agree with Soll that this is highly plausible as an interpretation of Nietzsche, but Soll does not go into detail about the specific type(s) of rarity that Nietzsche is interested in. There is a distinction to be made between at least three possible interpretations of the claim that rarity has value in-itself:

(1) Rarity is sufficient for *X*'s value (nobility simply *is* being exceptional).

(2) What is rare or exceptional always counts in favour of *X*'s value.

(3) What is rare or exceptional sometimes counts in favour of *X*'s value.

Claim (1) is exceptionally strong, and, as I shall shortly argue, implausible both in itself and as a reading of Nietzsche. Claim (2) takes rarity as having *pro tanto* value. That is, rarity always confers value upon something, but is just one consideration among many possible others, and so all things considered something rare may not be very valuable. This is still a

[158] Ivan Soll, "The Self Versus Society" in Julian Young (ed.), *Individual and Community in Nietzsche's Philosophy*, (Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 167.

controversial claim, but considerably weaker than claim (1). Claim (3) is weaker still, and holds that there must be some constraints on context with regard to rarity's value.

It might be objected that (3) to *too* weak to support to the view that I am proposing, that is: that rarity itself can confer value, and can't be explained away in terms of instrumental, or some other value. The general objection to the notion of rarity value is the doubt that something's being rare doesn't matter in itself; that the world does not somehow become a worse place if it turned out that a book, stamp, island, species, or person wasn't actually rare. Furthermore, that this might be indicated by reflecting on specific examples where rarity does *not* seem to make a difference in our positive evaluation of that thing. For instance, while there may be an intuition that rarity is a good-making property in the case of some classes of things (e.g. stamps), we are less inclined to say that rarity acts in this way when we consider cases of especially sadistic or effective serial killers. Ted Bundy was exceptional in the extent of his murder count, but is he more valuable in virtue of this?

This objection can be translated into examples of two sorts which reflect Nietzschean concerns. One example would be a case in which a person is exceptionally incapable, or peculiar in their inability to achieve anything. In terms of the exercise of their will to power, this person—in stark contrast to someone like Goethe—is unique in overcoming little if any 'resistance'. That Nietzsche would find such a person valuable in virtue of this feature is unlikely. A second and more substantive type of case that Nietzsche himself addresses is the character and deeds of Paul the Apostle in *The Antichrist*. Nietzsche's interest in Paul stems from his interpretation of him, and not Jesus, as the creator of what came to be Christianity. I shall not explain why Nietzsche interprets him in this way. The relevant point here is that Paul is portrayed as a "hate-obsessed false coiner" and "dysangelist" (*A*, §42) like no other. He is exceptional in at least two profoundly negative ways. Nietzsche argues that he instantiates vices—e.g. ressentiment—to a distinctively high degree. For instance, it is claimed that "on the heels of those glad tidings [Jesus] came the *worst of all*: those of Paul" (*A*, §42), and that "Paul was the greatest of all apostles of revenge (*A,* §45).

As a result of his hatred and desire for revenge, Paul created the concept of personal immortality and eschatological judgement as an imagined revenge against the ruling nobility of the time. Nietzsche considers this very concept to be adopted into Islam: Mohammed

inherited "The invention of Paul, his means for establishing a priestly tyranny, for forming herds: the belief in immortality — *that is to say the doctrine of 'judgement'...* (*A*, §42). Whether Nietzsche's historical claims about Paul and the sequence of events in the development of Christianity are true is irrelevant here. Given the historical success of Christian values, and the claim that they are in some sense inimical to the production of human greatness,[159] Nietzsche holds Paul responsible for his *exceptionally* detrimental effect on human history and culture.

By drawing attention to such cases, an objector may hope to show that it is not rarity *per se* that is a good-making property, but rather some other property of a thing which only *often* also features the property of being rare. In other words, rarity seems valuable only when conditioned upon certain contexts or classes of things. Moreover, this objection informs the exegetical point about whether Nietzsche himself actually engages with rarity as a value in itself: if there are cases of rarity which make no difference, or make a negative difference, to something's value (e.g. low achievers, or Paul), then Nietzsche does not consider rarity value a genuine concept, or so the objection would go.

The response to this objection has two parts, which taken together reveal some complicated and interesting structures. Firstly, as a preliminary remark, the conditionality for the goodness of rarity will be the same kind of conditionality for a number of other good-making properties. Many, for example, endorse the popular view that pleasure is good-making in so far as it is not sadistic pleasure. In this case, the goodness of pleasure is conditioned upon some conception of desert. Or similarly, many agree that knowledge is good-making if its object is significant for the subject. For instance, the knowledge of an important truth of physics is plausibly a good thing, while one's knowledge that a stranger on the other side of the world prefers tea to coffee is not. So the conditionality in question is not something special to rarity, but is a common phenomenon in our understanding of value concepts.

[159] I am yet to say precisely how Nietzsche understands this to be the case. I address the issue in the next chapter.

The second point related to this is that something being conditionally valuable is quite compatible with it being finally valuable. As Kant had already pointed out, conditionality and final value are compatible and often go together. Kant's own example, which I have already mentioned above, was of happiness and virtue.[160] On Kant's view, the only unconditional good is the 'good will'. Acts motivated by the desire for happiness are not praiseworthy, in Kant's view; the goodness of happiness is conditional upon acting from a good will. But this does not mean that happiness *derives* its goodness from the good will, or that goodness is *conferred* upon it by the good will. Rather, happiness is good in virtue of how it itself is, but on the condition of being had by someone who has a good will. In other words, the source of happiness' goodness resides within itself, even though the condition of its goodness is extrinsic.

The claim then, is that the fact that rarity is only valuable in some cases yet not others—its conditional value—does not undermine the concept. Moreover, on the exegetical point, the conditional value of rarity is exactly what one should expect from Nietzsche given his general suspicion of 'unconditional value' that I outlined above. That rarity would be valuable in the case of high achievers such as Goethe, yet have no (or perhaps negative value) in the case of Paul the Apostle is fully consistent with Nietzsche's claims that goodness depends upon non-relational *and* relational properties (i.e. context); that the good is "artfully related, knotted and crocheted to these wicked, apparently antithetical things, perhaps even in their being essentially identical with them" (*BGE*, §2).

I do not have time here to fully explore all conditions which are relevant to the value of rarity in Nietzsche's view, but I have tried to show that he is plausibly read as valuing rarity in cases of high achievers or great individuals. If this is correct, then Nietzsche engages with at least one form of extrinsic value which is not instrumental. Consequently, Leiter's claim that the extrinsic is only instrumental is false.

Now that the distinction between intrinsic value and final value has been made explicit, we can see that Nietzsche values human greatness in the latter sense, that is: for its own sake or as an end. Although Leiter uses the term 'intrinsic value', he likely does not mean by this what Moore had in mind. While this terminological point might be seen to be relatively

[160] See Kant, (1988), Section One.

minor, it helps avoid confusion about a highly complicated issue which Nietzsche himself is not always clear. Furthermore, by making this distinction explicit, we equip ourselves with the additional extrinsic concepts of value discussed above, and these will prove to aid in a more detailed analysis of Nietzsche's understanding of suffering and greatness.

2. A Conceptual Analysis of Value

2.1. Relativity

At this point I must provide at least part of a conceptual analysis of value: what does it mean to speak of the value of something, and why does it matter? I have argued above that Nietzsche is committed to a rejection of 'intrinsic value' in the Moorean sense, that is, the view that (a) what is valuable for its own sake is wholly dependent on its intrinsic properties; (b) what has intrinsic value is valuable unconditionally. This rejection gives us clues about Nietzsche's positive views on valuation, of which I will firstly identify two distinct further claims.

Firstly, Nietzsche clearly thinks some things can be more valuable than other things. He often talks in terms of an "order of rank [*Rangordnung*]" (*BGE*, §268; cf. *GM*, I, §17) among values.[161] Nietzsche is therefore in some sense committed to a second claim: that values are hierarchical; they are potentially quantifiable denominations intended to organize things in terms of 'higher' and 'lower'.

My purpose for the moment is to enquire as to how Nietzsche holds this view in connection with his commitment to a second claim, namely: that the measurement of all value is relative. In other words, something can only be thought to be valuable in relation to something else, namely being "more or less valuable" (*BGE*, §194) than that thing. He writes in a later note that if an object or state of affairs lacks "anything against which to measure it", then the context in which "the word 'value' would have meaning, is lacking" (*WP*, §708; *KSA*,

[161] The 'order of rank' is also used by Nietzsche to apply to drives (*GS*, §116; *BGE*, §6), and most frequently to human 'types' (e.g. *BGE*, §62, §257, §294; *A*, §57). For an insightful discussion into the use of this concept and why Nietzsche describes it as a "*problem*" (*HH*, Preface: §6, §7; *GM*, I, §17; cf. *BGE*, §265), see Robert Guay, "Order of Rank" in John Richardson and Ken Gemes (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Nietzsche*, (OUP, 2013).

1887, 11[72]). This idea that there is no absolute standard of measuring the value of something is likely another view inherited from Schopenhauer, who makes this point explicit in *On The Basis of Morals* when he writes:

> any *worth* is the evaluation of one thing in comparison with another; thus, it is a comparative concept, and hence relative, and this relativity comprises the very essence of the concept of *worth*. (*BM*, p. 177).

This view might helpfully be contrasted with Kant's notion of absolute worth or 'dignity' with regard to persons; a notion which Nietzsche fiercely attacks at least partly on these grounds. According to Kant, there is a distinction to be made between the intrinsic worth of human beings, who are capable of rational activity, and the relative value of non-human beings and things who lack this capacity:

> In the kingdom of ends everything has either a *price* [*Preis*] or a *dignity* [*Würde*]. What has a price can be replaced by something else as its *equivalent*; what on the other hand is above all price and therefore admits of no equivalent has a dignity.[162]

For Kant, all human beings are unique and irreplaceable in a way that other things are not; they cannot be evaluated and given a price amongst non-human things. To do this would denigrate their dignity or intrinsic worth. Nietzsche, by contrast, includes persons in the 'order of rank'. For example:

> Every elevation of the type 'man' has hitherto been the work of an aristocratic society — and so it will always be: a society which believes in a long scale of orders of rank and differences of worth [*Werthverschiedenheit*] between man and man... (*BGE*, §257)

> men not noble enough to see the abysmal disparity of rank between men and man — it is such men who, with their 'equal before God', have hitherto ruled over the destiny of Europe, until at last a shrunken, almost ludicrous species, a herd animal, something full of good will, sickly and mediocre has been bred, the European of today... (*BGE*, §62)

[162] Kant, (1988), pp. 63-64.

> The order of castes, *order of rank*, only formulates the supreme law of life itself...for making possible higher and higher types — *inequality* of rights is the condition for the existence of rights at all. (*A*, §57)

In these deliberately unsettling passages, Nietzsche not only makes a descriptive claim about there being significant differences between persons, and that ranks or castes tend to develop out of a practice of measuring the relative value of persons, but also (most controversially) that it is (at least instrumentally) *good* that this occurs. Consequently, Nietzsche rejects any Kantian view about inherent worth or dignity.[163]

Nietzsche sees in the Kantian notion of dignity and absolute value the same anthropocentric sentiment espoused by Christianity: that "everyone as an 'immortal soul' has equal rank with everyone else" (*A*, §43).[164] He calls this a "miserable flattery of personal vanity" (*A*, §43), and develops his view in a later note:

> Through Christianity, the individual was made so important, so absolute, that he could no longer be sacrificed...—All "souls" became equal before God: but this is precisely the most dangerous of all possible evaluations! If one regards individuals as equal, one calls the species into question, one encourages a way of life that leads to the ruin of the species: Christianity is the counterprinciple to the principle of *selection*. (*WP*, §246; *KSA*, 1888, 15[110])

There are a number of points being made in this critique. In this passage from the *Nachlass*, Nietzsche suggests that equality, or at least belief in the value of equality, would in some sense have bad *effects*, for example: a diminishing of the conditions needed for the cultivation of greatness.[165] In *The Antichrist* however, Nietzsche explains the *motivation* for the emergence of equality as a 'good' thing. The latter is significant for the current discussion,

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[163] This is not to say Nietzsche has no place for *some* conception of dignity. Huddleston, for example, argues Nietzsche retains the concept but with a radically different meaning. On his interpretation, while Kant conceives of dignity as equal and innate, Nietzsche considers dignity as *inegalitarian* and *earned*. See Andrew Huddleston, "Nietzsche on Slavery and Human Dignity" in the *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, Volume 52, Number 1, (2014), pp. 135-160.

[164] Nietzsche's tracing of Kantian ideas back to Christianity—his "theologian instinct"—is expressed in *A*, §11.

[165] Nietzsche makes similar claims repeatedly in his mature period, but most explicitly in BGE, §257 and TI, 'Skirmishes, §48.

because it is an attempt to explain away any concept of absolute value by exposing the psychological need that some, the majority, have to believe in it. As Nietzsche puts it: "The 'salvation of the soul'—in plain language: 'the world revolves around *me*'" (*A*, §43).

Nietzsche instead sees his task as "to translate man back into nature", by which he at least in part means to do away with any "vain and fanciful interpretations" (*BGE*, §230) of human value as 'dignity' or absolute. In order to bring about this "return to nature" (*TI*, 'Skirmishes, §48) and avoid the anthropocentric "flattery" of Kantianism/Christianity, one must subject human beings to the same conception of value as non-human things—that is, as one of relative worth.

2.2. Epistemic Constraints: The Frame of Reference Argument

In holding this view about the relativity of value, Nietzsche, in his later writings, recognises that there are epistemic restrictions on the evaluation of certain things: specifically, life 'as a whole', or the existence of the world itself. I shall refer to this as his 'frame of reference argument'.[166] It runs as follows:

Premise 1: In order to make reasonable value judgements about 'life as a whole', one would need to be situated outside of 'life'.
Premise 2: Human beings are always situated within 'life'.
Conclusion: Value judgements about life as a whole cannot reasonably be made.

The argument is an attempt to expose particular systems of thought as absurd or misguided by demonstrating that comprehending the value of life 'as a whole' is impossible. The first premise claims that evaluating life as a whole would require an exceptionally privileged epistemic position. The second premise claims that no human is in such a position. He makes this argument explicit primarily in *The Gay Science* and *Twilight of the Idols*. For instance:

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[166] Nietzsche, however, was not the first to make such an argument. Hans Vaihinger made a similar epistemic frame of reference argument in 1876. See Hans Vaihinger, *Hartmann, Dühring und Lange*, (Baedeker, 1876), p. 126; p. 177.

> One would have to be situated *outside* life, and on the other hand to know it as thoroughly as any, as many, as all who have experienced it, to be permitted to touch on the problem of the *value* of life at all: sufficient reason for understanding that this problem is for us an inaccessible problem". (*TI*, 'Morality as Anti-Nature', §5)

> We are far from claiming that the world is worth *less*; indeed it would seem laughable to us today if man were to insist on inventing values that were supposed to *excel* the value of the actual world. This is precisely what we have turned our backs on as an extravagant aberration of human vanity and unreason that for a long time was not recognised as such (*GS*, §346)

Nietzsche's argument has multiple targets, which include Christianity, Platonism, and Schopenhauerianism—all of which (according to Nietzsche), postulate some form of 'better world', 'true world', or 'world beyond' which is (often) preferable to reality that has been judged to be evil or deficient. The notion that a value judgement about the world as a whole can be made "found its final expression in modern pessimism, and a more ancient and stronger expression in the teaching of the Buddha; but it is part of Christianity also" (*GS*, §346). Regarding the Socratic/Platonic dichotomy of a perfect world of forms in contrast to our world, he writes that "*the value of life cannot be estimated*. Not by a living man, because he is a party to the dispute, indeed its object, and not the judge of it" (*TI*, 'Socrates', §2). Hence, "We laugh as soon as we encounter the juxtaposition of 'man *and* world', separated by the sublime presumption of the little word 'and'" (*GS*, §346). This same mistake is "ultimately formulated by Schopenhauer as 'denial of the will to life'" (*TI*, 'Morality as Anti-Nature', §5).

While Nietzsche does present this argument as an epistemic one—he doubts the capacity of human judges to *know*, *estimate*, or *understand* the value of life, given our position within it—he also can plausibly be read as intending the argument to support the stronger claim that life or the world 'as a whole' cannot *have* a value, and not just that it can't be known.

For instance, he claims in the same passages as above that "value judgements concerning life, for or against, can in the last resort *never be true*" (*TI*, 'Socrates', §2; emphasis mine), and that attempts to do so are imbued with "uselessness, illusoriness,

absurdity, *falsity*" (*TI*, 'Morality as Anti-Nature', §5). In another passage from *Twilight of the Idols*, he writes:

> one belongs to the whole, one *is* in the whole — there exists nothing which could judge, measure, compare, condemn our being, for that would be to judge, measure, compare, condemn the whole...*but nothing exists apart from the whole*! (*TI*, 'Four Great Errors, §8)

Nietzsche similarly writes in the *Nachlass*, in clear reference to Schopenhauer, that "*the total value of the world cannot be evaluated*: consequently philosophical pessimism belongs among comical things" (*WP*, §708; *KSA*, 1887, 11[72]). This second reading of the argument has the following form:

Premise 1: All value is relative.
Premise 2: For the world or life 'as a whole' to have value, there would need to be another world or life from which to compare it.
Premise 3: There exists no such other world or life.
Conclusion: Value judgements about the world or life 'as a whole' are always meaningless.

On this stronger reading, Nietzsche regards the attempt to evaluate life 'as a whole' as unsound. The reason being that because the word 'value' loses all meaning when there is nothing else to compare a thing to, and because Nietzsche rejects the notion of there being any reality other than our own, let alone a preferable one (e.g. the Christian notion of heaven), 'life' cannot be evaluated, either negatively or positively.

The potential weakness of this argument lies with premise 3. From the claim that there exists no other world to compare our own to, Nietzsche (on this reading) claims that our world cannot be evaluated. But one might ask why another world or reality would have to *exist* in order to compare it to our own. We might, for example, abstract from the world that exists (W) and consider *possible* worlds (W^1, W^2, W^3...) from which to evaluate it relatively.

The argument has its difficulties, which I will not seek to elaborate or defend against here, but Nietzsche makes a second and distinct point regarding value judgements about life

as a whole which is the primary motivation behind the argument, and that would still apply to the move to postulating 'possible worlds'. Nietzsche holds that while these judgements are either always epistemically unjustified or meaningless, when made they nevertheless act as a "symptom of a certain kind of life" (*TI*, 'Morality as Anti-Nature', §5). In order to understand what Nietzsche means here, it must be understood as part of a broader theme which is pervasive in Nietzsche's work throughout the 1880's.

He claims that "A human being's evaluations betray something of the *structure* of his soul and where it sees its conditions of life, its real needs" (*BGE*, §268). In other words, one's value judgements are useful in as far as they are indicative of one's psychology, or what 'type' of person one is. The metaphor Nietzsche most frequently employs is that of a symptom one must diagnose [*Symptom*]: like the headache and dehydration that signifies a fever, one's values signifies the orientations of one's drives. To take just a small sample of additional evidence, in *Daybreak*, he writes “our moral judgments and evaluations...are only images and fantasies based on a physiological process unknown to us” (*D*, §119). Specifically regarding philosophers, he claims their "morality" merely bears “decisive witness to...the innermost drives of his nature” (*BGE*, §6).[167]

Thus value judgements about life 'as a whole' are indicative of a certain type of person: a yes-saying life-affirmer, or a decadent nihilist. So giving a negative verdict on the value of existence, in Nietzsche's view, is "only a value judgement on the part of life—of *what* life? of *what* kind of life?—But I have already given the answer: of declining, debilitated, weary, condemned life". (*TI*, 'Morality as Anti-Nature', §5). While Nietzsche considers the evaluation of life as a whole as in some sense an error, it is nonetheless useful for the purpose of identifying 'types'. He concludes of both Socrates and Plato: "What? and all these great wise men -- they have not only been décadents, they have not even been wise?" (*TI*, 'Socrates', §2). In other words, their value judgements about 'life' not only give away their décadent nature, but both are also philosophically mistaken in making such judgements.

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[167] Nietzsche often uses feelings [*Gefühle*], affects [*Affekten*], instincts [*Instinkte*] and drives [*Triebe*] interchangeably.

2.3. Quantifying Value

Given that Nietzsche holds all value to be relative, the question then becomes a matter of *how* "rank-distinguishing value judgements" (*GM*, I, §2) can be quantified, or be understood as quantifiable. In some cases, value can be determined simply in terms of the economic principle of supply and demand, where a product's worth is ascertained in light of the variables of desire and availability. For example, if the desire for *P* increases while the availability of *P* decreases, its price rises. Alternatively, if the availability of *P* increases and the desire for *P* decreases, the price falls. In these straight-forward commercial examples, the worth or 'value' of *P* is tracked by its monetary price.

In a number of places, Nietzsche's language appears to reflect a similar method of evaluation, frequently speaking in economic terms with an emphasis on price [*Preis*], value/ worth [*Wert*], and exchange [*tauschen*].[168] For instance, he writes that "To estimate what a type of man is worth, one must calculate the price paid for his preservation" (*EH*, XIV: §4), and maintains, in stark contrast to Plato, that "art is worth more than truth." (*WP*, §853; *KSA*, 1888, 17[3]).

Nietzsche also gives a historical account of why we often speak in economic terms of price and measurement with regard to value. In *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche claims that measuring and evaluating is in some sense an essential part of being human:

> Setting prices, determining values [*Werte abmessen*], devising equivalences, exchanging, these preoccupied the earliest thinking of man to so great an extent that it, in a certain sense, constitutes *thinking as such* (*GM*, II, §8)

He continues:

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[168] For a similar line of interpretation, see Edward Andrews, "The Cost of Nietzschean Values" in *New Nietzsche Studies*, 3, (1999), p. 63.

> man designated himself as the creature that measures values, evaluates and estimates, as *the* 'measuring animal' [*Werte misst, wertet und misst als das 'abschätzende Tier' an sich*]. (*GM*, II, §8)

He finds this practice in the "earliest and most primordial relationship between men", locating its origin in the "relationship between buyer and seller, debtor and creditor" (*GM*, II, §8). Nietzsche even later explicitly suggests that an "attempt should be made to see whether a scientific order of values could be constructed simply on a numerical and mensural scale of force" (*WP*, §710; *KSA*, 1888, 14[105]). Nietzsche never in fact provides such a scale. However, it is necessary to explore how one might determine the value of things like 'greatness', achievement, and suffering, where the quantifier of 'supply and demand' is not appropriate.

One possible strategy for determining the relative value of these things is to consider one's experiences of them. If we come to understand a particular sensation or feeling as good, then we might deem the value of that feeling as quantifiable using a criterion of *intensity* and *duration*. This is a method of evaluation familiar to some traditions of utilitarianism. For example, Bentham's hedonistic account of the good regards the feeling of pleasure as susceptible to these criteria. According to Bentham, the value of a certain action is measured by the ratio between how strong a pleasure is felt in performing it (intensity), and how long that sensation lasts for (duration).[169]

A similar argument is sometimes made for Nietzsche's conception of evaluation, but in terms of power rather than pleasure.[170] On this view, an activity, event or object is valuable to the extent it provokes an intense and persisting feeling of power, and its relative value can be quantified in terms of its intensity and duration. For example, take the achievement of running a marathon in contrast to climbing Everest. One might measure the value of these achievements by gauging the intensity and duration of the feeling of power that results in

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[169]Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, (Oxford University Press, 1995): 4.2. Bentham also mentions others—*certainty*, *propinquity*, *fecundity* and *purity*—but are not relevant to the welfare value of a pleasure.

[170] For example, see Richard Schacht, *Nietzsche*, (Routledge, 1983), esp. pp. 348-349.

overcoming their inherent resistances. Whichever is greater would, on this view, be the more valuable achievement.

That Nietzsche endorses a view of this nature is perhaps best suggested by passages such as the following:

> What is the objective measure of value? Solely the quantum of enhanced and organised power. (*WP*, §674; *KSA*, 1887, 11[83])

> *Value* is the highest quantum of power that a man is able to incorporate. (*WP*, §713; *KSA*, 1888, 14[8])

> What determines your rank is the quantum of power you are: the rest is cowardice. (*WP*, §858; *KSA*, 1887, 11[36])

There are at least two problems with this approach. The first is an exegetical worry: where Nietzsche appears to suggest this type of evaluation, it occurs almost exclusively in the *Nachlass*, and at the beginning of the thesis I explicated the difficulties of *solely* relying on such passages in coming to a representative picture of Nietzsche's views.

The second problem is philosophical. One classic objection to the utilitarian method of evaluation concerns incommensurability: that two different things may produce valuable experiences, but cannot be qualitatively measured against each other. Consider the following case given by Roger Crisp.[171] Suppose we compare the lives of the composer Joseph Haydn and an oyster that lives for an unusually long period of time. In composing, Haydn will meet with success and honour in his own lifetime, travel in Europe and enjoy immense popularity. However, Haydn will die at the age of seventy-seven. The oyster's life will consist of mild sensual pleasure, but it is consistent across a large period of time—say, five-hundred years. Which life is best? The pleasures of Haydn are certainly more intense than the oyster's, but at some point, if the oyster lives long enough, its welfare will outweigh Haydn's (assuming there is no decrease in the value of the oyster's experiences over time). The objection is that utilitarians in this tradition will have to say that the oyster's life is preferable, and many will

[171] Roger Crisp, Mill on Utilitarianism, (Routledge, 1997), pp. 22-25.

reasonably reject this on the grounds that the experiences of Haydn are simply in a different category than the experiences of the oyster, hence it might not matter how long the oyster's life is.

We might consider a variant of this case that is relevant to power. In Book Nine of *The Iliad*, Achilles recalls the prophecy given to him by his mother, Thetis:

> ...destiny has left two courses open to me on my journey to the grave. If I stay here and fight it out round Ilium, there is no home-coming for me, but there will be eternal glory instead. If I go back to the land of my fathers, my heroic glory will be forfeit, but my life will be long and I shall be spared an early death.[172]

Achilles goes on to achieve an exceptional amount on the battlefield at Troy, ensuring his glory for thousands of years to come, yet tragically dies there. In the language of the will to power, he overcomes a vast amount of resistance, the intensity of which is tremendous. Compare this with a possible Achilles* who returns home instead of participating in the Trojan War. Achilles* lives a long and healthy life but he never attains glory: his achievements, although perhaps numerous, provoke relatively mild feelings of power; he overcomes little resistance in each of them, but a large amount over time.

The essence of the comparison is clear enough: Achilles*, least in theory, could over time achieve many things of little intensity, but which eventually collectively outweigh the intensity in the feeling of power that Achilles experienced. But measuring the lives of Achilles and Achilles* in this way seems misguided, and it is unlikely that Nietzsche would view the two as in the same category of value. Hence, the method of measuring value in terms of the experience of power faces the same problem of incommensurability.

An alternative way one might attempt to determine the value of something is to construe value in terms of the 'opportunity cost' of that good or service. Consider the examples of museums which have no entrance fee, great natural landscapes in preservations, and historic architecture. Here, there is no conception of economic price because these things are free to experience. However, we still want to say they are valuable, and crucially, perhaps *more* valuable than other things. To determine the 'order of rank' among these valuable things without use of supply and demand, their 'opportunity cost' would involve the extent of one's

[172] Homer, *The Iliad*, (Penguin Classics, 2003), Book 9, lines 410-415, p. 155.

willingness to give up resources, such as time, in order to participate in the activity or experience these phenomena. Put another way, the value of a certain thing might be measured by how much one *would* sacrifice relative to pursuing other possible goods.

Nietzsche can plausibly be interpreted as endorsing such a view. He claims explicitly that "The value of a thing sometimes lies not in what one attains with it, but in what one pays for it—what it *costs* us". (*TI*, 'Skirmishes', §38). Earlier in *Human, All Too Human*, Nietzsche similarly writes:

> We universally honour acts of love and sacrifice for the sake of one's neighbour, wherever we find them. In this way we heighten the *value of the things* loved in that way, or for which sacrifices are made, even though they are in themselves not worth much. A valiant army convinces us about the cause for which it is fighting. (*HH*, §77)

This strategy retains two features from the supply and demand approach. Firstly, it is still dependent on the strength of one's desires. One's desire has to be sufficiently strong enough to warrant sacrificing the pursuit of some other good, which will in turn be sufficient to sacrifice the pursuit of a further subordinate good, and so forth, providing a hierarchical ranking of values. Moreover, because it adopts a counterfactual approach to cost (i.e. how much one *would* give to attain something *if* available), it can make sense of Nietzsche's mercantile terminology. Secondly, because this approach relies on desires in this way, it still treats the measurement of value as relative. Choosing to (a) go to a museum, for example, might be more valuable than (b) going hiking in a nature reserve, because one has a stronger desire to do (a) *compared* to (b).

There are some things, however, whose value cannot be explained in these terms of exchange. As I have claimed, the value of some ends—the Noble prize, a steak dinner, seeing a film—can be measured by how much I am willing, or would be willing, to give to attain them. What I can 'give' can vary: we are most familiar with monetary exchange, but value may also be measured using other currencies. One example is time. Another, which I have mentioned in connection to Nietzsche's view, is effort and struggle. However, this mechanism of exchange is not obviously applicable to other conceptions of value, for example: the value

of Goethe's life, or the value of an achievement. How might we, or Nietzsche, explain the value of such things, where it is not appropriate to simply use a measure of the struggle to obtain them?

One plausible explanation of this value might be in terms of admiration: Goethe's life is more valuable than St. Paul's, for example, because the extent of our admiration for him is relatively greater. Similarly, *The Prose Edda* is a more valuable literary achievement than *The New Testament*, for instance, because the extent of our admiration for it is relatively greater. Admiration—as well as contempt—is a complex emotion. We often admire the features of an agent that they are responsible for (e.g. certain choices), but also sometimes features they are not responsible for (e.g. eye colour), with perhaps some borderline cases (e.g. intellect). Moreover, admiration of a person, artwork, or article, can also be partial or complete: we can admire Mike Tyson's strength and determination, while perhaps condemning his early attitudes towards women. Similarly, we may admire Wagner's tremendous talent, while simultaneously denouncing his anti-Semitism. Additionally, admiration is frequently felt accompanying other emotions of a diverse variety. For instance, it could be felt as a component of envy, of love, and amusement.

This last point is particularly salient with regard to the topic of this chapter. While we can imagine the extent of admiration to be at least roughly quantifiable in relative terms (i.e. admiring *X* by reference to admiration for *Y*), one potential complication with this view is that there may be several forms of admiration that are incommensurable. There are two types of cases to consider here. Firstly, there is the admiration of different components of peoples' lives. It is not immediately obvious that the admiration we feel for *X* in virtue of their achievements is commensurable with the admiration we feel for *Y* in virtue of their beauty. We can't, it would seem, simply compare our admiration for each in this case to determine which is a more valuable life, for the criteria may vary in kind. This problem can, however, be largely avoided for the purposes of this thesis, for the parameters of my investigation are narrow: I focus upon a specific good that Nietzsche emphasises as criterial of great individuals—achievement.

Nevertheless, there is still the second possible incommensurability problem to consider. Is the admiration for *X*'s heroic achievement in battle commensurable with *Y*'s tremendous literary achievement, to the extent that we can say that one is greater than the other? As I shall claim in the following chapter, Nietzsche does not appear to recognise this as a problem, and in fact provides a highly pluralistic account of admirable achievement—of 'overcoming resistance'—compatible with a variety of goals. While I shall argue that there must be some constraints on what the goal is for the activity to have value, he does not address issues of commensurability of noble pursuits.[173]

It is unclear how Nietzsche precisely conceives of valuation and determining the 'order of rank' among values. I have provided three possible ways one might attempt to do this: in terms of (1) intensity and duration of certain experiences; (2) opportunity cost; (3) extent of admiration. These methods of evaluation are not mutually exclusive: it may be that one is appropriate for some cases, and another for different cases. The second option—'opportunity cost'—will be discussed in detail with reference to the value of striving in the following chapter, for it fits naturally with the idea that suffering is (in some way yet to be specified) a 'cost' for reaching one's goal. The third option—extent of admiration—will be discussed in detail with reference to the value of achievements considered as a whole.

3. Greatness and its Relation to Suffering

I have so far argued that Nietzsche values human greatness as an end or 'for its own sake'. In this section I will introduce evidence for another claim I made earlier: Nietzsche believes suffering to be related to human greatness in some way. In doing so, we shall see *why* Nietzsche thinks suffering is valuable. The remaining chapters will then focus upon specifically *how* suffering is valuable by drawing out distinctions between different forms of extrinsic value, and to what extent and in which periods Nietzsche engages with them.

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[173] There is a third concern here that must at least be flagged, that is: admiration appears to be a highly subjective measure of value. Some people admire football players no more than grass-counters. While Nietzsche can allow a pluralism regarding the goals people pursue, it might be harder to interpret him as being a subjectivist about the some activities (e.g. that of Beethoven and Goethe). Are they really only valuable *in his opinion*? Nietzsche's meta-ethical position is a hugely contentious topic that I shall not have time to address here. But what I claim in this thesis will be compatible with a reading of Nietzsche as some form of anti-realist or realist about value.

In a number of places throughout his corpus, Nietzsche emphasizes that suffering is in *some* (yet to be specified) way connected to human greatness. This connection becomes increasingly emphasised in Nietzsche's later work when his critique of morality intensifies. This idea is perhaps best captured from passages in *Beyond Good and Evil*, which, as we have seen, is where Nietzsche provides the most in-depth account of 'greatness' and its conditions. For example, he claims that "Profound suffering ennobles; it separates" (*BGE*, §270); "How deeply humans can suffer almost determines their order of rank" (*BGE*, §270); and that "The highest type, which has hitherto almost always been the type that has suffered most" (*BGE*, §62). In a later note, Nietzsche echoes this sentiment:

> To those human beings who are of any concern to me I wish suffering ... because I wish them the only thing that can prove today whether one is worth anything or not—that one endures. (*WP*, §910; *KSA*, 1887, 10[103])

Crucially, Nietzsche often appears to endorse the stronger claim that this relation between suffering and greatness is a necessary one. In other words, that there is no greatness without suffering. For instance:

> The discipline of suffering, of *great* suffering — do you not know that *only* this discipline has created all enhancements of man so far? That tension of the soul in unhappiness which cultivates its strength, its shudders face to face with great ruin, its inventiveness and courage in enduring, persevering, interpreting, and exploiting suffering, and whatever has been granted to it of profundity, secret, mask, spirit, cunning, greatness — was it not granted to it through suffering, through the discipline of great suffering? (*BGE*, §225; second emphasis mine)

> This [suffering] is the *only* price for which one can buy the most precious shell that the waves of existence have ever yet washed on the shore. (*GS*, §302; emphasis mine)

> Examine the lives of the best and most fruitful people and peoples and ask yourselves whether a tree that is supposed to grow to a proud height can dispense with bad weather and storms; whether misfortune and external resistance, some kinds of hatred, jealousy, stubbornness, mistrust, hardness, avarice, and violence do not belong among the *favourable* conditions without which any great growth even of virtue is scarcely possible. (*GS*, §19)

It is worth remembering the important historical fact that Nietzsche was no stranger to suffering. Throughout his life, he struggled with a variety of health problems which often left him isolated and alone. Throughout the 1880's, Nietzsche's health deteriorated to a particularly poor level, yet within these ten years he was at his most prolific, producing the vast majority and most critically acclaimed of his philosophical body of work. Nietzsche often draws upon his own experiences of suffering as evidence of its necessary relation to achievement and greatness:

> I have often asked myself whether I am not much more deeply indebted to the hardest years of my life than to any others....And as to my prolonged illness, do I not owe much more to it than I owe to my health? To it I owe a *higher* kind of health, a sort of health which grows stronger under everything that does not actually kill it!— *To it, I owe even my philosophy*....Only great suffering is the ultimate emancipator of the spirit....Only great suffering; that great suffering, under which we seem to be over a fire of greenwood, the suffering that takes its time—forces us philosophers to descend into our nethermost depths... (*NCW,* epilogue; cf. *EH*, I, §1, §2)

Reginster argues that the necessity of suffering for greatness can be explained in terms of the will to power. As I presented in Chapter One, he claims that suffering is defined by resistance, that is: dissatisfaction is inherently painful, and since the feeling of power is the overcoming of such resistance, power necessarily requires suffering. However, I objected that the 'desire implies pain' principle is implausible, and that Nietzsche is best read as claiming that resistance is suffering only when it persists for too long. As a result, if suffering is a necessary requirement of greatness as Nietzsche appears to claim—"that the creator may be, suffering is needed" (*Z*, II, §2)—then it must be on other grounds which he does not make explicit.

So suffering is valuable, on Nietzsche's view, on account of its relational properties: it is somehow related to human greatness, which as I concluded in earlier chapters is taken to have final value. But if suffering is extrinsically valuable, this can't be the end of the story. After establishing in section 1.2 of this chapter that there are a variety of types of extrinsic

value, the question remains: which species of extrinsic value does suffering have, and in what way? This is crucial in order to make sense of the above quotations. This question will be the focus of the remaining chapters of the thesis. Moreover, I shall aim to show that Nietzsche's increased immoralism in his later period understands the value of suffering in a potentially different sense to that of his early and middle periods.

3.1. Valuable for the Few

Before I proceed, it is important to clarify *who* Nietzsche thinks suffering is valuable for. I argued in the first section of this chapter that, in Nietzsche's view, something's value has to be understood as sensitive to particular conditions or relations. I claim that one relevant condition or relation that Nietzsche considers the value of suffering to have is what type of person the subject is, namely: if one is capable of greatness. The implication of this view is that Nietzsche's claims about the value of suffering are restricted to a very few individuals, and that he does not recommend that just anyone strives towards greatness.

Nietzsche rejects the notion of equality because it undermines the *Rangordnung*. His rejection is comprised of two distinct components:

> (1) Equality of persons is *descriptively* false, because there are fundamentally different 'types' of people.
> (2) Any *normative* view that advocates equality is not conducive to the flourishing of at least one 'type' of human.

The concern that Nietzsche has in mind in point (2) is the flourishing of great individuals: "what is right for one *cannot* by any means therefore be right for another...the demand for *one* morality for all is detrimental to precisely the higher men" (*BGE*, §228).[174] Nietzsche repeatedly repudiates the claim—which he takes to be characteristic of particularly Christian,

[174] This is not to say that Nietzsche thinks equality itself is intrinsically bad. On the contrary, he claims that "'Equality for equals, inequality for unequals — *that* would be the true voice of justice" (*TI*, 'Skirmishes', §48).

Utilitarian and Kantian moralities—that a value or set of values is appropriate for all. He clearly states:

> What serves the higher type of man as a nourishment or delectation must also be a poison for a very different and inferior type. The virtues of the common man might signify vices and weakness in a philosopher. (*BGE*, §30)

The idea here is that 'good for' sentences such as 'egoism is good for John' will differ depending on whether John is what Nietzsche refers to as a 'higher type' or 'lower type'. I believe that Nietzsche treats the value of suffering in the same way: that it is 'good for' higher types but not for members of the 'herd'. For example, Nietzsche refers to the slave revolt as "the *prudence* of the lowest order [*diese Klugheit niedrigsten Ranges*]", and goes on to state the motive for the revolt as their "instinct for self-preservation and self-affirmation" (*GM*, I, §13; emphasis mine). I take the claim to be that the values which resulted from the revolt—humbleness, meekness, 'justice', contentment, and so forth—are *in the interests* of its instigators. Nietzsche suggests in a later note that the values of the herd are only a problem when they are unrestricted in their application: "the ideas of the herd *should* rule in the herd — but not reach out beyond it (*WP*, §287; *KSA*, 1886, 7[6]; emphasis mine). We might compare these claims with earlier comments Nietzsche made in *Human All Too Human*:

> All men who have no expertise with any weapon (mouth and pen counting as weapons) become servile: for such men religion is very useful, for here servility takes on the appearance of a Christian virtue and is surprisingly beautified. People who think their daily lives too empty and monotonous easily become religious: this is understandable and forgivable; however, they have no right to demand religiosity from those whose daily life does not pass in emptiness and monotony. (*HH*, §115)

Amongst the various claims in this passage, Nietzsche holds that some things considered a vice can, for some people, be virtues. He makes this move explicitly with regard to striving as opposed to contentment or 'happiness' in the pejorative sense. For instance, he recommends that "one leaves happiness to the great majority" (*WP*, §944; *KSA*, 1888, 15[115]), and states that "The poison of which weaker natures perish strengthens the strong — nor do they call it poison" (*GS*, §19).

In attempting to draw out the elements of Nietzsche's positive ethical project that can contribute to contemporary debates about the value of achievement, I shall show that this distinction between 'types' is non-essential, and can be ignored without undermining his axiological claims regarding suffering.

Conclusion

I have explored three areas of Nietzsche's axiology in this chapter. I first assessed Leiter's claim that human greatness has 'intrinsic value', and addressed the terminological and conceptual issues of Nietzsche's engagement with it. I argued that greatness is valuable as an end or for its own sake, but that this is importantly not the same thing as 'intrinsic value' properly understood. For Nietzsche, value is not necessarily generated by something's intrinsic properties, but by its relational properties. I then rejected Leiter's claim that what has extrinsic value has value only as a means, and supported this rejection with examples of non-instrumental extrinsic value, of which at least one form—rarity—Nietzsche plausibly engages with. I then gave a conceptual analysis of value in order to clarify how Nietzsche understands valuation and the measurement of value. In the final section I claimed that Nietzsche holds suffering to be necessarily related to greatness. The task of the next chapter will be to identify what *type* of value relation this is.

Chapter Four:

Suffering as Having Instrumental Value

We now have an understanding of two important issues: (1) *what* Nietzsche understands at least one conception of suffering to be: resistance to the will; (2) *why* suffering is valuable for Nietzsche: it has a necessary relation to human greatness, which is taken to be constituted at least in part by significant achievement. But suffering being 'necessarily related' to greatness is too broad a claim to be philosophically interesting. By making use of contemporary debate in the theory of value, in this chapter I will investigate specifically *how* Nietzsche thinks suffering is valuable. One view, apparently defended by Leiter, is that Nietzsche values suffering only instrumentally; it is a *means* to greatness. I have so far been using the term 'achievement' in a conventional sense, however, by elucidating in detail the nature and value of achievement, I show that the instrumental view is mistaken. This particular chapter is not only exegetical, but it also attempts to demonstrate the independent plausibility of a Nietzschean account of the value of achievement in a debate that has traditionally been dominated by Aristotle. I shall begin by giving a brief account of instrumental value.

1. Identifying Instrumental Value

Standard definitions of instrumental value usually start with the basic claim that it is properly contrasted with what I have in the last chapter presented as *final value*: what is valuable for its own sake. Objects, activities, states of affairs, or whatever, have instrumental value if they are a *means* to something that is valued for its own sake or *as an end*. Money, tools, chores, exercise, education are frequently listed as standard examples of things having instrumental value. For instance, money might allow me to gain entry to a museum to see beautiful works of art or ancient artefacts. A good education may help me get an admirable job. If we assume these aims to be valuable as ends, then money and education might be said to be valuable as a means.

This account leaves a number of important questions open. There are at least three points that need to be explicated. First of all, it is a mistake to define instrumental value in terms of what *we* value as such. Something can have value as a means regardless of whether one values it in this way, or if one fails to value it at all. Similarly, whether something is valuable as a means is completely independent of one desiring or enjoying it. For example, I may not value the Volvo that is parked on my drive for the sake of anything. Furthermore, no one else may have considered its value either. However, (assuming that the car still works) it still possesses instrumental value in virtue of the fact that I might use it to get from A to B.

Secondly, there appear to be two distinct senses in which something can be 'instrumentally valuable'. First of all, there might be something which is (1) good *as an instrument* or useful for achieving something. For example, a coat-hanger is good for hanging coats. This is the case regardless of whether hanging the coat is itself good. Similarly, the Volvo in my drive maybe useful in this sense, even if my destination holds no value.

This sense of instrumental value as 'utility' is to be distinguished from a second sense as a thing being (2) productive of value: a means to something else which is good. To demonstrate this distinction in more detail, Ramon Lemos cites an example of poisoning a person.[175] The use of poison might be instrumentally good as a means of killing a particular person; it is reliable to get the job done, requires little effort and is likely to leave scarce evidence of the act. The poison retains these features regardless of whether killing the person has any value, or even if it is in fact a bad thing. But on the second reading of a means, as being productive of value, poisoning the person is not instrumentally valuable unless their death is in some way a good thing. So a condition of something having instrumental value in this second sense is that the consequences of employing it must produces good outcomes. G.E. Moore formulates this conception in the following way:

[175] Ramon Lemos, *The Nature of Value: Axiological Investigations*, (UPF, 1995), p. 39.

> Whenever we judge that a thing is `good as a means,' we are making a judgment with regard to its causal relations: we judge both that it will have a particular kind of effect, and that that effect will be good in itself.[176]

But there is still much to be said. So far, we have established what Ben Bradley labels the "Naive View":

> **NV**: *S* is instrumentally good = df. *S* is a causal factor in the production of something good.[177]

As Bradley rightly states, **NV** requires improvement. First of all, it is unclear how 'good' is to be defined here. Presumably the 'production of something good' means something good for its own sake, or of final value. However it might be the case that something can have instrumental value if it acts as a means to something else of instrumental value. For example, suppose we are hedonists and think that the only thing that is intrinsically valuable is pleasure. Getting a good education, (a), may have instrumental value in virtue of gaining me a financially beneficial job, (b). The money I earn from this job, (c), may also have instrumental value in virtue of providing me with the means to buy a yacht. Moreover, the yacht, (d), might provide me with a means to a significant amount of pleasure. In this scenario, (a) (b) and (c) all act as a means to a *further* means of acquiring a final good, yet all retain instrumental value. A related point to consider is that something can be both valuable instrumentally *and* as an end. Candidates cited in discussion of this possibility most frequently include goods such as knowledge and virtue: they are plausibly good for their own sake, yet clearly can be instrumental in bringing about other goods.

NV also fails to account for the means of preventing things which are bad. Something might be instrumentally good in virtue of what has been called its 'preventative value'.[178] For

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[176] G.E. Moore, *Principia Ethica*, (Cambridge University Press, 1993), §19.

[177] Bradley, (1998), p. 111.

[178] For example, see Fred Feldman, "Basic Intrinsic Value" in Toni Rønnow-Rasmussen and Michael J. Zimmerman, *Recent Work on Intrinsic Value*, (Springer Science & Business Media, 2005), pp. 398-399.

example, medical vaccinations may have instrumental value in virtue of their being a means to avoiding serious illness or death. It is plausible to suppose that vaccinations would be good even if those vaccinated go on to live lives with zero final value, for some of those vaccinated would have been much worse off had they not been vaccinated. This leads us to a qualified understanding of instrumental value that takes into account something's total causal consequence or 'overall value'. Something becomes instrumentally valuable if all things considered it causes things to go better than they would have otherwise gone. We can call this qualified understanding of instrumental value the Standard View (**SV**):

> **SV:** *S* is instrumentally good = df. *S* causally contributes to bringing about something overall good or preventing something overall bad.

This improves upon **NV** significantly. It takes into account preventative capacities, and by focusing on overall good allows something to be instrumentally valuable to a further means. This understanding of instrumental value is sufficient for the purposes of this chapter, which is to ascertain whether suffering functions this way with regard to greatness.

2. Support for the Instrumental Interpretation

Brian Leiter argues that suffering does function in this way for Nietzsche: that it is a necessary means to greatness. I shall first present the view and Leiter's arguments for it with reference to the textual evidence. I will then provide two arguments which suggest this view should be rejected.

2.1. Leiter's Critique of Morality

In *Nietzsche on Morality*, Leiter provides an insightful account of Nietzsche's critique of morality. He argues that by 'morality' Nietzsche does not mean *every* system of ethical evaluation, rather a particular family of normative views—that he calls 'morality in the pejorative sense' (which I shall refer to as 'herd morality' for short)—which feature two components: (1) The Descriptive Component; and (2) The Normative Component.

Regarding (1), Leiter argues that Nietzsche rejects herd morality partly on the grounds that it is committed to philosophically implausible views regarding, for example, human agency and free will; the self; the similarity of persons. Regarding (2), Leiter argues that Nietzsche rejects herd morality on the grounds that its values are harmful to higher men; to the cultivation of human greatness. Nietzsche does not reject these components with equal force. I agree with Leiter that the normative component is "the core of Nietzsche's attack on morality".[179] The reason being that although his attack on the descriptive component of herd morality attempts to expose its internal inconsistencies and falsehoods, the fact that a morality has these features does not undermine its ability to facilitate the production of great individuals. As Nietzsche famously claims:

> The falsity of a judgement is to us not necessarily an objection to a judgement...the question is to what extent it is life-advancing. life-preserving, species-preserving, perhaps even species-breeding...(*BGE*, §4)

For my purposes here, I shall focus on Leiter's attention to (2) the normative component of Nietzsche's critique of morality; that herd morality is hostile to the flourishing of nascent Goethes who are under its influence. On Leiter's interpretation, what is common to Christianity, Kantianism, Utilitarianism, for example, is that they all in some way maintain "pro-attitudes" towards ideal-typical "pro-objects", of which Leiter lists: altruism; equality; pity/compassion; peacefulness. Herd morality takes these things to be valuable for their own sake, while simultaneously maintaining "con-attitudes" towards "con-objects"—self-interest; inequality; danger and risk; bodily drives—which are thought to have no value. Leiter interprets Nietzsche to reject herd morality on the grounds that it fails to recognise that these "con-objects" are necessary conditions for the cultivation of human greatness, and that therefore it obscures their *instrumental* value. These are the grounds upon which Nietzsche calls for a 'revaluation of all values'.

Crucially, one of these values which herd morality undermines, according to Leiter's interpretation, is suffering. Herd morality holds that suffering is something that ought to be

[179] Leiter, (2002), p. 113.

abolished or at least significantly reduced; it aims at its alleviation, and the ideal of a world or world-to-come without suffering. Leiter discusses the role that suffering plays in Nietzsche's ethics in some detail, and in quoting *BGE*, §225 in support, he writes that:

> The value of suffering, according to Nietzsche, is only extrinsic: suffering — "great" suffering — is a prerequisite of any great human achievement.[180]

Leiter explains this claim by proposing that "what has *extrinsic* value has value only as a means to something else".[181] However, I argued in the last chapter that this view is problematic, for there are numerous forms of extrinsic value. Nevertheless, this claim does tell us that Leiter understands suffering to have only instrumental value in cultivating greatness: if the value of suffering is only extrinsic, and extrinsic value is only instrumental, then suffering has only instrumental value.

There is an important clarification that needs to be made at this point. In Chapter One I claimed that Nietzsche distinguishes between different forms of suffering. I agreed with Leiter on this point. He identifies suffering as potentially (1) a "human instinct towards cruelty"; (2) "internalizing cruelty via bad conscience"; (3) "existential *angst*"; (4) "brute facts of physiology"; (5) that humans are "endlessly striving".[182] However, when Leiter claims that suffering has only instrumental value, he does not specify whether his view only pertains to the form of suffering relevant to this thesis—(5)—or possible other forms. This is significant because suffering might (and as I shall argue, *does*) have instrumental value in one form, but not plausibly in another. With this ambiguity in mind, I address and later reject Leiter's instrumentalist view only in as far as he intends it (which we must assume he does) to characterize the phenomenon of suffering as striving to satisfy a lack.

Leiter's view provides a picture of the relation between suffering and greatness in which suffering acts as a spur to great achievement: creative human excellence is to "grow out of

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[180] Leiter, (2002), p. 131.

[181] Leiter, (2002), p. 128.

[182] Leiter, (2002), p. 257.

intense suffering".[183] As Leiter rightly claims: "there is no shortage in the history of art and literature of such cases".[184] For instance, we might think of Van Gogh's paintings as crucially inspired by his great suffering. Indeed, other commentators agree that Nietzsche is aware of this sort of value associated with suffering. Alexander Nehamas, for example, claims that Nietzsche thinks suffering "can be tolerated; it can even be pursued if a reason for it exists, if it is *the means* to further achievement."[185] Similarly, David Cartwright appears to view Nietzsche's interpretation of suffering in instrumental terms, claiming that it is "the vital motor for creativity, strength, and great accomplishment".[186] Further still, Peter Poellner makes a comparable claim when he emphasises Nietzsche's attention to the "putative instrumental value of various kinds of things (for example suffering...)".[187] Leiter's claim is distinct in that he explicitly says that suffering *only* has instrumental value. I shall return to the implications of such a claim shortly.

2.2. The Evidence

What evidence is there from the primary sources to suggest that Nietzsche values suffering instrumentally? There are a variety of passages which would purport to sustain such an interpretation. For instance, in *Human, All Too Human*, he writes that:

> When a misfortune strikes us, we can overcome it either by removing its cause or else by changing the effect it has on our feelings, that is, by reinterpreting the misfortune as a good, whose benefit may only later become clear. (*HH*, §108)

And similarly:

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[183] Leiter, (2002), p. 132.

[184] Leiter, (2002), p. 132.

[185] Nehamas, (1985), p. 122 (emphasis mine).

[186] David E. Cartwright, "Nietzsche's Use and Abuse of Schopenhauer's Moral Philosophy for Life" in Christopher Janaway, *Willing and Nothingness: Schopenhauer as Nietzsche's Educator*, (OUP, 1998), p. 136.

[187] Peter Poellner, "Aestheticist Ethics" in Christopher Janaway and Simon Robertson, *Nietzsche, Naturalism and Normativity*, (OUP, 2012), p. 72.

> We have already mentioned that mutilation, crippling, or serious lack of an organ often causes another organ to develop unusually well because it has to carry out both its own function and another besides. From this we can divine the origin of many a splendid talent. (*HH*, §231)

Later in *The Gay Science*, Nietzsche claims comparably that:

> A loss is a loss for barely one hour; somehow it also brings us some gift from heaven—new strength, for example, or at least a new opportunity for strength. (*GS*, §326)

Nietzsche's terminology in these passages is highly suggestive. Presenting suffering as a potential "opportunity" to "bring us some gift" may appear to imply treating the misfortune as having positive instrumental value. For example, suffering was valuable for Van Gogh, in this sense, in that he used it as a spur to creative accomplishment.

Nietzsche makes further claims to this effect in his treatment of the concepts of 'health' [*Gesundheit]* and 'sickness' [*Krankheit*], in which there is a shift in focus from one's suffering to one's *attitude* towards suffering. For Nietzsche, 'health' and 'sickness' are at least partly to be understood as concepts which categorise how a person responds to suffering.[188] 'Health' indicates an appropriate response, and 'sickness' an inappropriate response. Nietzsche writes that health is the disposition of "instinctively choosing the right means against wretched states" (*EH*, I, §2). The higher man, ergo the healthy man, "guesses what remedies avail against what is harmful; he exploits bad accidents to his advantage" (*EH,* I, §2). On this understanding—explicitly endorsed by Leiter as sufficient to account for the concept[189]—'health' means something more like *resilience*: an ability not just to cope with misfortune, but to use it to one's benefit in some way. In doing so, one 'reinterprets the misfortune as a good'.

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[188] I claim that health is only *in part* to be understood as resilience because Nietzsche in many places treats the concept with a greater degree of complexity regarding its function. For example, at least one other aspect of health Nietzsche considers is convalescence. In other words, to be healthy is (perhaps) consistent with, revealed by, and even enhanced by illness and recovery. Support for this interpretation can be found in *GS*, §120, §382; *EH*, I, §2. Taking this into account, I disagree with Leiter, who claims that 'resilience' is sufficient to account for the concept.

[189] Leiter, (2002), pp. 118-119.

An exemplary 'healthy' figure may be a character such as Odysseus. In *The Odyssey*, when Odysseus plans to make the long voyage home to his native Ithaca, suspicious of whether the Gods will plague his journey with misfortune, he states:

> I have a heart that is inured to suffering and I shall steel it to endure that too. For in my day I have had many bitter and painful experiences in war and on the stormy seas. So let this new disaster come. It only makes one more.[190]

When Nietzsche writes that "profound suffering ennobles" (*BGE*, §270), he may have in mind the "noble long-suffering Odysseus".[191] Exploiting Nietzsche's distinction between health and sickness is an interpretative strategy Leiter uses to defend his view that Nietzsche considers suffering to be instrumentally valuable. Nietzsche's language and terminology in the passages cited certainly lend themselves to the instrumentalist reading. Nevertheless, there is reason to be sceptical regarding whether this textual evidence can be said to support the view under consideration.

Much of the textual evidence I have cited in support of the instrumental view is subject to the important conceptual distinction regarding suffering and pain that Reginster identifies, and that I addressed in Chapter One. Reginster makes the distinction between three forms of 'displeasure' that Schopenhauer identifies in his account of the will, and that Nietzsche implicitly adopts: boredom, pain, and suffering. The distinction between the latter two is significant here. While suffering is the experience of displeasure at the frustration of unattained desired ends—*striving* to achieve one's goal—pain can be experienced regardless of what the will desires; it comes unbidden. However, these pains can spawn new desires. Sometimes Nietzsche offers the Schopenhauerian argument that pain can be a means of escaping boredom for precisely this reason: it prompts us to act by giving us something to strive for:

> *The craving for suffering*.— When I think of the craving to do something, which continually tickles and spurs those millions of young Europeans who cannot endure their boredom and themselves, then I realize that they must have a craving to suffer and to find in their suffering a probable reason for action, for deeds. Neediness is needed! (*GS*, §56)

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[190] Homer, *The Odyssey*, (Penguin Classics, 2003a), Book V: line 222, p.68.

[191] Homer, (2003a), Book V: line 484, p. 75.

Nietzsche continues:

> These young people demand that—not happiness but unhappiness should approach *from the outside* and become ... a monster so that afterward they can fight a monster. (*GS*, §56)

While I follow Reginster's method in reserving the term 'suffering' strictly to mean the frustration experienced in striving to attain one's goal, this is not a practice that Nietzsche adheres to. Although in this passage from *The Gay Science* Nietzsche speaks of suffering rather than pain, the point clearly being made is that pain can provoke action in that it provides a goal to strive towards, a challenge to overcome. In this way, pains, as Nietzsche writes of his own experiences, can "become an energetic *stimulus* for life, for living more" (*EH*, I, §2).

With this distinction in mind, there are two points to be made. Firstly, it is not obvious that Nietzsche is referring to suffering, understood as resistance to the will, in the passages mentioned above in support of the instrumental view. Rather, he appears to be referring to the phenomenon of pain. This is suggested by Nietzsche's choice of words: "misfortune", "bad accidents" and "loss", all of which seem to refer to phenomena which can affect a person regardless of whether they have a pre-existing desire they are striving towards. Furthermore, referring to these phenomena as "opportunities" suggests that Nietzsche is referring to pain, which in spawning new desires provide more opportunity to overcome resistances to those desires; a 'monster' to fight, as Nietzsche puts it. On this view, while pain is only a *stimulant* to the will to power, suffering by contrast is an *ingredient* of it.[192] As we shall see shortly, this has significant consequences for the *value* of each concept, given that I earlier claimed that power is at least one standard of evaluation for Nietzsche.

One might still hold that suffering can and does have instrumental benefits while rejecting the stronger view (apparently defended by Leiter) that suffering has *only* instrumental value. For example, experiencing obstacles to a goal, or denying oneself a desired end, could stimulate one to work harder. Furthermore, it might be the case that suffering in pursuing a particular goal can be a means to cultivating certain character traits Nietzsche would approve of: tenacity, endurance, self-control, and so forth.

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[192] Reginster, (2006), pp. 234-235.

One example of what Nietzsche commends can be found in his distinction between two forms of asceticism. On the one hand, Nietzsche clearly rejects an asceticism of self-denial (identified in the first chapter) whereby one takes pleasure in one's own suffering, and gives it meaning by interpreting it as punishment from God for being sinful. Nietzsche characterises this as the 'ascetic ideal',[193] which he interprets to be a kind of "cruelty towards one-self" (*GM*, III, §10). He says of this form of asceticism that:

> ...when this master of destruction, of self destruction wounds himself — it is the wound itself which afterwards compels him to live...(*GM*, III, §13)

However, Nietzsche distinguishes a second form of asceticism that is instrumental in nature: the voluntary abandonment of certain desires simply as a means to achieve some further creative end. Regarding this form of asceticism, Nietzsche writes that:

> ...a hard and hearty renunciation with a good will, belongs among the most favourable conditions for the highest spirituality. (*GM*, III, §9)

Moreover, these conditions of restraint are described as "the most proper and natural prerequisites for [the philosopher's] *best* existence and *finest* productivity" (*GM*, III, §7). One example Nietzsche gives to demonstrate this idea is the philosopher who denies himself romantic interests and marriage in order to focus on his work (*GM*, III, §7).

So Nietzsche does not and need not deny that suffering has instrumental value. The controversial issue is whether it is as Leiter claims that suffering has *only* instrumental value. I have claimed so far that the evidence given in support of such a view is weakened by Reginster's distinction between pain and suffering. But there is a further and more compelling reason to doubt these passages as supporting the instrumental view. This is captured by the following claim:

> (C) Attributing only instrumental value to suffering allows one to consistently affirm a goal that has been achieved yet deplore the suffering endured in achieving it, and this

[193] Though, Nietzsche holds that the ideal is realised in many contexts, including secular and scientific ones through 'the will to truth'. See GM, III, §23-25.

undermines the significant value Nietzsche takes the *process* of striving (i.e. suffering) to have.

I shall now defend this claim in an attempt to reject the instrumental view. In doing so it will be necessary to discuss (1) precisely what achievement consists in and how Nietzsche understands the concept; (2) Nietzsche's view on which aspects of achievements make them valuable. After settling these exegetical issues, I will then approach the question of (3) if this view is at all plausible. Answering the first two points will require reassessing the relevant aspects of the doctrine of the will to power discussed earlier. Addressing point (3) will require considering Nietzsche's position in light of contemporary debate surrounding the nature and value of achievement

3. Reasons for Rejecting the Instrumental View: A Closer Look at Achievement

Achievement clearly plays a significant role in people's lives. We admire Nobel Prize winners, Olympic athletes, scientists who make groundbreaking discoveries, great novelists, and so forth. As I argued in chapter two, achievement is also something Nietzsche clearly values. But what, if anything, is common in all of the above cases? This is a question which has not received as much philosophical attention as, for example, the nature of knowledge, pleasure, autonomy, and other typical non-moral values. This should strike us as odd, given that achievement frequently appears alongside these values on 'objective list' or perfectionist accounts of what constitutes well-being or a good life for a human.

One possible explanation for this is that achievements can be and often are accompanied by, or result in, other goods such as pleasure, knowledge, or the exercise of virtue, and this can obscure the value that achievement may have for its own sake. When I successfully complete a marathon, it may bring me immense pleasure. However, this should not be taken as the sole reason, if it is a good reason, to value achievements. In this section I seek to draw attention to these questions, and a number of related ones, by exploring the nature of achievement within the context of the will to power. I argue that the will to power,

understood as 'the overcoming of resistance to our desires', is remarkably close to our intuitions regarding the nature of achievement. Moreover, Nietzsche's account of the value of achievements demonstrates that the striving for one's goals is not merely valuable as a means, but itself a constitutive feature of valuable achievements.

3.1. Achievement: What is it?

Prior to discussing the value of achievement, we first need to sketch an idea of what an achievement is thought to be. This is a remarkably more complex task than might be presumed. Simon Keller gives a first approximation of achievements as when your goals are brought about "due in part to your own efforts".[194] Others conceive of achievement slightly differently in terms of the amount one stands to gain based on how much one has sacrificed.[195] Thomas Hurka, who has discussed Nietzsche's contribution to this debate in the most detail, argues that "It is when a goal is hard to bring about that doing so is an achievement".[196] Further still, Gwen Bradford has more recently viewed achievement as "characterized by a difficult process which culminates competently in a product".[197] My task here is to make explicit the subtle differences in these accounts with a view to gaining a specific understanding of what the intuitive conditions are for something to count as an achievement. It is important to note that my interest is not in how the word 'achievement' is often *used*, for its semantic function may shift in emphasising certain features: sometimes on an agent's efforts, and sometimes on their aim. Rather, I seek to draw out the conceptual parameters for a sense of achievement that fit Nietzsche's claims about suffering and struggle in the pursuit of one's goals.

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[194] Simon Keller, "Welfare and the Achievement of Goals", *Philosophical Studies* 121, (2004), p. 33.

[195] Douglas Portmore, "Welfare, Achievement and Self-Sacrifice", *Journal of Ethics and Social Philosophy* 2, (2007), p. 3.

[196] Thomas Hurka, (2006), p. 221.

[197] Gwen Bradford, "The Value of Achievements", in *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly* 94 (2013a), p. 205.

One might begin with some preliminary remarks about achievement's general structure or shape. A useful way of initially thinking about achievement in this way might be to contrast it with knowledge. Hurka puts it in the following way:

> In knowledge the world is a certain way and you make your mind match the world, by forming a true belief about it. In achievement you start with a goal in your mind and make the world match your goal.[198]

In *The Best Things in Life*, Hurka says something similar: that when you achieve something, "you've mastered reality by imposing an idea on it".[199] This already sounds particularly Nietzschean, who characterizes "life itself" in a remarkably comparable way as the "imposition of one's own forms" (*BGE*, §259).[200] In what follows we must iron out what this description precisely involves. As a starting point, however, it gives us two initial conditions for something to count as an achievement: (1) achievements are essentially goal-orientated; (2) achievement essentially involves successful attainment of these goals.

I take it that (1) is uncontroversial. It is difficult to comprehend the concept of achievement unless there is already the idea of a goal one wants to achieve. But it will be useful here to remind ourselves of a distinction that was made in the first chapter between two concepts that ought not to be conflated, that is, between a goal and a desire. In my discussion of Schopenhauer's account of the will, I argued that whereas taking something as a goal involves intending to make an effort to realize that goal, this is not necessary of a desire. The example used earlier concerned the World Cup: one may have a desire for England to win the next World Cup, while at the same time acknowledging that nothing one does will affect the outcome whatsoever. Moreover, one could also have this desire without ever knowing the eventual outcome. This is not true of a goal, which, in virtue of simply having it, commits one to pursuing or intending to pursue it. So to have something as a goal is, in part, to desire it, but you can desire something without having it as a goal (as in the World Cup case).

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[198] Hurka, *British Ethical Theorists From Sidgwick to Ewing*, (Oxford University Press: 2014), Ch. 9, p. 25.

[199] Hurka, *The Best Things in Life: A Guide to What Really Matters*, (Oxford University Press: 2011), p. 97.

[200] 'Life' is often a term Nietzsche uses to refer to the will to power (e.g. *BGE*, §13, *GS*, §349).

The truth of (2) is less obvious. Suppose Andy Murray's goal is to win Wimbledon. He makes it to the final, only to lose to his opponent and fail to secure his goal of winning the tournament. One might want to say that he has still achieved a great deal. He has faced and defeated a number of opponents prior to the final. Perhaps Murray broke his fastest serve record, or his most aces in the first set record, in the final match. Further still, we might imagine in addition that he has had to train extremely hard in order to overcome an injury or deal with a personal loss prior to the tournament.

However, we need not deny that these are genuine achievements. But crucially, they are *related* achievements. Often the most spectacular failures will involve a great deal of related achievements that are subordinate to the ultimate goal, as in this case. These related achievements are only achievements because they involved the *success* of overcoming injury, breaking a record, defeating previous opponents, and so forth. In contrast, there was no success in *winning Wimbledon*, since (in this example) Murray failed to defeat the final opponent. Hence, Murray has not achieved his goal. If we put this into Nietzschean terminology, a necessary condition for the will to power to express itself is not just to have resistances and challenges, but to *overcome* those resistances and challenges. Without success, there can be no increase in power.

So a genuine achievement must essentially involve success. Even so, the successful attainment of a goal, while a necessary condition of achievement, is by no means a sufficient condition. One reason for this is that if it is true that any successful attainment of a goal amounts to an achievement, then acts such as successfully tying a shoelace, opening a door, brushing one's teeth and raising one's arm would all constitute an achievement. We accomplish all kinds of goals of this nature constantly throughout the day, but most would be reluctant to call them 'achievements', at least in the more narrow sense that merits admiration and respect. It is this narrow sense of achievement that is my focus here, and the sense that Nietzsche is concerned with.

Including these everyday accomplishments in our understanding of achievement is highly counter-intuitive, and we might think a likely reason is that the listed acts are typically easy to accomplish. The implication then, is that genuine achievements are in some way connected to difficulty.

3.2. Difficulty

The difficulty of an achievement can be understood in terms of the degree of effort required to attain the goal. There are good reasons to suppose that the process by which one attains one's goal must be difficult to some degree in order for it to count as an achievement. After all, if it were the case that writing numerous plays with complex story lines and themes, discovering ground-breaking scientific principles, or running marathons were all easy and required little effort, we might not hold the likes of Shakespeare, Einstein or Usain Bolt in such high regard for their activities as we do.

The first thing to say about the nature of difficulty is that some activities will be difficult for some and not for others, and this has consequences for how we understand achievement. This point requires drawing distinction between absolute and relative difficulty. To say something is absolutely difficult does not make sense. The concept of difficulty is always relative to a person or group of persons. We often think of some things as difficult full stop: climbing Everest, for example. However, this cannot be correct. The reason for this is that for any 'difficult' task given (e.g. climbing Everest), we can conceive of a genetically enhanced being or race of aliens for whom it is easy to perform.[201] So like something being tall or being fast, the standard of difficulty is always relative. In the context of achievement, difficulty must be understood as difficulty relative to a particular class of agents, for example those with typical human abilities given their age, or relevant disability.[202] Walking across a room,

[201] I take this point from Bradford's discussion of the relativity of difficulty. Gwen Bradford, *Achievement*, (Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 27-28.

[202] Of course, the standard of difficulty will greatly depend on the context and the task. The more variables are known about the context and agent, such as age, the further these will determine the relative difficulty for a class of agents.

for example, will be significantly *difficult-for* a one year old, or a severely wounded soldier, but not *difficult-for* an average 25 year old.

But if difficulty is a necessary condition of a genuine achievement, a number of issues regarding how it earns this status must be addressed. Firstly, it is certainly true that some activities will be *experienced* as difficult by some and easy by others. For example, Andy Murray would likely find it easy to complete a serve at around 100mph, whereas someone new to the game would likely struggle to come close to doing the same. Similarly, a magnificent pianist would likely have trouble performing a particular concerto on a flute than a magnificent flutist.

This point is relevant to the task of defining the nature of achievement for the following reason. If we hold that achievement is the successful attainment of a goal that necessarily involves overcoming significant difficulty, and also affirm that some tasks will be found difficult by some and not others, then it seems this will lead us to deny the validity of achievements which particularly skilled individuals—those with "talents far beyond their genius" and the "virtuosos through and through" (*BGE*, §256)—complete with relative ease. On this account, it would, for example, be less impressive if Mozart found it easy and effortless to compose his scores, to the extent that it would no longer be counted as an achievement. This seems too strong. But, conversely, if there *are* genuine achievements that are easily accomplished, then difficulty is not an essential ingredient of achievement. The 'virtuoso argument' might be put the following way:

P1. Mozart experiences no difficulty in composing his scores.
P2. Mozart's compositions are genuine achievements.
C. Therefore, difficulty is not a necessary component of achievement.

This argument has led Duncan Pritchard to suggest that an achievement is a success that is *either* significantly difficult to accomplish, *or* is accomplished because of the exercise of one's abilities to a significant degree (one's high level of skill).[203] One potential response to this denial of the claim that difficulty is a necessary component of achievement might be to

[203] Duncan Pritchard, "Achievements, Luck and Value", in *Think*, Vol. 9, Issue 25, (CUP, 2010), pp. 23-24.

hold that even in cases of highly skilled individuals completing tasks with relative ease, their achievement isn't *completely* effortless. Even when Mozart composed his scores, for example, there was *some* degree of effort exerted which will be sufficient to count as an achievement.[204]

But I think a stronger, more plausible, response is to exploit a second distinction that is implicitly at work here; a distinction between *achievement-for* on the one hand and *achievement simpliciter*, achievement which is good more generally, on the other. That which is an achievement simpliciter differs from what is an achievement for X, in that being an achievement for X is being an achievement from a certain point of view — X's — whereas being an achievement *simpliciter* is being an achievement from a broader point of view that takes into account the relevant class of agents.

In order to elucidate this distinction and why it matters for understanding achievement, we must consider the relevance of what is subjectively difficult—that which the agent *experiences* as difficult—and objectively difficult—that which is difficult for any typical agent of the relevant class—on the other. Consider the task of climbing a mountain: this is something objectively difficult relative to an average human being's limited capabilities. But we can imagine some hardened mountaineers will complete this task with ease, while a novice would probably find it extremely gruelling, or couldn't do it at all. Like its being objective that a typical basketball player is tall relative to average human beings, climbing a mountain is objectively difficult. Yet, a novice climber will probably find this task subjectively difficult too.

By recognising this distinction in difficulty, we can affirm that some activities will be achievements-for a particular person—those which are subjectively difficult—and some activities will be achievements simpliciter—those which are objectively difficult, regardless if they are experienced as such. To refer back to the apparently problematic Mozart example, the position under consideration holds that if Mozart found it so easy to compose his scores on account of his immense talent and skill, then they do not constitute achievements *for him*.

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[204] Bradford appears to endorse this kind of response, though only as one of many. See Bradford, (2013a), p. 220.

Yet his compositions are achievements in a more general sense that are worthy of admiration because they were objectively difficult relative to average human capabilities.

This distinction neatly accounts for such cases, and also for corresponding cases where an objectively easy task is accomplished by overcoming vast subjective difficulty. For example a poor swimmer, Nick, who manages to swim 10 yards without help: this is not an achievement simpliciter—it is unlikely that there will be songs and poems written about his activity in years to come—because it is an objectively easy task relative to average humans, but it is certainly an achievement *for Nick*, who found it extremely difficult. The problem with the 'virtuoso' argument' then is that it equivocates between two notions of difficulty: P1 refers to what is subjectively experienced as difficult, whereas the conclusion seeks to exclude what is also objectively difficult.

Nietzsche's own focus is on a particular kind of achievement: those which are *both* subjectively and objectively difficult.[205] For Nietzsche, the will to power requires the agent to experience difficulty or 'resistance' in order to manifest the feeling of power, since this simply *is* the overcoming of resistance. Hence, if Mozart found his compositions all too easy, if it was not a challenge, his will to power would not be satisfied and it would not count as an achievement-for him: "an easy prey is something contemptible for proud natures" (*GS*, §13; cf. *EH*, I, §7). So achievements must firstly be subjectively difficult on his view.

However, as we saw in Chapter Two, Nietzsche is concerned with human greatness above all, and is therefore also interested in those who are capable of achievements simpliciter: the overcoming of exceptional objective difficulty. It can't be the case that that those who overcome vast subjective difficulty completing objectively easy tasks (e.g. Nick the poor swimmer who manages a 10 yard breaststroke, or someone who finds it extremely hard to get out of bed in the morning) are great achievers on Nietzsche's view. Rather, what is important is also the amount of objective difficulty one can overcome, and the ease with which this is done reflects the ability of that agent. Instead of skill or ability however,

[205] I agree with Reginster on this point. See Bernard Reginster, "The Will to Power and the Ethics of Creativity," in Brian Leiter and Neil Sinhababu (eds.), *Nietzsche and Morality*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 45.

Nietzsche's vocabulary tends to centre on strength and weakness: *"*The strength of those who attack can be measured in a way by the opposition they require" (*EH,* I, §7).

To be clear, there are three concepts at work here:

Achievement simpliciter = significant objective difficulty is overcome.

Achievement-for = subjective difficulty is overcome.

Because Nietzsche is mostly interested in those exceptional and awe-inspiring achievements that distinguish individuals from the herd, but that also manifest power (with power being the feeling that difficulty has been overcome), he requires achievements be *both* objectively and subjectively difficult:

N-achievement = subjective and objective difficulty is overcome.

These distinctions allow us to retain that difficulty is an essential feature of achievement. But there is an important question to raise regarding difficulty: what *type* of difficulty—intrinsic or extrinsic—is relevant to achievement and Nietzsche's understanding of it. I shall return to this point in detail when I shortly come to discuss the *value* of achievement. For now, we still need a descriptive account of the phenomenon. Another condition must be met before something can appropriately be designated as an achievement in the relevant sense.

3.3. The Luck Condition

Difficulty is a strong candidate for a necessary condition of achievement. However, if we are to grant this, successfully attaining a goal that involves significant difficulty is still not sufficient to constitute an achievement. This is because the account is vulnerable to a number of Gettier-style counter-examples. The most obvious counter-examples centre on the role of luck in bringing about one's goal.

Often when pursuing a goal we experience luck in attaining it. This has implications for what is considered an achievement and what is not. Both Keller and Portmore account for 'luck conditions', as I shall call them, when they write:

> If someone receives a large unexpected inheritance, it would sound odd to say to him, "Congratulations on your achievement", even if he always had the goal of becoming rich; he doesn't achieve anything.[206]
>
> There is a difference, then, between achieving one's goal and having the object of one's goal realized as a windfall.[207]

Luck is relevant to our understanding of achievement in at least two ways. If difficulty is a necessary condition for something to count as an achievement then this is why purely lucky accomplishments, such as winning the lottery, are not thought to constitute an achievement: they diminish the difficulty of a task.

For example, imagine an artist who has all of their paints set up, and a fresh canvas ready to make a portrait. The artist trips up and spills their paint all over the canvas, but upon viewing the consequence decides it is a fantastic piece of modern art that spectacularly captures all kinds of emotions and so forth. The end product might be valuable in some way, and it may be a related achievement that the artist had the skill to *perceive* something valuable in the split paint, but it would not be the case that the artist has really achieved anything *creatively*: it was purely a matter of luck that the paint he accidentally spilt landed on the canvas in such a way. Framed in terms of the will to power, this scenario would be one in which the resistance that is needed to be overcome (i.e. the difficulty inherent to the task of painting a portrait) is robbed from the agent, hence no power can be increased.

There is a reason why I have framed this point in terms of *pure* luck, and that is that luck might still have some role to play in achievement. One way in which this may be the case is the luck relevant to achieving a goal after making a tremendous effort. For example, a sports team may train for weeks or months in preparation for a prestigious tournament. The arduous training will prime the players to overcome many difficulties they will face, such as defeating a strong opposing team. However, it is plausible to think that the team's training, while increasing the *chances* of a win, are not sufficient for winning. Luck might play a role in a number of ways. For instance, our team may be lucky in that, even though they are putting in a great deal of effort, the opposing team's defence makes a number of tactical mistakes. In an

[206] Keller, (2004), p. 33.

[207] Portmore, (2007), p. 3.

extreme case, if the opposing team did this constantly so that our team rarely even engaged in the game, we would be less inclined to praise them for a great achievement. But ordinarily these mistakes happen rarely, assuming the teams are fairly evenly matched. This requires a team to have the ability and skill to be ready to capitalize on them when they do occur. As we saw in Chapter Two, Nietzsche explicitly recognises this particular role that luck can play in achievements: what "fortunate circumstances played a part" (*HH*, §164) in attaining a goal.

However, there is a second way luck can be pertinent here. Although many cases of luck in striving for a goal will result in the diminishing (in some degree) of the difficulty needed to be overcome, this is not true of all cases. Some tasks may be significantly difficult yet play no role as a *cause* of accomplishing a particular goal. The causal connection between the striving and the successful overcoming may purely be down to luck, and this has significant consequences for whether something counts as an achievement. The suggestion is that achievements must involve the prominent role of one's relevant abilities in causing the attainment of a goal.

Consider the following example, originally given by Keller,[208] but reformulated by Bradford to make it relevant to difficulty:

> *Joan and the politician.* There is a local law prohibiting overnight parking in the town where Joan lives, and she has the goal of having this law changed. She has the crazy idea that standing on her head for three hours a day will have the effect of changing the law. She does this. As it happens, the law does get changed, but, of course not as a result of anything Joan does. Rather, a local politician buys a new car and needs a parking space.[209]

In this example, Joan (1) has a clear goal: to change the parking law; (2) engages in a difficult activity she believes will bring about her goal: standing on her head for three hours a day; and (3) sees her goal realized: the law gets changed. However, the change in parking law does not constitute an achievement for Joan. It was a matter of luck for her that a local politician needed a parking space. The point here being that for something to count as an achievement,

[208] Keller, (2004), pp. 27-41.

[209] Bradford, (2015), p. 12.

there must be some specific causal connection between the difficulty endured and the goal that it aims at accomplishing.[210] Here is another example to clarify the point:

> *The healer priest*. Kyle is a teenager with a terminal illness. He falls into a coma with no indication of when he will return to consciousness. A priest from the church in Kyle's local area visits him daily and prays for his recovery, often organising prayer meetings encouraging others to do so as well. Being from a particularly zealous sect, the priest also takes time translating ancient passages from his holy text which he believes ward off evil spirits and demons. He then recites these daily in Kyle's room in order to prevent these demons from frustrating his recovery. As it happens, after two weeks, Kyle awakes from his coma and shows signs of improvement to his health. Of course, this improvement is not at all a result of the priest's rituals, rather it is due to the careful monitoring and care of the hospital staff.

Like the case of Joan, the healing of Kyle does not constitute an achievement for the priest, even though it involved difficulty and the attainment of a goal. This is because his efforts had no connection to what causes his goal of Kyle's recovery. So in order for something to count as an achievement, it appears that the goal has to be achieved *in a certain way*. Like the footballer's misplaced free kick which is blown into the back of the opposing team's net by a freak gust of wind, genuine achievements cannot be coincidental. Rather, the goal must be brought about by a particular means. Hurka phrases this causation in terms of realizing a goal "intelligently".[211] Pritchard frames this in terms of bringing about one's goal because of the "exercise of one's relevant abilities".[212] Further still, Bradford states that a goal must be realized "sufficiently competently".[213]

Nietzsche also alludes to this particular danger that luck can pose to one's achievement when he writes that "no conqueror believes in chance" (*GS*, §258), implying that the presence of luck would undermine one's strength of will or ability, and therefore the achievement. More precisely, luck of this nature undercuts the agent's self-efficacy—the extent of belief in their causal influence in reaching their goal—which is the very feeling of power; that

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[210] Of course, other unintended effects can also count as achievements when they are themselves foreseeable effects of attaining the intended goal, as where one's goal is to cure cancer and, as a result of succeeding in doing this, one achieves the associated fame.

[211] Hurka, (2011), p. 98.

[212] Pritchard, (2010), p. 22.

[213] Bradford, (2013a), pp. 205.

resistance has been overcome and defeated *by* the agent.[214] Instead, Nietzsche calls for "the future of man as his *will*...so as to make an end of that gruesome dominion of chance..." (*BGE*, §203).[215]

There is much to be said about the specific content of this condition, particularly regarding various epistemological questions with respect to the agent. For example, whether the agent has justified and true beliefs that their actions will cause the desired outcome.[216] However, these are questions which Nietzsche shows little interest in, and certainly does not elucidate in detail. Nevertheless, the discussion up to this point gives us enough of an understanding about the nature of achievements for my purposes here, which is to investigate their value.

Achievements are characterised by successfully overcoming significant difficulty to attain a goal in a non-lucky and competently caused way.[217] This is an intuitive account of our usage of the term to denote awe and admiration at one's triumphs. The doctrine of the will to power, understood as the will to the overcoming of resistance, is remarkably close to this intuitive account. The three conditions for power must be that (1) there must a goal; (2) there must be resistance to one's goal; (2) this resistance must eventually be overcome; (3) it must be overcome by making a demand on one's ability (or as Nietzsche frames it: strength), in a non (purely) lucky way.

Now that we have an understanding of the nature of achievement and how it corresponds to the will to power, we can enquire into which aspect of achievement makes it valuable. In doing so, I shall argue that, for Nietzsche, resistance to the will (i.e. suffering), is

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[214] The importance of self-efficacy has also been discussed in great detail in regard to Nietzsche's subsequent conception of freedom by Manuel Dries, though not explicitly in the context of luck. See Manuel Dries, "Freedom, Resistance, Agency" in Dries and Kail (eds.), *Nietzsche on Mind and Nature*, (Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 142-162.

[215] To be sure, in this passage Nietzsche makes a large number of independent points. In calling for "new philosophers" to revalue so called 'eternal values', Nietzsche is not specifically referring to the role of chance or luck in particular achievements. Rather, he derides the absence of the will and of "collective experiments in discipline" in the history of valuing in general. Nevertheless, the role of the will is used to show the value of deliberation and influence in the concept of achievement.

[216] Bradford devotes a chapter to discussion of competent causation, skilfully exploring these issues which I will not have time for here. See Bradford, (2015), pp. 64-82.

[217] I discuss the possibility of a fourth condition, a constraint on the value of the goal, in the following section.

not merely instrumental in reaching a valuable goal, but is in fact a constitutive feature of a valuable achievement. Moreover, that Nietzsche is right to hold this view.

4. Sources of Value: Three Competing Views

I will firstly present the two views which I shall argue fail both as accurate interpretations of Nietzsche's position and as plausible accounts of the value of achievements in themselves.

4.1. The Product View

An ordinary way of thinking about the pursuit of goals is that the easier it is to achieve those goals the better. In other words, the value of an achievement is only as valuable as the goal it aims at realizing. For example, many people have the goal to lose weight and get in shape, and they understand that a process of intense exercise and strict dieting is a means of doing so. But many prefer quicker and easier methods of achieving this goal through dietary supplements, steroids, and even hypnosis. According to the view under consideration, the *value* of achieving the goal is entirely in the end (being in shape) and independent of the difficult process of getting there (the exercise). I shall call this the Product View.

On the Product View, engaging in difficult activity, or suffering in striving to achieve one's goal, is of merely instrumental value: it is valuable as a means of bringing about some finally valuable end, but it *would have been better* if the end was already attained without difficulty or suffering. In cases where a tremendous effort results in no independently valuable goal, then according to the product view, that effort is worthless.

The product view can even allow that difficulty is of *negative* value if the goal is not independently valuable: that one's effort in overcoming difficulty was a waste of time. Scenarios like that of Sisyphus—rolling a large boulder up a mountain, only to watch it fall back down to the bottom, repeating this cycle perpetually—appear to support this intuition. As the myth goes, Sisyphus is being *punished* by being made to do this task. The example is almost always cited as an intuitive case of difficulty being of negative value when

experienced in pursuit of worthless goals. As we shall see shortly, some cases provide reasons to challenge this view.

The product view appears plausible in particular cases. For example, when a team of scientists finds the cure for a terminal illness, we might not think that this achievement is made more valuable by the addition of difficulty in coming to their conclusions. Rather, the achievement is valuable because of what it achieves: the prevention of death, or at least an improvement in health, for many people. According to the product view, it would be better if the cures for these diseases were *already* known. Examples of this nature, in which the value of the product is particularly striking, indicate that the product view gets something right about the value of achievements. However, I shall argue that its plausibility is severely limited.

The important aspect of the product view to consider for my purposes here is that it allows one to coherently deplore the suffering endured in achieving a goal while recognising its instrumental value. We might hold that hardships and suffering would not exist, or at least be significantly reduced, in ideal circumstances, while still viewing them as a means to certain ends. The product view allows for this idea by placing the value of achievements solely in the goal. Does Nietzsche accept something like the product view? I argue that he does not.

Understanding suffering as regrettable means in this way would be perfectly compatible with evaluative/normative views that Nietzsche explicitly rejects. For example, a hedonist could accept that a great degree of suffering is needed to achieve a goal that results in a significantly compensating pleasure. They would argue that it *would have been better* if reaching the pleasurable end didn't involve suffering; that an alternative means was available. Similarly, a Christian will likely accept that suffering is a means—even a necessary means—to certain goods. Striving to know God, for instance, might involve great sacrifice and suffering. However, it might have been better if they *already* knew God in the first place. Similarly, experiencing bliss in heaven is a goal which may require overcoming vast suffering in the real world. Yet if doing so is only instrumental, then it would have been better if one was *already* in a state of bliss, rather than struggling in striving to attain it.

It may seem odd that Christianity is placed alongside hedonism in Nietzsche's campaign against morality. The reason being that Christian ethics traditionally opposes hedonistic accounts of wellbeing, instead adhering closer to a broadly perfectionist view which holds that there are certain values which are good regardless of the pleasure they may bring an agent. However, Nietzsche argues that Christianity, in postulating a 'better world beyond' or 'perfected reality', ultimately values the same kind of happiness as the hedonist: happiness as the "alleviation of suffering" (*GM*, III, §17) that I presented in Chapter One. He writes:

> They tell me their misery means they are God's chosen and select, after all, people beat the dogs they love best; perhaps this misery is just a preparation, a test, a training, it might be even more than that – something which will one day be balanced up and paid back with enormous interest in gold, no! in happiness. They call that 'bliss' (*GM*, I, §14; cf. *BGE*, §61)

In a later note, Nietzsche makes explicit the idea that Christianity values suffering instrumentally; as something regrettable, which in ideal circumstances would not be:

> God created man happy, idle, innocent, and immortal: our actual life is a false, decayed, sinful existence, an existence of punishment—Suffering, struggle, work, death are considered as objections and question marks against life, as something that ought not to last; for which one requires a cure—and *has* a cure!
>
> From the time of Adam until now, man has been in an abnormal state: God himself has sacrificed his son for the guilt of Adam, in order to put an end to this abnormal state: the natural character of life is a curse; Christ gives back the state of normality to him who believes in him: he makes him happy, idle and innocent. (*WP*, §224, *KSA*, 1887, 11[262-263])

Nietzsche's interpretation of the Christian story of the fall of Adam and the redemption of mankind is one in which suffering might be valuable as a means of attaining a particular goal, but that in ideal circumstances, would not have to be endured. In the same passage, Nietzsche also makes a separable claim that Christianity can even discourage the value of struggle in freeing oneself from sin: that this struggle is dissolved and made unnecessary by the sacrifice

of Jesus on mankind's behalf. He refers to the "lazy Christian concepts" of "'blessedness', 'innocence', 'immortality'", and that the Christian's goal of freedom from sin is "not through his own deed, not through a stern struggle on his part, but ransomed for freedom through the act of redemption" (*WP*, §224; *KSA*, 1887, 11[263]).

If suffering has only instrumental value, then the process of striving is either worthless or of negative value. Herd morality endorses, or at least Nietzsche *believes* it to endorse, the instrumental view. This has significant consequences for an interpretation of Nietzsche in which he claims suffering is *only* of instrumental value. I offer the following initial argument (call this the "weak rebuttal"):

Premise 1: Suffering having only instrumental value is compatible with, and even affirmed by, herd morality.

Premise 2: Nietzsche strongly rejects herd morality at least partly on the grounds that it fails to appropriately value suffering.

Conclusion: The indication is that Nietzsche values suffering in an additional, non-instrumental, sense.

I have addressed premise 1, but regarding premise 2: it is difficult to exaggerate the frequency and force of Nietzsche's rejection of herd morality. In *Daybreak*, Nietzsche writes:

> Are we not, with this tremendous objective of obliterating all the sharp edges of life, well on the way to turning mankind into *sand*? Sand! Small, soft, round, unending sand! Is that your ideal, you heralds of the sympathetic affections? (*D*, §174)

The same sentiment only increases into Nietzsche's mature period. Herd morality, he claims is "a common war on all that is rare, strange privileged, the higher man, the higher responsibility (*BGE*, §212). He claims specifically of Christianity that "if anything is unevangelic it is the concept hero. Precisely the opposite of all contending, of all feeling oneself in struggle has here become instinct: the incapacity for resistance here becomes morality (*A*, §29). He continues, that Christianity has "waged *a war to the death* against this

higher type of man" (*A*, §5). His attack on herd morality is often explicitly framed in terms of the value of suffering, and rejects the claim that it is merely a regrettable means:

> If you experience suffering and displeasure as evil, hateful, worthy of annihilation, and as a defect of existence, then it is clear that besides your religion of pity you also harbour another religion in your heart that is perhaps the mother of the religion of pity: the *religion of comfortableness* (*GS,* §338).

> You want if possible — and there is no more insane 'if possible' — *to abolish suffering*; and we? — it really does seem that *we* would rather increase it and make it worse than it has ever been! (*BGE*, §225)

The accused in this passage are all those who define happiness in terms of the alleviation of suffering, as "narcotic, anaesthetic, calm, peace...*passivity*" (*GM*, I, §10), which was discussed in Chapter One in contrast to Nietzsche's 'new happiness', defined in terms of striving and actively overcoming challenges. If suffering is *always* seen to be something that should be eradicated or reduced, then it can only ever be of instrumental value: a means to achievement, but not what a valuable achievement consists in. Nietzsche is keen to distance himself from such a view, describing himself and like minds as endorsing the "opposite" position:

> What with all their might they would like to strive after is the universal green pasture of happiness of the herd, with security, safety, comfort and an easier life for all; their two most oft-recited doctrines and ditties are 'equality of rights' and 'sympathy for all that suffers' — and suffering itself they take for something that has to be *abolished*. We who are the opposite of this, and have opened our eyes and our conscience to the question where and how the plant 'man' has hitherto grown up most vigorously, we think that this has always happened under the opposite conditions, that the perilousness of his situation had first to become tremendous...his will to life had to be intensified into unconditional will to power (*BGE*, §44)

In the *Nachlass*, Nietzsche makes a strikingly similarly vehement rejection of herd morality explicitly on the grounds that it fails to appropriately value suffering. Most clearly, he writes:

> Such men of great creativity, the really great men according to my understanding, will be sought in vain today and probably for a long time to come; until, after much disappointment,

> one must begin to comprehend *why* they are lacking and that nothing stands more malignantly in the way of their rise and evolution, today and for a long time to come, than what in Europe today is called simply 'morality'—as if there were no other morality and could be no other—the aforementioned herd-animal morality which is striving with all its power for a universal green-pasture happiness on earth, namely for security, absence of danger, comfort, the easy life...The two doctrines it preaches most often are: 'equal rights' and 'sympathy with all that suffers'—and it takes suffering itself to be something that must absolutely be abolished. (*WP*, §957; *KSA*, 1885, 37[8])

This passage is telling: it explicitly states that the reason that great individuals are 'sought in vain today' is precisely because the dominant morality that exists is one in which suffering is considered to be something that ought to be abolished; at best a regrettable means to an end. My argument so far has been that (1) given herd morality is compatible with the product view —in which suffering, in Leiter's terminology, is 'only instrumental'—and (2) given that Nietzsche strongly rejects herd morality and calls for a 'revaluation of all values' at least partly on the grounds that it *fails* to appropriately value suffering, Nietzsche must value suffering in an additional and non-instrumental way. This "weak rebuttal" argument only gets us so far: it aims to raise our suspicion of the instrumental interpretation in light of Nietzsche's other claims. But we still need to know why Nietzsche would reject it, and what form of non-instrumental value suffering has in his view.

At least one major concern that Nietzsche has is that there is value to be found in the *process* of striving, and not just the goal one strives for, and this is obscured by the instrumental approach of the product view. Nietzsche's complaints are not unwarranted, and even intuitive, for the product view faces several serious problems. I shall now address this issue, and the reasons which I take to be the strongest to reject the product view as a plausible account of the value of achievements.

If the product view is true, then cases where a goal is reached after much effort and struggle, all else being equal, are no more admirable than those achieved with significantly less struggle. This is highly counter-intuitive. Hard work, effort, struggle and devotion seem to matter in our estimations of valuable achievements. Take the following example:

> Goethe[1]: in one possible world, Goethe writes *Faust* in a relatively short time in the comfort of his large house. He experienced some writers block and stress on odd days, and like any creative project there were more productive moments than others. Much work was done that was later discarded, nevertheless, writing *Faust* was enjoyable for him.
>
> Goethe[2]: in a second possible world, Goethe writes *Faust* while enduring the same hardships. However, it takes him years longer due to a number of additional obstacles and setbacks. Being significantly poorer, he has to work ten hours a day at a mundane job to support himself, and therefore can only afford to allocate a short time each evening to developing *Faust*, which he does in a particularly unsuitable workspace. His wife leaves him, and he also experiences the loss of two close family members while carrying out his project. His health deteriorates, likely due to his depression over the loss, and so on. Despite this, Goethe completes *Faust* after much toil and struggle.

In this example, each Goethe produces an identical *Faust*. Both are great achievements (assuming they satisfy the conditions outlined in the previous section), yet there is a very strong intuition that Goethe[2]'s achievement is worthy of more admiration for being a *greater* achievement. The reason being that Goethe[2] has overcome significantly more difficulty in attaining his goal. Likewise with the case of Beethoven, argues Reginster, our admiration for him "grows deeper when we learn of his deafness of loneliness".[218]

But the product view simply does not allow for this possibility. For the product view, what makes an achievement valuable is purely the final value of the goal held independently of the process. Hence, what is admirable about both Goethe's achievements is the final value of *Faust*, and the difficulty both faced in completing it is merely instrumental. The consequence of the product view seems to be that Goethe[1] and Goethe[2]'s achievements are of identical value. But in clashing with a strong contrary intuition, this gives us reason to be sceptical of the product view's plausibility.

There are two potential responses that defenders of the product view can make at this point. Firstly, one might defend the claim that Goethe[1] and Goethe[2]'s achievements of writing *Faust* are equally valuable, but the reason there is a strong intuition that Goethe[2] is worthy of more admiration is because, on top of writing *Faust*, he also had to face adversity at his job,

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[218] Reginster, (2006), p. 180.

overcome poverty, and so forth. The thought being that in the case of Goethe^2, there is not one achievement, but at least two independent achievements, and so *all things considered* his activity is more valuable.

But this type of response does not do the work required in order show that the value of an achievement resides purely in its product. If Goethe^2 is worthy of more admiration in virtue of having overcome adversity in not one achievement but two, this still recognises *overcoming adversity* either as an achievement itself or as a constitutive feature of an achievement. If it is itself a valuable achievement to have overcome adversity, then this is surely because it was difficult to do so, which is indicated by the thought experiment. Consequently, this argument would already account for the value of overcoming difficulty. If, on the other hand, it is not overcoming difficulty which is itself an achievement, but the goals he attained at his mundane job, for example, which constitute the second achievement, then this leaves the product view upon to a further objection: that it cannot account for genuinely valuable achievements where the product is of zero (or perhaps negative) value. I return to this type of case in detail shortly.

A second counter-argument would be to distinguish between admiration for the achievement and admiration for the achiever. With this strategy, what we are additionally admiring in Goethe^2 is not his achievement per say, but rather in dealing with the additional obstacles to his goal, we admire his exercising of relevant executive virtues which are themselves independently valuable. This response would seemingly allow defenders of the product view to affirm that purely the excellence of *Faust* is what makes each achievement valuable, while simultaneously satisfying our more positive intuitions regarding Goethe^2 by differentiating between the value of the work and assessment of the strength of character it required. Consequently, all things considered Goethe$^{2'}$s activity would be more valuable because of the excellence of *Faust* plus the presence of virtue.

Yet this response also fails to be convincing insofar as it aims to provide the best explanation for *all* of the value in question. This argument that defenders of the product view could make would only allow overcoming difficulty to indicate an admirable character. While I do not deny that the exercise of (for example) discipline, perseverance, tenacity, endurance, and so forth, is an *additionally* valuable feature of the activity, that this is *only* why Goethe$^{2'}$s

activity is more valuable is an odd view to take. The reason being that as we saw in the last section, it is not the case that difficulty is merely a contingent feature of achievements, it is *essential* to them: something cannot be an achievement in the relevant sense unless it is significantly difficult. With this in mind, there is no real pressure to adopt a purely character-centred evaluation rather than the more natural reading of the example in terms of overcoming difficulty. On this view, Goethe[2]'s *achievement* is 'attaining X under circumstances Y'.

The *Faust* thought experiment is a variation of a case given by both Reginster and Bradford to demonstrate the intuitive pull of this idea that the process of achieving one's goal contributes to the value of an achievement, and not solely the product.[219] Nietzsche clearly shares this positive intuition, which he expresses plainly in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. In the section entitled 'Of the One Thousand and One Goals', Nietzsche writes that:

> A tablet of the good hangs over every people. Behold, it is the tablet of their overcomings; behold, it is the voice of their will to power. Praiseworthy is whatever seems difficult to a people; whatever seems indispensable and difficult is called good; and whatever liberates even out of the deepest need, the rarest, the most difficult — that they call holy. (*Z*, I: §15)

Although there are a number of different points being made in this passage, I take this to show part of Nietzsche's commitment to the view under consideration: that the process of striving and overcoming obstacles is a valuable feature of achievements. Hence Nietzsche's great admiration for Goethe being at least partly in virtue of his belief that he "was not fainthearted but took as much as possible upon himself, over himself, into himself" (*TI*, 'Skirmishes', §49). On Nietzsche's view, although Goethe had a clear aim (to complete *Faust*) this was not his sole aim. Goethe also aimed at bringing about the completion of *Faust* in a way that gave him a challenge: he aimed at difficulty, for "proud natures" are excited "only at the sight of all possessions that are hard to come by" (*GS*, §13).

As I argued in Chapter One, the will to power can only manifest itself through the *process* of striving. Power can only be experienced by overcoming difficulty—resistance to

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[219] Reginster's version of this case involves two scientists: one who makes a great discovery after a lifetime of effort, and the other stumbles upon the same discovery by chance. However, introducing the variable of luck makes this example more complicated than it needs to be for the purpose of comparing the value of each scenario. I have altered the example with the Goethe case so luck is not a factor. For Bradford's version, see Bradford, (2013a), p. 208.

the will—and difficulty can only be experienced in striving to realize a goal; a goal which according to Nietzsche, when achieved, will be overshadowed by a subsequent new goal which provides *more* resistance. In this sense the agent in part *desires* difficulty; for resistance to provide them with a challenge. Difficulty, of which suffering is a form, is therefore a *constitutive* feature of the good rather than a mere means to it.

The *Faust* thought experiment given above strongly suggests Nietzsche to be on to something; that the process of overcoming resistance to our goals matters for the value of that achievement, and is not merely instrumental. The argument I have offered—call this the "strong rebuttal"—is a *reductio ad absurdum*, which I take Nietzsche to endorse.

Premise 1: The Product View holds that the value of an achievement resides solely in the goal.

Premise 2: On this view, the process of struggle in achieving the goal is worthless or disvaluable.

Premise 3: The process of struggle in achieving is valuable.

Conclusion: The Product View is false.

Bradford derives from this conclusion that "the value of achievement increases as difficulty increases".[220] But although this may be true as a rule of thumb, this move is too quick, for there is an important distinction to be made that Bradford does not directly explore, namely, the distinction between different *types* of difficulty: the intrinsic and extrinsic.

Intrinsic difficulty can be understood as the difficulty, or 'resistance', essential to a task, that anyone in pursuit of its goal will have to surmount. For example, the rules of tennis will require a player to overcome the intrinsic difficulties of energy preservation, calculated and precise racket-motions, acute depth perception, anticipating the opponents strategy, and so forth. Extrinsic difficulty can be understood as that which is not specifically demanded by the task, but nonetheless provides obstacles to the realization of a goal. For instance, if the tennis match was being played on a run-down court, in total darkness, or the rackets being used were of an extremely low quality

[220] Bradford, (2013a), p. 211.

If we affirm plainly that the more difficult something is the better the achievement will be, provide it is overcome, then this rests on the assumption that both types of difficulty contribute equal value to an achievement. But this is far from obvious. In order to strengthen the view that difficulty does add value to an achievement, it will be helpful to disentangle these two concepts.

Consider again the *Faust* example. Goethe[1] overcomes all the intrinsic difficulties in writing *Faust* but encounters little if any extrinsic difficulty. On the other hand, Goethe[2] experiences all the same intrinsic difficulty, but in addition overcomes vast extrinsic difficulty. On my view, and plausibly Nietzsche's, Goethe[2] has a greater achievement; he has 'overcome more resistance'. However, if we alter the case given and suppose that Goethe[2]'s *Faust* was of much lower quality, then the intuition that his achievement is a better one than Goethe[1]'s is significantly weakened, even if his extrinsic difficulties remained. This indicates that overcoming intrinsic difficulty somehow counts for more than overcoming extrinsic difficulty.

To take another example that addresses this distinction, we might consider athletic pursuits such as weight lifting or pole-vaulting. Typically, we do not see these athletes removing fingers or limbs in order to make their task more difficult. Rather, we do see them adding weight to the bar, or raising the height to be jumped: they increase the intrinsic difficulty of their task and not the extrinsic difficulty. Similarly, marathon runners tend not to put stones in their shoes when competing. Rather, they increase the intrinsic difficulty by attempting to run a longer distance in a shorter time. I take this to indicate at least part of an explanation regarding the different contributions of value that these two types of difficulty make to an achievement. Of course, one reason why athletes do not remove limbs even though it adds difficulty to their task is that achievement is not the *only* good thing in life. Removing limbs would cause significant harm to other aspects of their well-being, or at the very least be instrumentally bad for other activities. However, the point here is that even if it didn't (perhaps the weightlifter temporarily numbed some of his fingers), it is not obvious that the achievement would be of more or equal value to the same task with but with the equivalent *intrinsic* difficulty instead.

Nietzsche does not address this distinction explicitly; only using a broader terminology of 'resistance' to the will. However, Katsafanas argues that Nietzsche implicitly associates the will to the overcoming of resistance with intrinsic difficulties. He distinguishes two claims:

> (A) Whenever we act, we aim to encounter and overcome resistance of any and all kinds.
>
> (B) Whenever we act, we aim to encounter and overcome resistances that are related to the activity that we are performing.[221]

Katsafanas interprets Nietzsche to endorse (B), for claim (A) has absurd implications, which I shall discuss in the final section of this chapter. Katsafanas argues that the will to power motivates one to express one's drives in a way that gives them resistance to overcome, and that one only aims to encounter and overcome resistances that give that drive the relevant opportunity for expression. Katsafanas writes that:

> ...our actions are motivated by drives; drives aim at continuous expression of their characteristic forms of activity; thus, drives motivate the agent continuously to seek resistances upon which to vent their form of activity. The particular types of resistance that the agent is motivated to seek will depend upon the drive in question.[222]

Put another way, the determinate goal that one pursues will ascertain what form the resistance to its attainment will take. For example, if my goal is to compose a brilliant and original score, the resistance essential to the task will involve creating harmonies and interesting musical expressions, engaging with and developing existing genres, innovating new techniques, blending a variety of instruments, and so forth. The implication of Katsafanas' view is that the will to power aims at intrinsic difficulty rather than extrinsic difficulty.

However there is an ambiguity regarding Katsafanas use of "related to" in formulation (B). It seems that at least some forms of extrinsic difficulty can be 'related to' the activity one is performing too. When one composes, the presence of an irritating noise will make the task harder. When one runs a marathon, it will be harder to complete during a storm, or with a

[221] Katsafanas, (2013), p. 176.

[222] Katsafanas, (2013), p. 177.

stone in one's shoe. It is unclear how drives cannot be relevantly expressed through these difficulties. Moreover, it is likely Nietzsche does indeed value the overcoming of extrinsic resistance as well: for example triumphing in one's achievement while living in a society whose norms seek to thwart that excellence. Or alternatively, when individuals are victorious against all the odds, perhaps due to ill health (as in Nietzsche's own case). I agree with Katsafanas that the will to power likely *motivates* one to seek intrinsic resistance, but the *value* of extrinsic resistance cannot be ignored altogether when evaluating a particular achievement, and the appeal to Nietzsche's conception of drives does not seem to help in determining the relative value of each form of resistance.

We have seen so far that the product view is implausible, both as an interpretation of Nietzsche as well as an exhaustive account of the value of achievements itself. At least one reason for this is that the product view fails to be able to account for the value of the process of attaining a goal: a feature that Nietzsche clearly values. But at this point we must ask whether Nietzsche values the overcoming of resistance unconditionally, that is, even if the goal strived for is worthless, or of negative value. This will allow us to gain further clarity on how Nietzsche thinks achievements are valuable, and under what conditions. I shall now discuss this possibility and its complexities.

4.2. The Process View

Some genuine achievements have goals which appear to be completely worthless when considered independently of the process of achieving them. For example, many undertake various challenges, such as mountain climbing or marathon running, not because of the what they result in: being on top of a mountain, or being 26 miles away from a previous location—these states appear to have no *intrinsic* value—but they partake in these activities purely because of the value of the process of achieving them. These people do not get helicopters to the top of the mountain, or catch a taxi to the finish line, but choose to engage in their activity precisely because it is difficult to achieve the goal. On one understanding of the value of achievement—call this the process view—the striving to attain a goal and overcoming difficulty is *entirely* what makes achievements valuable, regardless of whether the goal is

itself independently valuable. Independently valuable goals may add to the total value of an achievement all things considered, but are by no means necessary for a valuable achievement.

There may be an intermediate position here which could explain such cases without reference to difficulty. One, for example, might eschew getting to the top of the mountain via helicopter, but deny that this is because getting to the top under one's own steam is difficult; one might just value getting to the top *under one's own steam*, whether it is difficult or not. This might account for some cases, but it is unlikely to account for all cases. It is most intuitive when the goal, or the effects of achieving it, is something independently worthwhile. It would be odd if the *only* reason one climbed a mountain, or ran a marathon, was because they valued self-sufficiency. But my purpose here is to explain what makes struggling to obtain worthless goals valuable achievements in-themselves, regardless of their effects. Many people *do* climb mountains explicitly to overcome difficulty, and it is these cases which are relevant to this discussion.

Paradigm cases of this understanding of the value of achievements can be found in games. Contra Wittgenstein, Bernard Suits attempted to define what it means to play a game, and Hurka has recently discussed the merits of Suits' view in relation to what he takes to constitute the value of achievement.[223] Suits argued that "playing a game is the voluntary attempt to overcome unnecessary obstacles",[224] and proposed three conditions that, taken together, constituent a sufficient definition:

> (1) *the prelusory goal:* one always aims at a *goal* that can be described independently of the game (e.g. in football, the goal is to get the ball in the back of a particular net).
>
> (2) *the constitutive rules:* the function of these rules is to forbid the most efficient means to the prelusory goal. (according the rules of football, you cannot pick up the ball and run it into the net; you cannot pass the ball to a player who is standing past

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[223] Hurka, (2006), "Games and the Good", *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society*, Supplementary Volumes, Vol. 80, pp. 217-235.

[224] Bernard Suits, *The Grasshopper: Games, Life and Utopia*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978) p. 41. Hastings Rashdall made a similar claim about sport: "Sport has been well defined as the overcoming of difficulties simply for the sake of overcoming them". See Hastings Rashdall, *The Theory of Good and Evil*, (London: OUP, 1907), p. 105.

the opposing team's final defender; there is a time limit; there are constraints on appropriate tackling, substitutions and so forth).

(3) *the lusory attitude*: a person's willingly accepting the constitutive rules. In other words, wanting there to be difficulty to overcome.

The prelusory goal and constitutive rules together give game playing an important feature, namely *difficulty*, and the lusory attitude chooses it *because of* this feature. Suits' full definition is that:

> To play a game is to attempt to achieve a specific state of affairs [prelusory goal], using only means permitted by the rules...where the rules prohibit the use of more efficient in favour of less efficient means [constitutive rules], and where the rules are accepted just because they make possible such activity [lusory attitude].[225]

When one engages in a football match, does a crossword, plays computer games, and so forth, one does so not with the aim of enduring their associated difficulties as a mere means to achieve the valuable goal: it would not have been better if the goal was achieved without the difficulty. Rather, the difficulty is precisely what makes the activity valuable.

The first thing to say about Suits' definition of a game is that it is highly inclusive. The three conditions allow for a number of activities that are not generally considered games, for instance; mountain climbing, to be designated as such. In this sense, Suits' definition is highly stipulative. A second point is that not all games seem to have a 'prelusory' goal (i.e. a goal that can be described independently of the game itself) as Suits claims. For example, in chess or ice-skating, the rules which govern the game have to be referred to in order to make sense of the goal. Nonetheless, the crucial aspect of his view for my purposes, regardless of whether his definition is consistent with all games, is that some activities are valuable not because of the goal they aim at achieving, but because of the difficulty involved in doing so.

The question arises whether Nietzsche thinks the overcoming of resistance is valuable in this sense as well; that suffering to achieve one's goal makes for a valuable achievement even if the goal one pursues is completely worthless. In support of this view, an analogy between game playing and Nietzsche's position regarding the value of striving is not as far-fetched as

[225] Suits, (1978), pp. 54-55; additional brackets taken from Hurka, (2006).

one might think. The general tone of Nietzsche's remarks on the pursuit of one's goals is comparable to a game, more specifically the Greek concept of 'Agon', usually translated as contest or competition (see *HH*, §158, §170; *D*, §431; *TI*, 'Socrates', §8, 'Skirmishes', §23).

One example to draw out this theme is Nietzsche's claims regarding the need for enemies, for they create a struggle. So for example, it was in a sense bad for Achilles to slay his enemy Hector, for although he achieved his goal, he deprived himself of the only worthy opponent that could potentially defeat him and give him a real challenge. Nietzsche recognises the "value of having enemies" (*TI*, 'Morality as Anti Nature', §3) for precisely this agonistic reason; they provide resistance to overcome; for the continuation of significant struggle in competition (*Z*, I, §10; III, §12; *GM*, I, §10; *EH*, I, §7).

Nietzsche further emphasises the value of struggle and process in the following passage from *Human all too Human* on war:

> When the Romans of the imperial era had grown a little tired of war they tried to gain new energy through animal-baiting, gladiatorial combats and the persecution of Christians. Present-day Englishmen, who seem also on the whole to have renounced war, seize on a different means of again engendering their fading energies: those perilous journeys of discovery, navigations, mountain-climbings...so as to bring home with them superfluous energy acquired through adventures and perils of all kinds (*HH*, §477)

Nietzsche aims to make a number of separable points in this passage, but the relevant point here is that there is supposedly a strong intuitive admiration for the process of striving—war for the sake of war (e.g. *Z*, I, §10)—to the extent that perhaps it matters not what the goal is, as in the case of games.

The structure of the will to power that I have presented is also remarkably similar to Suits' definition of a game. Consider again Suits' three point analysis. According to him, when we take part in a game we start with a *prelusory goal*, which as stated above is an objective which can be described independently of the game. The same is true of the will to power as I have defined it: since resistance to the will is always defined in relation to desired determinate ends, resistance cannot be made intelligible, and cannot be overcome, unless the agent desires a particular end.

The second element Suits identifies are the *constitutive rules*, whose function is to forbid the most efficient means of achieving the *prelusory goal*. Again, the will to power, understood as the process of overcoming resistance, reflects this aspect of game playing: given that power can only be experienced as a result of overcoming resistance to the will, activities worthy of increasing one's power must be sufficiently difficult: "Ah, whoever guesses what is my will should also guess on what *crooked* paths it must proceed" (*Z*, II, §12; emphasis mine).

The third element, the *lusory attitude*, is perhaps the most relevant to why suffering cannot have merely instrumental value in Nietzsche's view. This is the aspect which requires a person to willingly accept the constitutive rules that make a game difficult. In the language of the will to power, this translates as *desiring* there to be difficulty so that it can be overcome. Nietzsche, as we have seen, repeatedly emphasises this feature: "the poison of which weaker natures perish strengthens the strong – *nor do they call it poison*" (*GS*, §19; emphasis mine).

Hurka has defended the process view about the value of achievements, and also interprets Nietzsche to endorse it. He writes:

> ...for both Marx and Nietzsche a central human good was activity that on the one side is necessarily directed to a goal but on the other derives its value entirely from aspects of the process of achieving it. This is why the type of value they affirm is paradigmatically illustrated by playing in games; when one's goal is trivial, the only value can be that of process.[226]

One immediate problem with interpreting Nietzsche in this way, and as a view about achievements more generally, is that it will implausibly allow certain mundane activities to be valuable achievements. For instance, if we again imagine Sisyphus rolling his boulder up a mountain for all eternity, his process of doing so will involve much resistance to be overcome. According to the process view, it would be seem as though Sisyphus' activity is exceedingly valuable. This is not only extremely counter-intuitive, but also highly

[226] Hurka, (2006), p. 231.

improbable as a case of genuine achievement in Nietzsche's view. This point has been emphasised recently by Poellner. He writes:

> What intrinsically matters about an activity, according to him [Nietzsche], is not just the quantity of resistance it overcomes, whatever that resistance may be. Not every overcoming of obstacles, however great, is necessarily significant or worthwhile. Evaluative judgements are also possible and required about the worth of an overcoming in terms of what it is an overcoming *of* and what it is an overcoming *towards*; that is, what our first-order desires aim at.[227]

Similarly, Reginster makes precisely this objection, writing that:

> ...if the nature of the determinate end did not matter, then we would no longer be able to rule out as frivolous, disgusting, or simply ridiculous achievements such as that of eating twenty-five pies in one sitting.[228]

Reginster takes this to indicate that Nietzsche must implicitly hold some substantive constraints on the determinate goal in order for something to count as a valuable achievement. Nietzsche does not indicate what these constraints are, only that they are not necessarily moral constraints.[229]

However, Hurka is well aware that the process view, as it stands, is vulnerable to this objection. Consequently, he develops a process-account of Nietzsche's understanding of the value of achievements which aims to accommodate these worries. Hurka interprets Nietzsche not to posit substantive goals which make an achievement valuable, but rather he "evaluates goals in terms of formal qualities, ones that are compatible with many different substantive contents".[230] Hurka cites two such properties that Nietzsche identifies, with the differing value of achievements, on this view, corresponding to the degree they are realized.

The first formal property Hurka identifies is how far one's goal is integrated amongst a number of diverse others, so "they form a system in which many different ends are pursued as

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[227] Poellner, (2012), p. 54.

[228] Reginster, (2006), p. 183.

[229] Reginster, (2006), p. 181.

[230] Hurka, "Nietzsche: Perfectionist" in Leiter and Sinhababu (eds.), *Nietzsche and Morality*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2007), p. 23.

means to a single overriding one".[231] Hurka calls this unity-in-diversity, or what is more commonly known as organic unity: what one needs is not just a large number of diverse goals, but to have them unified by a single taste.[232] The textual evidence for this notion is plentiful, and is present in Nietzsche's work as early as *Schopenhauer as Educator*, where he states that riches, honours, and even great wisdom cannot "lift the individual out of the profound depression he feels at the valuelessness of his existence", but how "striving after these valued things acquires meaning only through an exalted and transfiguring overall goal" (*UM*, III, §3). In contrast, Nietzsche expresses disdain at "specialists" and the "jobbing workman" (*BGE*, §204) who only focus their unified efforts in one discipline. Instead, he writes in a much quoted passage:

> *One thing is needful*. -- To "give style" to one's character -- a great and rare art!... In the end, when the work is finished, it becomes evident how the constraint of a single taste governed and formed everything large and small. Whether this taste was good or bad is less important than one might suppose, if only it was a single taste!" (*GS*, §290; cf. cf. *BGE*, §188; *GM*, II, §17; *TI*, 'Skirmishes', §49)

Like his conception of strong and varied drives that was discussed in chapter two, Nietzsche holds that a great achiever's value lies not in a particular goal, but in his "range and multiplicity, in his wholeness in diversity" (*BGE*, §212). Hurka concludes from this textual evidence that Nietzsche "deemed activities good if they involve organizing one's aims around a single goal whatever that goal is".[233]

The second formal property is what Hurka calls the goal's extent, both in (1) time; and in (2) the number of people or objects it involves.[234] With regard to (1), Nietzsche derides "all more short-willed and unreliable creatures" (*GM*, II, §2), in favour of he who can "extend his will across great stretches of his life" (*WP*, §962; *KSA*, 1885, 34[96]). He shows in a later note his hope for:

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[231] Hurka, (2007), p. 22.

[232] I discuss organic unity as a principle in detail in the next chapter.

[233] Hurka, (2006), p. 231.

[234] Hurka, (2007), p. 23.

> ...a new, tremendous aristocracy, based on the severest self-legislation, in which the will of philosophical men of power and artist-tyrants will be made to endure for millennia. (*WP*, §960; *KSA*, 1885, 2[57])

In addition, I argued in Chapter Two that Nietzsche is interested in the extent to which one's achievements affect the lives of people, yet it is ambiguous as to whether Nietzsche takes this to be merely a *result* of a great achievement or what a great achievement at least partly *consists in*. Hurka defends the latter thesis, drawing attention to passages *GM*, II, §17-18 where Nietzsche venerates a heroic people who "unhesitatingly lays its terrible claws upon a populace perhaps tremendously superior in numbers but still formless and nomad" (*GM*, II, §17), and those "artists of violence and organizers who build states" and who exercise their force on "some *other* man, *other* men" (*GM*, II, §18).

To take an example which Hurka uses in his *Perfectionism* to support this intuition, we might consider the task of a politician who fights to get an important and influential social bill passed in contrast to someone tying a shoelace. According to Hurka, the reason why the politicians achievement is a greater one is firstly because they had a number of goals subordinate to their goal of passing the bill, and secondly due to the fact that their achievement is more extended, both in time and across persons: "It includes everyone in his society for the foreseeable future, whereas the lace-tier's involves just one person and a shoelace now".[235]

Taken together, Hurka holds these two properties as sufficient to account for how Nietzsche values achievements; that he "values process independently of product".[236] Hurka concludes:

> Nietzsche wanted people to have both extended goals and ones that unify their lives...he didn't care what this goal was, so long as it was extended and unifying—you could organise your life around anything.[237]

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[235] Hurka, (1993), pp. 115-116.

[236] Hurka, (2011), p. 115.

[237] Hurka, (2011), p. 115.

There are significant merits to Hurka's interpretation. One such merit is that it captures Nietzsche's highly pluralistic account of the good life. If we again consider Nietzsche's paradigm list of great achievers, they include people as diverse in their projects as Shakespeare, Cesare Borgia, Da Vinci, Julius Caesar, and Beethoven. Hurka's formal approach to the value of achievements can account for this plurality by explaining their value not in terms of each of their substantive goals, but in terms of qualities common to each individual's striving.

Hurka's interpretation is also effective in defending against the Sisyphus objection raised earlier. Hurka provides two reasons why Sisyphus' achievement is not a valuable one without appealing to the value of his goal independently of the process of achieving it. First of all, Sisyphus does not have any other goals; he is doomed to repeat his single activity for eternity. As a result, he cannot pursue a range of diverse projects with a unified will. Secondly, rolling his boulder up a mountain has little to no extent in time or across persons. His activity effects him and him alone, and only in his temporal existence. On these grounds, Hurka can dismiss Sisyphus as a genuine achiever and retain the integrity of the process view.[238] This strategy is also effective in defending against Reginster-style examples like that of the person who overcomes vast difficulty in eating twenty-five pies in one sitting. This activity, and variants of it, are unlikely to be highly unifying and influential across time and persons in history.

It must be said that Hurka's account does not directly deal with difficulty. Rather, it is implied that the two formal conditions proposed, a complex interrelation of subordinate goals and one that has a far-reaching extent, make for suitably difficult activities. Hurka presents this argument in his book *Perfectionism*, where he outlines his own, very similar account of the value of achievements. He writes that "difficult activities usually involve a more complex

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[238] There is also a third argument for why Sisyphus cannot be a great achiever which appeals to the will to power. The will to power manifests itself in overcoming obstacles to one's goal which provide challenge. But as Nietzsche writes: "Every growth betrays itself in the search for a mightier opponent or problem (*EH,* II, §7), and that “whoever reaches his ideal transcends it *eo ipso*.” (*BGE*, §73). In other words, when one has overcome a goal, one can no longer find (at least as much) value in conquering it again. Instead, one looks for new challenges. Consequently, Sisyphus is unlikely to manifest his will to power to a high degree. It is also significant that Sisyphus is being *forced* by the gods to do this activity; he has no choice whether to continue or not. I am unsure whether forced activities completely shut off any hope for describing them as valuable achievements. Given Nietzsche's emphasis on 'self-legislation', he may endorse such a view.

subordination of ends, and therefore more dominance".[239] Similarly, he states that difficult activities are also "often accompanied by greater (non-temporal) extent".[240]

It is worth emphasising that Hurka understands that while it may be true that this is *often* or *usually* the case that achievements involve these features, it is not *necessarily* the case. Complexity and extent are only contingently related to difficulty. For example, lifting heavy objects is extremely difficult, but it is not very complex: it might just require brute strength. Another example might be threading a needle or drawing a ten metre long near-perfect straight line without the aid of a ruler. These are not complex actions, they are also actions which have no necessary connection to extent whatsoever, yet they are still difficult. Similarly, we can conceive of cases where someone's activity does have a huge impact in the world but is not difficult. For example, a pilot's releasing of a nuclear warhead from his aircraft onto a city.[241]

While extension and complexity are not necessarily connected to difficulty, they will in some cases make for a more difficult activity, and therefore make a contribution to the overall value of an achievement in certain cases. The most plausible way of interpreting Hurka's position regarding the current discussion then, is to consider it within the context of, and as a possible supplement to, Reginster's conception of the will to power as the overcoming of resistance.

I agree with Hurka that these formal properties are very important to Nietzsche. However, while his account accommodates worries about Sisyphus, it cannot deal with other cases that can satisfy these formal properties yet likely still fail to count as valuable achievements for Nietzsche.[242] Let us remind ourselves of Hurka's claim:

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[239] Hurka, (1993), p. 123.

[240] Hurka, (1993), p. 123.

[241] Of course, developing a nuclear weapon and the means of transporting it through the air are complex, but the using of the weapon, particularly for the pilot, is at the push of a button.

[242] To be clear, Hurka's aim is to give an accurate account of human greatness on Nietzsche's view. He does this by exclusively focusing on achievements. However, I argued in chapter two that greatness is a matter of both achievements *and* character. Consequently, I do not take Hurka here to be discussing greatness, but only a *part* of greatness: valuable achievements.

> In an early work he [Nietzsche] said the one thing 'needful' is to 'give style to one's character', so its elements are unified by 'a single taste', and that it matters less whether this taste is good or bad than whether it is a single taste.[243]

Hurka's interpretation heavily draws upon section 290 of *The Gay Science* for support, specifically where Nietzsche notes that "Whether this taste was good or bad is less important than one might suppose, if only it was a single taste" (*GS*, §290). The idea here being that, supposedly, there is no standard of correctness in matters of taste, but value is to be found in organising one's single taste to govern one's variety of diverse projects. While it is certainly true that Nietzsche's higher men are driven towards the completion of a unifying project (what Hurka rightly identifies Nietzsche to mean by 'style'), it is highly unlikely, and the above passage does not obviously demonstrate, that Nietzsche thinks that the goals one directs oneself towards do not matter *at all*.

Consider again Hurka's example of the politician and shoelace-tier, which aims to demonstrate the intuitive pull of a process orientated and formal approach to the value of achievements. In a sense, this is not the strongest example Hurka could give, for it is plausible that an *'important* social bill' has consequences that are valuable as a product, independently of the process of achieving it. Nevertheless, we might imagine the same case but where the bill passed has little importance. For instance, if the politician managed to pass a bill requiring a large number of people to partake in grass-counting activities for an hour a day, or to flick a light switch off and on constantly between 12.00 and 12.05. Although this might involve overcoming vast difficulty, and would satisfy both formal properties, it is far from obvious that Nietzsche would count this as a valuable achievement.

We might imagine similar activities which satisfy these formal conditions yet still appear ludicrous, and again not obviously acceptable for Nietzsche as genuinely valuable achievements. For example, there exist a number of immensely successful reality TV programmes which feature people performing a wide range of different dangerous, crude, or self-injuring stunts and pranks. These programmes are designed to be deliberately shocking and often revolting, yet they are popular globally and have increased in their scale since

[243] Hurka, (2006), p. 230.

breaking into film. It appears that in this case, the makers of these programmes satisfy the formal properties Hurka proposes, and overcome many difficulties in doing so. Even so, it is once again not clear that Nietzsche would praise this as a valuable achievement.

These counterexamples are supported by the fact that, as I suggested in Chapter Two, in many places Nietzsche indicates that tastes can be ranked in terms of their value. For example, he clearly thinks that many people have *bad* taste: “One must,” as Nietzsche says, “shed the bad taste of wanting to agree with many” (*BGE*, §43). Moreover, in asking "what makes a person 'noble'?", he explicitly claims that it is "Certainly not following some passion, for there are contemptible passions" (*GS*, §55).

With this in mind, it is significant that a purely formal account such as Hurka's, while deflecting some implausible cases, cannot deflect all ludicrous and frivolous accomplishments that satisfy its conditions. But there is a further problem here. So far I have considered counterexamples which involve seemingly trivial or worthless activities. However, Hurka's position entails a much stronger claim: that for Nietzsche, valuable achievements can be attained even when these formal properties are realized through goals which are not merely trivial, but independently negative. This has serious implications.

If only the process of overcoming difficulty and scoring high degrees of unity-in-diversity and extent make for valuable achievements, then it seems that Nietzsche will have to allow that the slave revolt in which 'morality' came to prominence is an extremely valuable achievement. It is, after all, a historical event that shaped the lives of millions and required immense skill in overcoming its inherent difficulties. But presumably Nietzsche does *not* take this to be a very valuable event. Hurka recognises the seriousness of this objection to his view,[244] and although he does not commit to either, he proposes two possible responses.

The first response Hurka suggests as an option is to make the value of an activity depend not just on its current properties but also on what motivated the activity. As Hurka phrases this suggestion:

[244] Hurka, (2007), p. 25.

> If an integrated activity with far-reaching goals issues from strength and self confidence, as it presumably will in Nietzsche's hoped-for creators of values, it has immense worth. But if it is a product of weakness and resentment, it does not.[245]

The idea being that if, for example, Goethe had completed *Faust* because of a deep-seated urge to get back at someone who wronged him, or because his peers pressured him into doing so, then Nietzsche would not count this a valuable achievement. This manoeuvre would supposedly allow one to retain a formal and process-orientated account of the value of achievements while consistently denying that the slave revolt was immensely valuable, for the priests in Nietzsche's account acted from ressentiment.

While this type of response is plausible in the case of what Nietzsche considers *greatness* to consist in, we saw in Chapter Two that achievement is only one element of greatness. Consequently, it would be a mistake to equate these two concepts. What is most important here are the examples I gave in Chapter Two, such as Wagner's *Parsifal* and the Lutheran Bible, that Nietzsche *does* count as valuable achievements, yet in which the achievers do not act from virtue or strength. Taking this into account, one cannot deny the value of the slave revolt as an *achievement* by simply appealing to the character of its instigators.

The second response Hurka gives is to hold that the value of an achievement *does* depend upon the value of the goal, but crucially, the goal is evaluated using formal rather than substantive measures.[246] For example, if the goal is such that its realisation would be instrumental in preventing capable individuals realising the formal properties of further achievements, then that goal, and hence the activity, is not a valuable one. On this view, although the slave revolt was difficult to bring about; included a number of subordinate achievements; and had a profound influence across time and persons, it is not a valuable achievement according to Nietzsche on the grounds that it was designed to prohibit the conditions for *further* achievement.

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[245] Hurka, (2007), p. 26.

[246] Hurka, (2007), p. 26.

Yet the force of this move is weakened by once again reminding ourselves of the distinction between greatness on the one hand and achievement on the other. As Chapter Two sought to demonstrate, achievement is but one element of greatness, which is a more complex concept that requires a valuable character as well as significant achievements. Because Nietzsche can and does allow that certain individuals who do *not* have an admirable character can still make valuable achievements (e.g. Wagner, Luther), it is not clear that the slave revolt *has* prevented the further realization of simply unified and extended activities. Rather, it is more plausible that the revolt has prevented the realization of the *right kinds* of unified and extended activities, namely substantive *achievements*. For this reason, the second response Hurka provides is does not quite hit its target. It seems that although Nietzsche does think the slave revolt was instrumentally bad, he likely also thinks it intrinsically bad.

Although Hurka is right to emphasise the importance of these formal properties to Nietzsche's conception of valuable achievements, it is not clear that they can do *all* the work necessary to account for a plausible interpretation of his position on the matter.

4.3. Hybrid View

A more tenable interpretation of Nietzsche's views then is one that recognises the value of the process of achieving one's goal, yet allows room for constraints on what those goals are. This view would be partly formal and partly substantive. Reginster defends a rather strong version of this view. He writes that "an achievement can be great only if it is valuable in respect to its determinate content",[247] and continues that "the determinate content of the achievement must itself be valuable".[248] However, this would rule out many valuable activities which aim at value neutral goals, for example games and athletic endeavours.

The most plausible view of the value of achievements will aim to account for these cases yet also exclude trivial or frivolous activities that Reginster is rightly concerned that the will to power thesis risks including. A weaker version of the hybrid view is therefore preferable,

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[247] Bernard Reginster, (2007), p. 42.

[248] Reginster, (2007), p. 43.

whereby achievements are valuable in part due to the process, but that some substantive goals are fairly obviously not worthy in Nietzsche's view.

However the details of such a view are complex. It might be thought that this hybrid view commits Nietzsche to holding that overcoming difficulty is *only* valuable when the activity aims at certain goals. But there is reason to doubt the truth of this implication. To see why, we must enquire as to *what happens to the value of overcoming difficulty* when it is done in pursuit of goals that are trivial or independently bad. Nietzsche gives no explicit view on this matter, and it is likely he did not have a fully worked out theory regarding it. Consequently, a lack of explicit textual support for either view makes what follows at least partly reconstructive.

There are at least three options on the table to consider as plausible interpretations of Nietzsche's view:

> (1) The value of overcoming resistance is conditional upon the determinate goal being independently valuable.
>
> (2) The value of overcoming resistance is conditional upon the determinate goal being either independently valuable or neutral.
>
> (3) The value of overcoming resistance is unconditional in the sense that it always adds value to an activity even if it is directed at neutral or independently negative goals.

Let us first consider option (1), which is to attribute to Nietzsche a type of broadly Aristotelian[249] principle of the following form:

> (a) If *x* is intrinsically good, loving *x* for itself is also intrinsically good, and hating *x* for itself is intrinsically bad.[250]

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[249] For evidence of Aristotle's engagement with this idea, see in particular *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1175b25-30.

[250] This is an account of the principle taken and adapted from Thomas Hurka, *Virtue, Vice, and Value*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 11-20.

We can interpret at least one form of 'loving' the good here as *pursuing* the good. On strong versions of this principle, sometimes called the 'principle of recursion', there is also a corresponding commitment:

> (b) If *x* is intrinsically bad, loving *x* for itself is also intrinsically bad, and hating *x* for itself is intrinsically good.

In other words, overcoming difficulty in pursuing a goal that is of independently negative value not only adds nothing to the value of an achievement, but actually makes things *worse* than they would otherwise be.

Consider the case of an evil genius: a particularly clever and capable Machiavellian with an evil plan. In order to do achieve his evil goal, the evil genius had to overcome a vast amount of obstacles, which involved a high degree of complexity, careful timing, and elaborate planning. In such cases, there is an intuition that their striving is not to be regarded as a good thing. There is understandable revulsion at the idea that activities such as this, and comparable historical events like Stalin's purges, the Crusades (at least the 'successful' ones), and so forth, were 'achievements'. In these cases, it is plausible to suppose that it isn't just having sinister goals that is of disvalue, but also the effort to realize these goals.

But this Aristotelian principle advocated by (1) seems far too restrictive. Activities which might have mildly negative goals seem to intuitively still involve some value in the process of achieving them. This point has been defended by Bradford,[251] who gives the following examples to refute this strong principle of recursion. Art heists and bank robberies, assuming for the sake of argument have negative goals, can still be plausibly admired for being particularly elaborate and cleverly planned and executed.[252] If there is at least some value to be found in these cases, the principle of recursion cannot account for it, and instead finds the overcoming of difficulty in this instance to be intrinsically *bad*. For this reason, the principle seems too strong.

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[251] Gwen Bradford, "Evil Achievements and the Principle of Recursion" in *Oxford Studies in Normative Ethics Volume III*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013b), pp. 79-97.

[252] Examples of this admiration that spring to mind might be found in the films *The Italian Job* or *Ocean's Eleven*.

There is reason to think that Nietzsche would find the principle to be indefensible for this reason as well. As Hurka rightly observes, Nietzsche suggests that the slave revolt in values was not devoid of *any* desirable features. For example, Nietzsche recognises that the slave revolt manifested immense power and creativity (*GM*, I, §10). After all, a project as extensive, elaborate, yet subtle as the slave revolt requires a high degree of devious cleverness [*Klugheit*] to overcome its inherent difficulty. As Nietzsche writes in *On the Genealogy of Morals*:

> ...but it is only fair to add that it was on the soil of this essentially dangerous form of human existence, the priestly form, that man first became an interesting animal, that only here did the human soul in a higher sense acquire depth and become evil–and these are the two basic respects in which man has hitherto been superior to other beasts (*GM*, I, §6).

If there is at least some value in striving for goals which are independently negative, it might be thought that Nietzsche values overcoming resistance unconditionally. But this would be compatible with the Hybrid view of achievements that Nietzsche likely accepts. For instance, it might be that there is still value to be found in pursuing bad goals, though the reason these activities do not intuitively qualify as 'achievements' is that the value of the process is just outweighed by the negative value (both intrinsically and also instrumentally) of the goal, all things considered.

To use a different terminology, rather than overcoming difficulty being *prima facie* valuable, this view regards it as being *pro tanto* valuable: overcoming difficulty retains its value valence regardless of the content of the goal, but can be overridden by other values. To continue with the example of the slave revolt, this view holds that the priests' pursuit of their goal had a value of *A*. The goal of the revolt itself had a value of *B*, and the consequences of it which were instrumental in discouraging human greatness have a value of *C*. The reason this is not a valuable achievement considered as a whole, even though overcoming resistance is *pro tanto* valuable, is that the negative value of *B* and *C* vastly outweighs that of *A*. Drawing upon the discussion of value in Chapter Three, we can explain this in less crude terms: one can plausibly *admire* the priests creativity and cleverness, but hold the goal and its effects collectively in greater contempt.

This could plausibly be Nietzsche's position. However, two problematic cases face this interpretation. The first is that because it calculates the value of an achievement summatively, it can *at least in principle* (if a conception of value that allows commensurability is granted) allow for cases where the positive value of an elaborate and grand process can exactly equal the negative value of its particular product. In other words, the product cancels out the value of the process. The result being that a catastrophic and objectionable event, all things considered, could in theory be value neutral; comparable to the blink of an eye. Cases of this variety would highly conflict with our intuitions regarding achievement, and a plausible account of the value of achievements will aim to avoid this kind of scenario.

This objection may rely on an inappropriate conception of value for the phenomenon in question. I argued in this last chapter that a mercantile conception of value in terms of exchange and cost is less applicable to achievements than one of admiration. If, for example, I am broke but then given twenty pounds, and I then lose twenty pounds: I now have zero. Are the good and bad aspects of an evil achievement like this? More plausibly, is that I admire the difficulty overcome, and hold in contempt the goal and its effects. If they are felt in equal degrees, the value of the achievement is not zero, nor do I not feel anything. Rather, the case is simply more complex, to the extent that it may not make sense to give the achievement *as a whole* a determinate value.

But a second problem facing the view that overcoming resistance is *pro tanto* valuable concerns how to exclude elaborate activities with worthless goals which Nietzsche would likely reject. While valuing the overcoming of resistance in this way would account for athletic and sporting activities as valuable achievements, it would deprive itself of the means of condemning other more problematic activities, like that of elaborate grass-counters, or reality TV-type cases mentioned in the last section. The reason being that because these activities aim at value neutral goals, these goals cannot outweigh the supposed value of the process of achieving them.

There are two more responses that could be made to these problems in order to defend the view under consideration. One response would be to concede that some ludicrous activities of a nature described in the first and second objections might risk inclusion under the category of valuable achievements, yet these will be extremely rare and exceptional cases.

Perhaps there could at least *in principle* be such cases which prove counterintuitive, but Nietzsche is simply not interested in robust ethical theories which can eliminate *every* counter example, no matter how unlikely. Rather, Nietzsche pragmatically aims to draw attention to a valuable component of achievements which, he perceives, is all too often overshadowed by the *object* of one's striving: a view exacerbated in modernity by a 'morality' of comfort and timidity.

I think this view is representative of Nietzsche's position. But to make a stronger defence, another issue with the objections is that they rely on the assumption that something only counts as an achievement when the activity's balance of positive value outweighs its negative value all things considered; that achievements are always finally valuable. This points to a much deeper problem with its attempt to assess the value of achievements. Namely, that there is an ambiguity regarding the use of the term 'achievement' between its descriptive and evaluative components. One the one hand, there are certain conditions that need to be met before we can appropriately call something an achievement. But achievement is also in a sense a value-laden term; it is usually reserved to refer to those activities worthy of admiration and veneration. As a result, we tend to assume achievements *always* bring value into the world.

But we might challenge this assumption. While it is in the nature of achievements to be finally valuable overall, this is consistent with the fact that not *all* achievements are finally valuable overall. Some achievements, for example ones with significantly negative goals that outweigh the value of its process, may lack final value. Pritchard presents a similar argument, and in order to show that this is not as bizarre a view as it might first appear, he proposes the following analogy:

> Consider, for example, a claim such as that *tigers are fierce*. This statement seems true. Moreover, notice that this claim does not seem to be at all undermined by the fact that there are tame tigers in the world who are not fierce at all. In particular, in saying that tigers are fierce we are not making a claim about all tigers but rather making a claim about the *nature* of tigers – *a fortiori*, we are making a claim about how tigers would behave in normal circumstances.[253]

[253] Pritchard, (2010), p. 25.

The point being made is that although achievements *usually* involve a greater balance of positive value, the fact that this is not always the case does not undermine arguments defending the final value of achievements generally.

To conclude this section, Nietzsche likely adopts a hybrid view, according to which achievements are valuable in virtue of their process, but with significant substantive constraints on some of the goals that process is directed at. However, I agree with Reginster that Nietzsche does not provide an explicit account of what these substantive constraints might be. But the hybrid view which I have defended does not necessarily commit one to an interpretation of Nietzsche in which he holds a strictly codifiable standard of taste (i.e. a strong account of precisely which substantive achievements are excellent). Rather, I agree with Nehamas in sensibly holding that Nietzsche has no codifiable standard of correctness in this respect, but that there are nevertheless some things which Nietzsche fairly obviously does *not* think exhibit good taste or excellence (e.g. blade-counter cases). Furthermore, the hybrid view does not commit Nietzsche to holding that the value of overcoming resistance is conditional upon pursuing a valuable or neutral goal. Rather, it is compatible with the view that overcoming resistance is pro tanto valuable — a view that I have argued Nietzsche likely accepts.

5. Implications

The position I am attributing to Nietzsche may appear implausible in an important way. For instance, a reasonable thought is that we ought to pursue the good. Let us assume for the moment that this is true. If overcoming resistance to your will, or surmounting difficulty, is valuable in the way Nietzsche and I propose (i.e. non-instrumentally), it seems this will lead to absurd normative implications. For example, seeking to add value to every action, such as reading a newspaper, eating lunch, driving to work, and so forth, by deliberately making it as difficult as possible. But there are a number of reasons why this objection is not a compelling one.

First of all and as a preliminary point, I have made no normative claims so far. Up to this point in the discussion my concern has been purely evaluative, focusing on what kinds of activities have a certain kind of value, and under what circumstances. I have made no claims about the right way to act in light of this particular value.

Nevertheless, the objection can be met head on. Katsafanas has recently provided a counter argument for effectively defending against it. He claims that making everything as difficult as it can be, which the objection implies is a result of the view under consideration, would very likely be *instrumentally* bad in hindering the realization of greater projects. For example, imagine Beethoven sets out to realize his musical ambitions but looks for anything that can provide him resistance: he only writes in the dark; he only uses instruments in the worst condition he can find; he places his hand in an open flame every few minutes; and so forth. This would indeed make Beethoven's task significantly more difficult, and if he somehow managed to produce his compositions *to the same standard* as he did, his achievement on my view would be significantly greater. However, adding all of these difficulties and countless more would at some point make a demand on his strength and ability that even he could not surmount. Thus, these difficulties would be instrumentally bad in preventing him from achieving his goal.

Katsafanas own example is that of a writer who goes to write a sentence. It is absurd, Katsafanas writes, that this person would or *should* aim to encounter resistance in moving his pen across the page. The reason being that writing a sentence is typically a part or means to a larger project, such as writing a paper or book. If the writer ought to create resistance on this micro-scale—that of moving the pen across the page—this would likely stifle his grander project. The claim is then, that this objection is "looking for resistance in the wrong place".[254] Many seek intellectual challenges in their writing, but resistances of all and any such kinds would likely thwart the attaining of one's goals.

Nietzsche explicitly recognises this point in his acknowledgement that even the highest and strongest individuals have their human limits, and so advises prudence in picking one's battles:

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[254] Katsafanas, (2013), p. 179.

> I love the valiant; but it is not enough to wield a broadsword, one must also know against whom. And often there is more valour when one refrains and passes by, in order to save oneself for the worthier enemy (*Z*, III, §12)

A second response to the objection is available to those who agree with Nietzsche that achievement is an important final good in life, but are willing to accommodate various other goods that Nietzsche would perhaps not allow for (for example pleasure; knowledge). If this is the case, then achievement might have to be balanced and weighed against the pursuit of these other goods. The best life may well involve satisfying as many of these goods as possible to significant degrees, and only focusing on achievements would likely overshadow them. The point being made is that it is not just the final value of achievements that needs to be taken into consideration, but also the instrumental effects of spending time and effort on them.

Conclusion

This chapter has defended a number of separable claims. I first presented a basic account of instrumental value, whereby something that retains it is good as a means. I then surveyed this evidence for attributing this type of value to Nietzsche's conception of suffering in the pursuit of one's goals. However, while it may be a sustainable interpretation of Nietzsche's early to middle works, the position that this is *all* the value Nietzsche takes suffering to have in his mature and developed writings cannot be sustained. The reason being that this would locate the value of an achievement purely in the goal one strives towards, where it perhaps *would have been better* if it was achieved without a struggle. But, from *The Gay Science* onwards, Nietzsche clearly does think that there is value in the process of *striving* for one's goal, and that this is undermined by herd morality. The implication is that Nietzsche must value suffering in some non-instrumental way—as part of a valuable whole. Moreover, Nietzsche is right to defend this view, for this is an independently plausible position. Contra Hurka, there must however be some substantive constraints on what the goals one strives towards are for something to be a valuable achievement.

Chapter Five:

Suffering as Part of a Valuable Whole

If suffering does not have merely instrumental value then it must have some additional form of extrinsic value. I have used the term 'part of a valuable whole' throughout the last chapter in contrast to the instrumental. In what follows I will assess what this precisely entails, and the different ways one might interpret the concept. I intend to do this by defending and building upon aspects of Reginster's claim that suffering, in Nietzsche's view has 'contributory value'. In particular, I assess the relevance of the principle of organic unities to the debate, and how the value of suffering within the context of achievement is informed by Nietzsche's radical aestheticism. I conclude that Reginster's claim that suffering has value as part of a valuable whole does not tell the complete story. If Nietzsche is to value suffering in such a way that it can't be a regrettable feature of an achievement, it must form part of a valuable whole in a particular way.

1. Reginster on the Value of Suffering

1.1. Suffering and "Contributory Value"

Reginster claims that Nietzsche intends the doctrine of the will to power to serve not only as an accurate account of human motivation and action, but as "the principle of revaluation" in his wider ethical project.[255] Even if one endorses a weaker claim that power is but one standard of value for Nietzsche, this has implications for the value of suffering. These implications, according to Reginster, are precisely what distinguish a Nietzschean ethics of creativity from 'morality':

> It is precisely insofar as it implies a radical revaluation of suffering that Nietzsche's ethics of creativity underwrites his famed attack on morality. As Nietzsche understands it, morality,

[255] Reginster, (2006), p. 150.

> paradigmatically the 'morality of compassion', is predicated upon a wholesale condemnation of suffering. As such, it fosters an ethical climate that is essentially inimical to creativity.[256]

I similarly argued in the last chapter that at least part of Nietzsche's rejection of herd morality is that it fails to appropriately value suffering. Reginster also defends the second claim I presented: that suffering having instrumental value is perfectly compatible with moralities, such as Christianity, that Nietzsche rejects.[257] Reginster argues that because Nietzsche is committed to "a *radical* revaluation of the role and significance of suffering in human existence", he must have a different evaluation of suffering, namely: one which is "grounded in the claim that the difficulty of an achievement, or the fact that it requires overcoming of resistance, is an essential part of what makes it a great achievement.[258] Reginster draws this distinction in the following way:

> Suffering, in contemporary parlance, has *contributory* value. Contributory value is typically distinguished from instrumental value through the observation that activities can have contributory value when they are part of an intrinsically valuable life, and contribute to its value, even though they are not a means to it...Suffering has only contributory value, however, insofar as it does not suffice to make a life valuable.[259]

A number of points need unpacking here. Firstly, Reginster sometimes talks of the value suffering has as an ingredient of a valuable *life*, and at other times as an ingredient of a valuable *achievement*. This apparent similarity between a valuable achievement and a valuable life is explained in terms of his account of the role of the will to power as a measure of how well one's life is going, making them structurally identical. A good life simply *is*, at least in part, one in which a great deal is achieved. Since my focus in this thesis is on suffering and specifically achievement, I shall continue to talk in these terms.

Secondly, while Reginster here talks of "activities" having contributory value, we need not restrict the concept in this way. Many things might plausibly have contributory value

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[256] Reginster, (2007), p. 45.

[257] Reginster, (2007), p.44.

[258] Reginster, (2007), p. 45.

[259] Reginster, (2006), p. 297.

which are not activities—for instance, a particular stone which forms part of a beautiful mosaic. Moreover, 'activity' does not appear to be the right term to describe *suffering*. While suffering, in some degree, necessarily forms a part of striving, which is an activity, it is itself a passive feeling in the sense that it happens *to* you: it is not performed.

I agree with Reginster that contributory value is distinct from instrumental value. We have already seen that what has instrumental value is valuable as a means to an end. What is crucial is that if these things are valuable *only* as a means, then it yields no loss in value all things considered if the end was achieved via a different means. Furthermore, on this view it might be *better* if a particular end was achieved without enduring the process of achieving it.

Contributory value, on the other hand, is usually understood to mean the value something has in virtue of being 'part' of a finally valuable 'whole'.[260] Robert Nozick expands upon this definition and describes an object or state of affairs as having contributory value when it can "make a value difference", and continues:

> ...not merely that value can be produced via them, but that they be necessary for that production: the slack of their absence would not be taken up by other factors so that the same value got produced anyway. Let us term this value difference something makes — the value (amount) that wouldn't be there if it weren't — its contributory value.[261]

An example to illustrate what might be meant by a 'value difference' here might be found by considering the concept of courage. Courage can be understood conceptually as the overcoming of fear. In this sense, fear is not merely a means to courage, rather it is a necessary component of the concept. If we assume for the sake of argument that courage is indeed a valuable disposition, then fear is necessary for the production of that value, not as a means, but as a part. In this way, fear has contributory value and makes what Nozick refers to as a 'value difference'.

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[260] The concept of being 'valuable as a part' is traditionally a terminological minefield: terms such as 'contributory value', 'constitutive value', 'intrinsicalism' and 'variabilism', 'holism' and 'conditionality', pervade the literature, often used by philosophers to mean quite different things. Some have reserved the term 'contributory value' for a particular way in which something forms a part of a valuable whole. I shall come on to the distinction later, but for the sake of argument, I shall continue to use this phrase as to not confuse my claims against those of Reginster, who uses this term for the same concept.

[261] Robert Nozick, *Philosophical Explanations*, (Harvard University Press, 1981), p. 313. A similar description of contributory value is given by G.E. Moore, (1993), §19.

I also agree with Reginster that suffering is only a necessary, not a sufficient, condition of great achievement. Reginster continues to emphasize that suffering "is not valued *by itself*", but rather "only as an ingredient of the good".[262] But more needs to be said about what he is committed to. Precisely *how* suffering acts as an 'ingredient', or 'contributes value' to a whole, requires explanation.

Reginster apparently understands suffering to contribute value in the following way:

> If we value the overcoming of resistance, then we must also value the resistance that is an ingredient of it. Since suffering is defined by resistance, we must also value suffering.[263]

> From the standpoint of the ethics of power, suffering cannot be coherently deplored...because it is an essential constituent of the good.[264]

These passages are crucial, because they seem to depend on the assumption that *the value of the whole must be a function of the value of its parts.* However, this is precisely the view which is called into question by the principle of organic unities.

1.2. Organic Unity

We commonly understand there to be cases in which otherwise valueless parts can be considered valuable when they are related within a whole in some way. We might think, for example, that a particular mosaic has great value, yet when the stones which form it are jumbled or removed and placed in an unorganised heap, have no value at all. Implicit in this kind of understanding is what is known as the 'principle of organic unities', which G.E. Moore formulated in the following way:

> The value of a whole must not be assumed to be the same as the sum of the values of its parts.[265]

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[262] Reginster, (2006), p. 234.

[263] Reginster, (2006), p. 177.

[264] Reginster, (2006), p. 233.

[265] Moore, (1993), §18.

The principle holds that if two or more states or objects enter into the relations that constitute a given whole, the resulting value may be either more or less than those states had when apart. According to Moore, one can't simply view the goodness of a particular state of affairs by assigning a value to each part and adding them together. Rather, the total value of any state of affairs is often generated by the *relations* between its parts, and not by the value they may hold independently.

Moore's primary example to demonstrate the force of the principle is that of experiencing a beautiful object.[266] Being conscious of a beautiful object, Moore argues, is of great intrinsic value. However, the same object when experienced by no one, and existing in isolation, is of comparatively little value, or perhaps none at all. Similarly, consciousness itself doesn't appear to be necessarily valuable. In Moore's example, beautiful objects and consciousness are not particularly valuable things. They may have some value, but when we consider the total value of a consciousness experiencing a beautiful object, it seems to exceed the simple sum of these values.

Putting aside for now (1) the particular elements of Moore's example involving the value of beauty; (2) the issue of the practical difficulty in measuring the precise value of an object or state, the essential claim of the principle might be presented formally in the following way:

a = 0 units of value
b = 5 units of value
$(a+b)$ = 10 units of value

The principle can also be used to explain cases where a bad thing and an indifferent thing may form a whole much worse than the sum of the badness of its parts:

c = 0 units of value
d = -5 units of value
$(c+d)$ = -10 units of value

Since my focus here is on the positive value that Nietzsche appears to attribute to suffering, I shall primarily talk of forming organic unities which are productive of value.

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[266] Moore, (1993), §18.

Reginster does not directly engage with the principle or its implications for the value of suffering. This omission potentially leaves his position vulnerable to the following objection. One may grant that suffering is an 'essential ingredient' of great achievement, and one may also grant following from this, "he who wants to be creative must welcome resistance, and therefore suffering".[267] But from the claim that suffering is an essential ingredient of the good, to then claim that "Suffering is no longer a necessary evil to which the creative individual must somehow accommodate himself" would be too quick.[268] Taking advantage of the principle of organic unities, we might ask why it is the case that someone couldn't hold that suffering is always bad, always regrettable, even when it is recognised as an essential part of a good whole? In other words, there seems to be nothing incoherent about supposing that there are wholes containing something bad and deplorable, which are, nevertheless, of great positive value all things considered. To continue with the example of courage: that the overcoming of fear is a positive disposition seems to essentially involve fear being something negative, even when considered as part of the valuable concept of courage.

The relevant point to be taken from these examples is that accepting the principle of organic unities allows one to coherently deplore certain constituents of the good, even if they are essential. This is because if the value of a whole is not equal to the sum of the value of its parts, then certain parts of a whole may have negative value, yet within a whole help produce a value that outweighs its negative component. Translated into a more pertinent example, the manifestation of power through a particular determinate end, say the composing of a great symphony, might be of tremendous value. However, the suffering the composer may have felt in completing his task may still be regrettable, even if he recognises it as an essential part of his achievement. This is at odds with Reginster's interpretation of a Nietzschean *radical* revaluation in which suffering "cannot coherently be deplored".[269]

This point is exploited by Simon May, who argues that a broader Nietzschean affirmation of life is of the whole, and not necessarily the individual parts which constitute

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[267] Reginster, (2007), p. 45.

[268] Reginster, (2007), p. 45.

[269] Reginster, (2006), p. 177.

it.[270] May argues that for this reason, Nietzsche is 'still in the morality game'. However, I think Reginster is right to hold that for Nietzsche, existence (or in this case achievement) must be affirmed not merely in spite of suffering, but (at least in part) because of it. Indeed, this is a significant feature of his rejection of Christian morality. My proposition is that Reginster does not provide the tools to avoid May's claim that Nietzsche's revaluation is, to an extent, not as radical as he proposes. Nevertheless, I shall argue shortly, that one *can* provide a defence of Reginster's position by drawing upon Nietzsche's aestheticism.

Before I get to that however, further clarity is required on the concept of parts, wholes, and the notion of the bad being an essential feature of the good. I have made two claims regarding contributory value so far:

(1) Contributory value is distinct from instrumental value.
(2) The constitutive parts of valuable wholes do not always work in a summative way: the value of the whole is not necessarily the sum of the value of its parts.

Reginster endorses (1), and I agree. However he does not address (2), and this creates a tension with his claims about the value of suffering. I shall now provide detail on how constitutive parts which vary in goodness may relate to a valuable whole, and how Nietzsche understands this concept. I shall then move on to how exploiting this phenomenon may provide a defence to the objection raised.

1.3. The Bad as Part of the Good

There is a distinction to make at this point between two different views relating to the idea that the good somehow *requires* the bad:

(A) Good is always understood relative to a corresponding bad that provides contrast.
(B) Good necessarily requires bad as an element in itself.

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[270] See Simon May, *Nietzsche's On the Genealogy of Morality: A Critical Guide*, (Cambridge University Press, 2011).

Claim (A) holds that the positive relation between good and bad is one of contrast: we value health all the more because of awareness of terrible diseases; or we value a nice summer's day in contrast to a miserable rainy and grey one. In these cases, we are thought to value goods against the backdrop of corresponding ills, the absence of which would render the good incomprehensible.

This perhaps more familiar view should be distinguished from the much stronger claim (B). The idea in (B) being that the bad is not just necessary to *appreciate* the good, but to overcome the bad is precisely what goodness *is*. Without the bad as an element, the good cannot exist. For example, in order to have a war hero, there must first be a war. While Nietzsche may endorse (A), what is relevant to the current discussion is his endorsement of (B), at least with regard to the goodness of achievement, and the suffering experienced in striving to achieve. I shall restrict the scope of (B) to this context for the purposes of simplicity.

On this point I agree with Richardson, who makes precisely this distinction and arrives at the same conclusion. He writes:

> ...good requires bad not just for contrast, but as an element in itself: good is always an overcoming of a bad. One particular way he [Nietzsche] often argues this is with respect to suffering.[271]

Nietzsche's endorsement of (B) would be consistent with the doctrine of the will to power which I have presented so far: power is one standard of value, and power consists in the overcoming of resistance and difficulty. Hence, goodness is partly constituted by the bad. But Nietzsche sometimes claims that herd morality typically fails to acknowledge (B), and instead:

> it takes good and evil for realities that contradict one another (not as complementary value concepts, which would be the truth), it advises taking the side of the good, it desires that the good should renounce and oppose the evil down to its ultimate roots-it therewith actually

[271] John Richardson, "Nietzsche's Value Monism: Saying Yes to Everything" in *Nietzsche on Mind and Nature*, eds. Manuel Dries and Peter Kail, (Oxford: OUP, 2015), p. 106.

> denies life, which has in all its instincts both Yes and No. (*WP*, §351; *KSA*, 1888, 15[113]; *BGE*, §2)[272]

But the details of (B) need to be made explicit. In what way does goodness depend on the overcoming of the bad? What happens to the value of the bad once it has been overcome? In other words, when one suffers in striving to reach one's goal, does that suffering retain its badness once it is overcome, or does it become good upon entering the whole?

The distinction at work here is between two different ways a 'part' can be valuable in virtue of its relation to a whole. The first is as an *enabling condition*, and the second is as a *contributor*.[273] An enabling condition retains its badness but in certain contexts allows for a whole of greater value to outweigh it (i.e. X enables Y, which has value). In contrast, a contributor changes its value depending on the context. A particular thing, X, may be of negative value in one context, but upon forming a whole in another context can increase in value (i.e. X contributes value to Y).

If, as Reginster claims, suffering has contributory value and *therefore* cannot be coherently deplored, then suffering must act as a part of valuable whole in a particular way, namely as a contributor. In order to defend his view, I shall argue that by comprehending Nietzsche's aestheticism, one can see how Nietzsche juxtaposes and rejects the 'moral' evaluation of suffering precisely because it is compatible with treating it as an enabling condition, and hence can be 'coherently deplored'.

2. Struggle as Art: Nietzsche's Aestheticism

In this section, I claim that for Nietzsche, the process of striving to achieve one's goal—of agonistic struggle—can itself be something beautiful or artistic; as a way in which we can 'turn ourselves into a work of art' (*GS*, §107). The value Nietzsche finds in one's striving to achieve goals, I argue, is best understood in a way that depends upon the principle of organic

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[272] Nietzsche repeatedly takes 'Life' to be synonymous with the will to power (e.g. *GS*, §349; cf. *Z*, II, §12, *BGE*, §259).

[273] I adopt this terminology from Jonathan Dancy's discussion of organic unities in Dancy, (2003), pp. 629-650.

unities, and this is due to his attempt to strengthen the relationship between the ethical and aesthetic. In this section I elucidate these claims and their consequences for the value of suffering.

2.1. Aestheticism

There is vast disagreement about the precise content, target, and extent of Nietzsche's 'aestheticism'. Alexander Nehamas, for example, defends a particularly strong conception in which he claims that Nietzsche:

> ...looks at [the world] as if it were a literary text. And he arrives at many of his views of human beings by generalizing to them ideas and principles that apply almost intuitively to the literary situation, to the creation and interpretation of literary texts and characters.[274]

Nehamas' view that Nietzsche takes a literary text to be the "overarching metaphor"[275] for life is similarly defended by Allan Megill, who describes aestheticism as "an attempt to expand the aesthetic to embrace the whole of reality" and a "tendency to see 'art' or 'language' or 'discourse' or 'text' as constituting the primary realm of human experience".[276] More recently, Daniel Came has refined these claims and treats Nietzsche's aestheticism as consisting in an attempt to seek a "rapprochement" between the two fields of aesthetics and ethics in a particular direction, that is, to temper the margin of the aesthetic/ethical terrain in such a way that gives preference to the former.[277] In Came's words, Nietzsche intends in his project of revaluation:

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[274] Nehamas, (1985), p. 3. Leiter provides an in-depth critique of this interpretation in Brian Leiter, "Nietzsche and Aestheticism", *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, 275, (1992).

[275] Nehamas, (1985), p. 164.

[276] Allan Megill, *Prophets of Extremity: Nietzsche, Heidegger, Foucault, Derrida*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), p. 2.

[277] Peter Poellner has given a similar account, in which he writes that Nietzsche's aestheticism "is not a doctrine of substantive value, but a view about the grounds of such comparative value judgements, a view according to which these grounds, in both ethical and what are conventionally labelled 'aesthetic' contexts, are ultimately located in experiences which are aesthetic" (See Poellner, 2012, p. 62).

> ...to extend the structure of aesthetic judgment into the ethical domain, and, indeed, to effect the substitution of aesthetic for moral concepts when dealing with such typically ethical domains as action, motivation and character, and their adoption as the predominant terms in practical reasoning.[278]

Came's claim is much more abstract that Nehamas' and Megill's in the sense that it needn't make strict analogies to literary texts, which require a strong case for how such analogies would work. Came rather draws attention to a broader issue of how aesthetic values can or do function. It is this sense of 'aestheticism'—the view that aesthetic values can guide and inform one's behaviour as much as typically moral values can, and should—that is relevant to the concerns of this chapter, and so I follow Came's (at least partial) definition of the concept here.[279]

The application of aestheticism persists (though to varying degrees) throughout Nietzsche's texts, and at least partly what motivates his claim, from a later note, that preference for higher and lower modes of life "is at bottom a question of taste and *aesthetics*" (*WP*, §353; *KSA*, 1887, 11[325).

Aestheticism, as a matter of coherence, requires it to be true that aesthetic values are independent from moral values, in other words, that something can be beautiful even if it is (a) morally neutral, or perhaps (b) morally vicious.[280] Nietzsche is eager to affirm this point. Regarding the Greek myths, he writes that those "seeking elevated morals...charity and benevolence, will quickly be...discouraged and disappointed" (*BT*, §3). Instead of "asceticism, spirituality or duty", everything about these myths "speaks of a rich and triumphant existence, in which everything is defied, whether it be good or evil" (*BT*, §3).

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[278] Daniel Came, "Nietzsche on the Aesthetics of Character and Virtue" in *Nietzsche on Art and Life*, (Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 127.

[279] Of course, aestheticism is not as black and white as I am presenting it here. There may plausibly be middle ground versions which seek to simply *strengthen* aesthetic concepts in typically moral domains and not replace them completely. Nietzsche endorses the stronger view in as far as he attempts to confront broader existential concerns, which I will not address here. As he often states: "it is only as an *aesthetic phenomenon* that existence and the world are eternally *justified*" (*BT*, §5; cf. §24; *BT*, 'Attempt', §5).

[280] The opposing tradition of seeking a rapprochement between in aesthetics and morality in a way that favours the latter stretches back as far as Plato.

Nietzsche also hints at this view in his genealogy when describing "the *contradiction* posed by the magnificent but likewise so gruesome, so violent world of Homer" (*GM*, I, §11; emphasis mine). 'Magnificent' or 'splendid' [*die herrliche*]—both with aesthetic connotations—are terms Nietzsche often provocatively places alongside "hideous" and "appalling" to describe the violent nature of the nobles prior to the slave revolt (*GM*, I, §11). Nietzsche makes explicit this distinction between aesthetic and moral value earlier on in *Daybreak*. In a passage entitled "The realm of beauty is bigger", he writes that:

> ...hitherto we have been permitted to seek beauty only in the *morally good* — a fact which sufficiently accounts for our having found so little of it and having had to seek about for imaginary beauties without backbone! — As surely as the wicked enjoy a hundred kinds of happiness of which the virtuous have no inkling, so too they possess a hundred kinds of beauty; and many of them have not yet been discovered. (*D*, §468; cf. *D,* §499)

Nietzsche also holds that aesthetic values have no necessary relation to something having epistemic value; that is to say, aesthetic concepts need not tell us any truth about the world.[281] On the contrary, Nietzsche's consistent view is that aesthetic concepts do precisely the opposite: they provide a "healing balm of illusion" (*BT*, §19) that mask the terrible existential truths of descriptive pessimism, thus making life bearable (see *BT*, §3; *GS*, §107; *GM*, III, §25). The *way* in which they 'mask' or 'conceal' these terrible truths will shortly prove to be crucial for my purposes here, and I discuss it shortly.

I will now consider how aestheticism is relevant to Nietzsche's project with respect to suffering in the pursuit of one's goals, or striving—an idea which is expressed through the concept of the 'heroic' as opposed to the moral. However, it will be useful first to present some of the numerous instances of Nietzsche's aestheticism which explicitly evoke the principle of organic unities—a point which makes Reginster's omission of the principle from his argument more troubling.

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[281] Nietzsche broadly attributes this view to the Socratic-Platonic conception of the function of aesthetics: what he calls "aesthetic Socratism" (*BT*, §12, cf. *GM*, III, §25). As we shall shortly see, this is in addition a significant point of departure from Kantian-Schopenhauerian aesthetic theory.

2.2. Nietzsche on Organic Unity and Beauty

Although Nietzsche never talked directly of organic unities using the formal terminology familiar from Moore and contemporary value theory, and should not in any way be thought of as a precursor to Moore, the principle is very much implicit in a number of areas of his philosophy. Nehamas, for example, frequently employs the principle of organic unities in his interpretation of Nietzsche's ethics, though never labelling it as such. He writes that for Nietzsche: "traits of character and actions can only be evaluated in light of their contribution to a complete person, a complete life, or...a complete work".[282] I agree with this claim, and support for it can be found in two representative examples: organic unity with regard to (1) drives; (2) character traits.

Nietzsche's higher men are repeatedly described as having not only "powerful and irreconcilable instincts", but also the "proper mastery" (*BGE*, §200) to control and guide them. In other words, Nietzsche values not necessarily certain drives and instincts themselves, but a particular kind of relation between them which includes how numerous and diverse yet *unified* they are. He speaks of a 'spirit' which "has the will of a multiplicity for a simplicity, a *binding*, taming, imperious, and essentially ruling will" (*BGE*, §230; emphasis mine).

The reason this is a form of organic unity is that Nietzsche emphasises the value to be found in a particular relation between drives and not necessarily just the drives themselves. Hence, the value of the whole is not necessarily the sum of the value of its parts when considered apart. Moreover, the value to be found in the relation between these three features above appears to be at least in part aesthetic: there is a harmony between competing and strong drives which Nietzsche suggests is aesthetically pleasing.[283]

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[282] Nehamas, (1985), p. 229.

[283] Came suggests (I think rightly) that the Nietzschean conception of the self in terms of a harmony of constitutive drives is, as an aesthetically pleasing phenomenon, not far from Plato's (particularly Plato, *The Republic*, Book 4, Section 443d). See Daniel Came, (2013), p. 218.

A second example of Nietzsche's engagement with the principle of organic unity, and perhaps most obviously indicative of his aestheticism, concerns his treatment of one's character in aesthetic terms of 'style'. Nietzsche's higher men have diverse character traits, some of which may be undesirable when considered in isolation, yet as a conscious part of one's nature or disposition are "reinterpreted and made sublime" (*GS*, §290). To have unity-in-diversity is precisely what it means to "give style to one's character" (*GS*, §290; cf. *GS*, §79) according to Nietzsche. He calls this:

> ...a great and rare art! It is practiced by those who survey all the strengths and weaknesses of their nature and then fit them into an artistic plan until every one of them appears as art and reason and even weaknesses delight the eye. (*GS*, §290)

An example to demonstrate what is meant here might be found in Achilles. Achilles is brave and exceptionally strong, yet also deeply stubborn and arrogant. Being stubborn or arrogant considered by themselves may have either negative value or no value at all. However, we admire Achilles' character *not in spite* of his stubbornness and arrogance, but *in virtue of* them as part of his unified personality. Nietzsche makes this point about character explicit: he speaks of those who are "more attractive by virtue of his imperfections" (*GS*, §79). In this way, we might value Achilles' character as a whole greater than that of the sum of his traits considered apart. Nietzsche writes of such characters and their activities as:

> ...a *living* structure of domination, in which parts and functions are demarcated and articulated, where *only that which has been given a 'meaning' with respect to the whole finds a place*. (*GM*, II, §17; second emphasis added)

That Nietzsche finds some *aesthetic* value in "style" (*GS*, §290) in at least some instances of organic unity has important implications for how he understands the value of parts and wholes to work. But more must be said regarding what constitutes a genuine aesthetic experience for Nietzsche, and how this differs from merely finding something to have beauty or "charm". What is going on when one finds something genuinely beautiful in Nietzsche's view?

On this question Nietzsche profoundly disagrees with both the Kantian and Schopenhauerian account of aesthetic experience as, broadly conceived, one of 'disinterestedness'.[284] For Kant, this amounts to the view that an object is beautiful when one takes pleasure in it detached from any sort of desire satisfaction in mind; one's attention is solely on the object 'in itself' and not to any relations (i.e. to well being) it might have.[285] Schopenhauer's account of aesthetic experience is similar to Kant's in a number of important ways, but involves a particularly strong version of disinterestedness in which the perceiver briefly loses self-consciousness. One has an aesthetic experience when one enters a state of contemplation of an object that provides brief respite from the will's tormenting striving. Because it "lifts us out of real existence, and transforms us into disinterested spectators of it", aesthetic contemplation "remains foreign to all willing" (*WWR*, I, §57, p. 314) and thereby results in a brief transcendence of the self.

Nietzsche argues that aesthetic experience as 'disinterested', and especially as 'will-lessness' characteristic of the ascetic, is profoundly mistaken, and defends what he takes to be the antithetical position. There are two major disagreements. Firstly and as I stated above, Nietzsche does not think aesthetic experience necessarily provides any experience of 'true' reality or knowledge of the world. Rather, it is characteristic of aesthetic experiences to do precisely the opposite. Secondly, Nietzsche broadly rejects the idea of aesthetic experience as what "pleases without interest", rather it consists in the "arousal of the will" (*GM*, III, §6).[286] One metaphor Nietzsche uses to present this idea is that of "intoxication" [*Rausch*], which he describes in terms of “the feeling of fullness and increasing strength” (*TI*, "Skirmishes", §8). When a painting, for example, excites desires in and of itself in a pleasurable way, then that painting is beautiful. As Richardson claims in his discussion of 'intoxication': “something is beautiful if and only if it can (or does) produce *Rausch*”.[287] In this way, pleasure in beauty is 'interested'; that "art is the great stimulus to life" (*TI*, "Skirmishes", §24).

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[284] The literature on this important topic is vast. I shall only attempt to give a brief account of the main differences for the purpose of how suffering might be understood in aesthetic terms.

[285] Kant's views on aesthetic contemplation appear in *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime* (1764), and are developed in the *Critique of Judgement* (1790).

[286] Nietzsche often draws an analogy between aesthetic experience and sexual excitement to emphasise this point (*GM*, III, §8; *TI*, "Ancients, §4).

[287] John Richardson, *Nietzsche's New Darwinism*, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 230.

This is an overly brief account of the main distinctions between a Nietzschean conception of aesthetic experience and the Kantian-Schopenhauerian account. However, my purpose is only to provide a minimal understanding of how Nietzsche thinks of aesthetic value so it may be soon applied to suffering. I make no claims about which is more plausible here. I now turn to how the notion of beauty in organic unity is particularly pertinent with regard to his view of suffering's value by considering his concept of the 'heroic'.

2.3. The Heroic

Nietzsche's claims regarding heroism and the value of a heroic disposition occur as early as *The Birth of Tragedy*, but reach their pinnacle in *The Gay Science*. I shall draw heavily, but not exclusively, upon this text in elucidating the concept of the heroic, before identifying it with subsequent Nietzschean claims regarding aesthetic value and suffering.

Nietzsche defines heroes in terms of striving, suffering, and sacrifice, and appeals to the interrelation of these components to tempt his readers into considering the great value which has been disregarded, and even discouraged, since the historical triumph of herd morality. Nietzsche clearly presents himself as a defender of this kind of value; as one who will "welcome all the signs that a more virile, warlike age is about to begin, which will restore honour to courage above all" (*GS*, §283).[288]

For Nietzsche, heroes are those who suffer greatly in relentlessly striving for their goals. Moreover, heroism is construed at least partly by one's joyfully facing great and potentially fatal challenges. He states plainly: "*What makes one heroic?*—Going out to meet at the same time one's highest suffering and one's highest hope" (*GS*, §268). Put in Reginster's terms,

[288] It is important to distance Nietzsche's positive evaluation of heroism from the claim that he was engaged in a kind of 'hero worship' or veneration of certain individuals as role-models that ought to be emulated. It is true that Nietzsche lamented the decrease in the importance of the hero, and repeatedly expresses approval for figures such as Goethe, Beethoven, Caesar, and so forth. In light of this, Arthur Danto claims that "Nietzsche was an inveterate worshiper of heroes" (Arthur Danto, *Nietzsche as Philosopher*, (McMillan, 1965), p. 198). However, this mistakenly overlooks Nietzsche's clear aversion to, and denouncing of, such a practice. See *D*, §298; *EH*, III, §1. Nietzsche venerates the *formal properties* that 'great' figures share, and not their particular personas.

heroes inherently exercise their will to power to a high degree; to such an exceptional extent that their striving involves great risk and sacrifice. Nietzsche warns that identifying *true* heroism as opposed to merely "apparent heroism" can however be difficult, for there are epistemological constraints on knowing peoples' real motivations: "To throw oneself into the thick of battle can be a sign of cowardice" (*D*, §299). But Nietzsche is keen to emphasise the importance of risk and sacrifice, to the extent that he thinks of himself to manifest the heroic for these very reasons. Though not a fighter in the context of war, where we might traditionally place 'heroic' deeds, Nietzsche applies the value of heroic struggle to other aspects of life; one of his own being his battle with ill-health:

> What constitutes the value and result of life *for me*, lies elsewhere...I know more about life because I have been so often on the verge of losing it; and precisely for that reason I get more out of life than any of you! (*GS*, §303; *TI*, 'Skirmishes', §17)

Nietzschean heroes thrive in situations where their necessary conditions—turmoil and danger—are present. He writes of the heroic type that their "expression is never prouder, more warlike, and happier than it is when a storm comes up; indeed, pain itself gives them their greatest moments!" (*GS*, §318). Though Nietzsche presents this point in provocative terms, it is by no means new, or indeed that radical. The idea of heroic deeds requiring risk and sacrifice is (unsurprisingly) embedded in the work of Homer. To take but one example from *The Iliad* that may help make Nietzsche's point in this passage explicit, the Lycian hero Sarpedon answers his friend Glaucus regarding the question of why they are honoured back in Lycia with "the best of everything" by saying:

> All this now obliges us to take our places in the front ranks of the Lycians and fling ourselves into the flames of battle. Only then will our Lycian men-at-arms say of us: "Well! These are no dishonourable lords of Lycia that rule over us and eat fat sheep and drink the best sweet wine: they are indomitable and fight in the forefront of the Lycians.[289]

[289] Homer, *The Iliad,* (Penguin Classics, 2003b), p. 211, 12.316-330.

The point that Sarpedon makes is that in the front lines lies the greatest risk to their lives, and therefore "where men win glory".[290] Heroism consequently depends on one's mortality. Lawrence Hatab captures this point in claiming that:

> ...in a world where no one died, the need for protection and the subsequent rewards for heroic risk would be absent. All people would be on a common footing and noble privilege would disappear.[291]

In her detailed assessment of the role of Agon in Nietzsche's philosophy, Christa Davis Acampora draws upon an early essay of Nietzsche's—*Homer's Contest*—to make a similar point. She argues that Nietzsche views the lives of the human protagonists in the work of Homer as "potentially surpassing that of the gods—the gods cannot achieve the status of the heroes because they cannot risk their lives".[292] The idea being that the very greatest achievements are often those so difficult that the agent's striving involves a high risk for the achiever; they, like Sarpedon and Glaucus, could potentially lose their lives in the struggle (*UM*, II, §9; *TI*, 'Skirmishes', §38). Although the gods can reach their ends with ease, this heroic struggle is something they are not able to do, the significance of which being that they are deprived of tremendous value.[293]

Nietzsche holds that in opposition to an existence of "smug ease", these few and rare individuals "are the heroic type, the great *pain-bringers* of humanity" (*GS*, §318; cf. §377). The same sentiment persists in later work:

> Like a rider on a charging steed we let fall the reins before the infinite, we modern men, like semi-barbarians—and attain *our* state of bliss only when we are most—*in danger*. (*BGE*, §224)

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[290] Homer, (2003b), p. 211, 12.325.

[291] Lawrence Hatab, *Myth and Philosophy: A Contest of Truths*, (Open Court, 1990), p. 74.

[292] Christa Davis Acampora, *Contesting Nietzsche*, (University of Chicago Press, 2013), p. 43.

[293] I agree with Acampora that Nietzsche's interpretation of Homer in this way is why he ultimately takes Homer's worldview to be a life-affirming one: it places great value in *this* world and not in some other realm.

The important point for my purposes here is to acknowledge that Nietzsche considers heroism to be at least partly an aesthetic concept. As a philologist, Nietzsche would have been particularly sensitive to the choice of terminology in Homer's texts. Consider again Sarpedon and Glaucus' conversation in *The Iliad*: by risking their lives in the frontlines of battle they win glory [*kleos*], the opposite concept being shame or disgrace [*aischros*]. While shameful actions were judged to be bad, they were not considered immoral or wrong. Rather, they were considered 'ugly', which is another meaning of *aischros*. The opposite concept of *kalos*, 'beauty', therefore corresponds with *kleos*: glory. A defining feature of Nietzsche's positive ethics is his acceptance of this Homeric evaluation of the good in close connection to the beautiful. For instance, Nietzsche describes these rare individuals as “uniquely himself to every last movement of his muscles, more, that in being thus strictly consistent in uniqueness he is beautiful, and worth regarding" (*UM,* III, §1). Much later, Nietzsche draws a parallel between power and "magnificence" or "splendour" [*Pracht*] (*GM*, Preface, §6) that is found in great individuals; a quality which has significant aesthetic connotations. Furthermore, in the same work Nietzsche later presents to his readers an "aristocratic value equation" as follows:

> good = noble = powerful = *beautiful* = fortunate = loved by god (*GM*, I, §7; emphasis added)

Heroic activity is clearly a good thing in Nietzsche's view, and because his aestheticism treats ethical concepts like aesthetic ones, at least in this context, heroic activity (i.e. striving) is also beautiful. This has consequences for the aestheticization of suffering, which heroic beauty is in part constituted by. I shall now turn to this point and why it is relevant to the value of suffering and organic unity, in turn showing how Reginster can best defend his view.

3. Suffering as a Contributor

3.1. Can Suffering be Beautiful?

Striving for one's noble goals has aesthetic value in Nietzsche's view. The importance of the aesthetic value tied to heroic struggle culminates in tragedy, whereby the heroic

protagonist leads himself to annihilation because of his ambition and drive to achieve his goals. Thus, when Achilles is overcome with rage at the death of Patroclus, the grandeur of his vengeful rampage that ends with his death is supposedly aesthetically pleasing in some way. Nietzsche praises Macbeth in similar terms in a passage from *Daybreak* titled "The Morality of the Stage", arguing that to think the actions of Macbeth are presented as evil and to be shunned would be a mistake. Rather, "if the hero perishes by his passion this precisely is the sharpest spice in the hot draught of this joy" (*D*, §240). It is precisely this element of tragic heroes, such as Macbeth and Achilles, which has "demonic attraction" (*D*, §240) in Nietzsche's view. This attraction, we are told, is entirely lost in the modern man: he is no longer "the centre and tragic hero of existence in general" (*WP*, §18; *KSA*, 1886, 7[3]).

But while Nietzsche finds beauty in striving, whether this means that all constitutive features of that striving are themselves beautiful in such a context remains unclear. At first glance, the idea that *suffering* can be beautiful seems abhorrent. Claims about the suffering of victims of natural disasters or wars whose entire families are lost; of leukaemia; of child abuse; suicidal depression; and other such horrors, being beautiful appear deeply superficial. Importantly, Nietzsche certainly does intend his claims about the value of suffering to be shocking, after all, they are made as part of an attempt at a radical 'revaluation of all values' aimed at curing a diagnosed problem with contemporary culture. However, it is important not to attribute to Nietzsche a more radical position than he actually defends, thereby dismissing his distinctive view wholesale.

The possibility that Nietzsche defends the notion that *all* suffering, including the examples above, can be found beautiful is unlikely. However, it matters little for my purposes here because there are two crucial constraints on the thread of argument in this thesis. The first constraint is that I only discuss Nietzsche's suffering of a *particular kind*: that of resistance to the will in striving to reach one's goals (as defined in Chapter One). This significantly limits the scope of Nietzsche's claims about suffering to that experienced in certain activities, namely great achievements. The second constraint is that, as I argued in Chapter Three, Nietzsche does *not* think this type of activity is valuable for everyone, or should be attempted by everyone. Rather, the value of suffering in pursuit of noble goals is

considerably limited to a small number of individuals: those capable of 'greatness'. Taking these constraints into account, the issue of superficiality is at once less compelling.

Nevertheless, there may still be a lingering worry of this nature in holding that suffering is able (at least in some contexts) to be beautiful. There is certainly one intuition that seeing heroes suffer in their epic struggles is glorious, but that suffering itself can be anything other than negative will be objectionable to many. Nietzsche is aware of this clash of intuitions, and in *The Birth of Tragedy* asks: "How can ugliness and discord, the content of the tragic myth, produce aesthetic pleasure?" (*BT*, §24). He continues:

> The content of the tragic myth at first seems to be an epic event that glorifies the struggling hero. But what is the origin of that mysterious feature whereby the hero's suffering, the most painful victories, the most agonising oppositions of motives—in short, the exemplification of the wisdom of Silenus, or to put it in aesthetic terms, ugly and discordant elements—are repeatedly portrayed with such love and in such countless forms, precisely in the most voluptuous and youthful era of people, unless a higher pleasure was perceived in it? (*BT*, §24)

There are two ways we might understand the relation between suffering and beautiful wholes. Both of these make use of the principle of organic unity, but each in different ways by turning on the notions of enabling conditions and contributors that I presented earlier.

The first way one might understanding suffering's relation to beauty would be to regard suffering as an aesthetic defect or imperfection that nevertheless increases the value of a whole. To give an analogy, it might be that just as a small mole or birth mark may add beauty to a face, or a poor quality recording may make a song sound more authentic, suffering is necessary for the greater beauty of heroic striving. On this view, suffering is an enabling condition for a valuable whole that outweighs its badness.

Came rejects this view as unrepresentative of Nietzsche's position. I agree with Came, but for slightly different reasons. Came writes that in order for an aesthetic imperfection to plausibly act as an enabling condition for a valuable aesthetic whole, the value of that whole must significantly outweigh the ugliness of the imperfection. However, suffering seems to 'top trump' anything it appears with. Came argues:

> ...suffering seems not only to cancel out but to engulf what ostensibly has positive aesthetic value in the world. Suffering is not like the ugliness of a small patch of colour in a painting that is defeated or cancelled out by the positive aesthetic value of the whole.[294]

However, while this point about the nature of suffering is an insightful one,[295] and carries weight for his purposes—to address Nietzsche's attempt at a *justification* of existence in the face of immense suffering in the world—it loses its force when the two restrictions I made above are taken into account: that my focus in this thesis is on (1) a *particular kind* of suffering: resistance to the will in striving; (2) what Nietzsche takes to be valuable for *particular types* of people, namely exceptional and potentially 'great' individuals. In the context of heroism in which Nietzsche approaches the aesthetic value related to suffering, it is less clear that suffering of this kind must "engulf" the value in great achievements.

Nevertheless, I agree with Came that for Nietzsche suffering was not merely an enabling condition. I now turn to whether there are adequate grounds to consider suffering as a contributor. Let us take stock of what has been discussed so far: I have up to this point attributed three major claims to Nietzsche:

(a) The endorsement of the principle of organic unities.
(b) The aestheticization of ethics.
(c) The veneration of the 'heroic' over the 'moral'.

But what are the logical relations between them? Nietzsche's opponents—proponents of herd morality—implicitly accept (a) when they hold that compassion is a virtue, which (logically) presupposes suffering, since compassion simply *is* the disposition to want to alleviate suffering. They might also endorse (b). For instance, Both Hume and Hutcheson thought that compassion is a beautiful character trait, and that it is a virtue because we are pleased by the

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[294] Came, (2005), p. 54.

[295] This echoes a similar sentiment expressed by Schopenhauer in his defence of pessimism—that there is a severe imbalance between suffering and pleasure in terms of value and affect (*WWR*, II, p. 576; *P2*, §149, p. 292.

contemplation of it. However, neither they nor the Christian, for example, would endorse (c). The reason for this is that they do not think suffering is made into a 'good' thing by the compassion. Rather, the suffering is a regrettable enabling condition of a good (the compassion) that is (sometimes) greater than the suffering. This indicates that Nietzsche's conception of (b) must differ radically from Humean/Christian conception of (b): while the latter tempers the margin of the ethical/aesthetic domain in favour the ethical (or 'moral'), Nietzsche does the opposite.[296]

Nietzsche gives a strong indication that he understands suffering to be beautiful in this second way, that is: as a contributor rather than as an enabling condition. On this view, suffering itself is construable as beautiful in certain contexts: when suffering in pursuit of one's goal, the extra value to be found in heroic striving comes from suffering *increasing* in value upon entering the whole. An analogous example might be the case of the mosaic mentioned earlier. The stones which make up a beautiful mosaic, let us imagine, are of little worth before the prospect of a mosaic was pondered. However, upon entering as a part of the beautiful mosaic, each part acquires beauty and can be admired for their qualities (e.g. of their particular shade of blue) and what it 'brings' to the whole.

In the same passage from *The Birth of Tragedy* quoted above with regard to heroic struggle, Nietzsche importantly draws his own telling analogy between suffering and "musical dissonance" (*BT*, §24) to elucidate this concept. He writes that "the pleasure engendered by the tragic myth comes from the same native soil as our pleasurable sensation

[296] An interesting comparison might be made here between Nietzsche and Hume's views about the pleasure to be found in suffering in tragedies. Some interpretations of Hume's *On Tragedy* have him claim that we experience pleasure in the sorrow and suffering *itself*, and not merely in virtue of further goods it may enable. This is often referred to as his emotional conversion theory. This particular interpretation of the theory looks remarkably close to the view I attribute Nietzsche here. However, the crucial difference is that Hume, unlike Nietzsche, does *not* think this theory can be plausible or desirable outside the realm of fiction. On Hume's view, we take comfort in knowing these instances of suffering are "nothing but a fiction" (*OT*, p. 217) . Therefore, Hume cannot be said to endorse Nietzsche's form of aestheticism.

of dissonance in music" (*BT*, §24).[297] In other words, just as we find dissonance in chords and harmonies to be aesthetically pleasing, not as enabling conditions but as contributors, the same is true, Nietzsche thinks, of suffering in the case of the tragic hero. This relationship between pleasure and suffering, Nietzsche writes, is "the great pantheistic sharing of joy and sorrow that sanctifies *and calls good* even the most terrible and questionable qualities of life" (*WP*, §1050; *KSA*, 1888, 14[14]; emphasis added). Similarly, he claims that "It is the *heroic* spirits who say Yes to themselves in tragic cruelty: they are hard enough to experience suffering as a *pleasure*" (*WP*, §852; *KSA*, 1887, 10[168]). These comments are supported in Nietzsche's broader claims about the nature of value that I discussed in Chapter Three. For example:

> It might even be possible that *what* constitutes the value of those good and honoured things resides precisely in their being artfully related, knotted and crocheted to these wicked, apparently antithetical things, perhaps even in their being essentially identical with them. (*BGE*, §2)

The claim that something can be "good and honoured" and "essentially identical" with negative values implies that Nietzsche understands things as being able (at least) to be valuable in one context but not in another. This further supports the interpretation that when Nietzsche claims that "only the particular is loathsome, and that all is redeemed and affirmed in the whole" (*TI*, 'Skirmishes', §49), bad/ugly parts are "redeemed" in virtue of being *contributors* and not enabling conditions. Moreover, that where "weaknesses delight the eye" (*GS*, §290), one perceives parts, such as suffering, as beautiful, and not regrettable features of valuable wholes.

It will be useful to compare these important remarks to a later aphorism from *The Gay Science*, where Nietzsche again asks how 'ugly' things can be considered beautiful:

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[297] Nietzscheans will likely not find this observation particularly surprising or controversial given Nietzsche's views about the human psychological tendency to feel pleasure in another's suffering, be that through (1) cruelty (where that pleasure comes from *inflicting* suffering, either upon another agent, or in the case of the ascetic, upon oneself), (2) schadenfreude (where that pleasure comes from *perceiving* suffering in another), or cases of (3) revenge. Indeed, this idea is the basis of Nietzsche's account of the origins of punishment: one is paid back the debt one is owed by a transgressor in pleasure at their being punished, with varying practices more subtly expressing this urge to cruelty in various cultures across history than others (*GM*, II).

> *What one should Learn from Artists*. How can we make things beautiful, attractive, and desirable, when they are not? And I rather think that in themselves they never are. Here we could learn something from physicians, when for example they dilute what is bitter or add wine and sugar to a mixture—but even more from artists who are really continually trying to bring off such inventions and feats. Moving away from things until there is a good deal that one no longer sees and there is much that our eye has to add if we are still to see them at all; or seeing things around a corner and as cut out and framed; or to place them so that they partially conceal each other and grant us only glimpses of architectural perspectives; or looking at them through tinted glass or in the light of the sunset; or giving them a surface and skin that is not fully transparent—all this we should learn from artists while being wiser than they are in other matters. For with them this subtle power usually comes to an end where art ends and life begins; but we want to be the poets of our life—first of all in the smallest, most everyday matters. (*GS*, §299)

There are a number of interrelated points being made in this passage; those of relevance to my purposes here are threefold:

(1) Things are never beautiful "in-themselves".

(2) Rather, they *become so* when considered in relation to other things.

(3) This principle of art should be applied to the ethical domain (aestheticism).

Point (2) is especially relevant given Nietzsche's earlier claims in *The Birth of Tragedy* regarding the beauty of suffering and the analogy with musical dissonance. But Nietzsche's description of point (2) in this passage is especially interesting. He implies that one ought to "withdraw from things" of negative value in order to see them through a variety of diluting "perspective views" that "disguise" their nature as ugly. Nietzsche's strategy for viewing suffering as beautiful when a part of a valuable whole seems to therefore depend upon what he considers a form of illusion or falsification of the phenomena. In other words, suffering's badness is made tolerable by giving it a certain perspective—that of heroic struggle—that makes it an object of aesthetic pleasure. Nietzsche is able to make such a move because of his commitment to the claim that the relationship between aesthetic value and epistemic value is asymmetrical: what has value does not necessarily correspond to what is true.

3.2 Suffering Experienced vs. Suffering Perceived

At this point we must draw a distinction between two different phenomena, that is: between the suffering one *experiences* in one's own striving, on the one hand, and the suffering one *perceives* in *others'*, striving on the other. Nietzsche's position so far might be thought to be more appropriate for the perception of suffering in another's struggle; that aesthetic value is found in suffering as a spectator witnessing an agonistic struggle. Yet Nietzsche is ambiguous about which form he is concerned with, and could plausibly be interpreted as attempting to address both.

Came holds that "the general tenor of his descriptions of suffering", at least in *The Birth of Tragedy*, "suggests that it is the pain of others, rather than one's own pain, that is most problematic".[298] This may be the case, but I wish to remain open to whether Nietzsche's claims regarding the beauty of suffering can be applied to oneself for two reasons. Firstly, while the suffering of others in general *may* be "most problematic", it is unlikely that Nietzsche, who later refers to his own great suffering on numerous occasions (e.g. *GS*, §303; *EH*, I, §1, §2), thinks one's own suffering isn't problematic *at all*.

Secondly, Nietzsche does in at least one place explicitly attempt to draw a connection between the perception and experience of suffering as beautiful by arguing that perceiving the struggle of the tragic hero in an aesthetic context allows one to reflect upon one's own striving in the same terms. In a telling passage, he writes:

> Only artists, and especially those of the theatre, have given men eyes and ears to see and hear with some pleasure what each man *is* himself, experiences himself, desires himself; only they have taught us to esteem the hero that is concealed in everyday characters; only they have taught us the art of viewing ourselves as heroes—from a distance and, as it were, simplified and transfigured—the art of staging and watching ourselves. (*GS*, §78)

[298] Came, (2005), p. 53.

The idea being conveyed here is that art has the capacity to act as a heuristic device in that it can give perspective on one's life in a way that provides a third person view of one's first person experiences. By 'putting ourselves on the stage', we treat the way we live as a kind of performance. If we apply this to the problem at hand, because we perceive the beauty of the hero's suffering, we can apply that experience to our own striving to some degree. In this way Nietzsche appears to attempt to addresses both the suffering of others and one's own suffering as instances of beauty.

Nietzsche later again advises that "we must discover the *hero*", and appears to commit to a stronger claim that *only* art gives this capacity for perspective: "art furnishes us with eyes and hands and above all the good conscience to be *able* to turn ourselves into such a [aesthetic] phenomenon (*GS*, §107). This, to put it modestly, is an ambitious expectation for someone to be able to effectively do. But again, Nietzsche does not expect just *anyone* to be able to do so, but only those rare and exceptional individuals capable of it.

Conclusion

To conclude, Reginster is right to claim that suffering, in Nietzsche's view, has value in virtue of being part of a valuable whole (i.e. contributory value). However, by making use of the principle of organic unities—a principle that heavily underpins Nietzsche's wider positive ethical project—we can understand that suffering contributes value to a whole *in a particular way*. This is as a contributor which bridges the ethical with the aesthetic (understood through the concept of the heroic), and not merely as an enabling condition (typically understood in the moral case of compassion). On this view, suffering is not itself good, but can be construed as good in aesthetic terms in virtue of its overcoming. It is on *these* grounds that, as Reginster claims, suffering "cannot be coherently deplored" in the context of striving, and not simply in virtue of the fact that suffering is an essential feature of the good. Furthermore, it is precisely this treatment of suffering as a contributor and not an enabling condition that sharply distinguishes Nietzsche's ethics of heroism from his moral opponents.

My arguments here are limited in important ways, and can therefore only take us so far. First of all, I have drawn heavily upon claims from the period up and including to *The Gay Science* in order to support my interpretation. While I see no reason to suggest Nietzsche changed his view after this, the strongest evidence for the claims I have made reside in this work and the works that preceded it. Secondly, my claims pertain only to the suffering experienced in the pursuit of one's goals. The broader project of trying to reconcile *all* suffering in the world with an affirmation of life—of fundamental 'yes-saying' [*Jasagen*]—may have been partly answered in the process, but my arguments should not be taken as sufficient to address this larger Nietzschean theme.

Nietzsche's aestheticism is radical, and when considered in a wider sense to apply to the whole of existence as a type of performance or theatre, in which *all* suffering contributes beauty to an agonistic spectacle of greatness, it is implausible. However, whether Nietzsche is actually committed to such a view is controversial, and far from what I have attempted to interpret him as defending here. Rather, his aestheticism considered in a narrower sense pertaining to a certain kind of activity by certain people—the striving of the heroic—while still radical, has interesting implications. The intuition that he is latching on to—that the utilitarian mission to minimize suffering as much as possible does away with any need or possibility for the heroic—is a powerful one. Morality, in Nietzsche's view, comes at the expense of abandoning opportunities for great individuals to flourish, and it is at the very least not obvious that this is a preferable state of affairs. Nietzsche is prompting his readers—which I have argued is in some way justifiable—into casting doubt upon the tacit assumption of modernity that suffering is always to be abolished.

Bibliography

Primary Literature

Works by Nietzsche are cited by section using the following abbreviations and translations (though modified where I have felt it appropriate to do so):

A = *The Antichrist*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale, 1968

BGE = *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale, 1990

BT = *The Birth of Tragedy*, trans. Ronald Speirs, 1999

D = *Daybreak*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale, 1997

EH = *Ecce Homo*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale, 1979

GM = *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Douglas Smith, 1998

GS = *The Gay Science*, trans. Walter Kaufmann, 1974

HH = *Human, All Too Human*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale, 1996

NCW = *Nietzsche Contra Wagner*, trans. Walter Kaufmann, 1954

TI = *Twilight of the Idols*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale, 1968

Z = *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. Walter Kaufmann, 1954

UM = *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale, 1997

WP = *The Will to Power*, trans. Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale, 1967

Citations from *WP* are given corresponding references from KSA = *Kritische Studienausgabe*, ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzio Montinari (de Gruyter, 1967), and are cited by year, notebook number, note number (taken from www.nietzschesource.org).

Citations from Nietzsche's letters are taken from KSB = *Kritische Sämtliche Briefe*, ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzio Montinari (de Gruyter, 1967). I use the translation from Christopher Middleton, *Selected Letters of Friedrich Nietzsche*, (Hackett Publishing Co., 1996)

Works by Schopenhauer are cited by section and page number using the following abbreviations and translations:

WWR, I = *The World as Will and Representation*, volume one, trans. E.F.J. Payne

WWR, II = *The World as Will and Representation*, volume two, trans. E.F.J. Payne

BM = *On the Basis of Morals*, in *The Two Fundamental Problems of Ethics*, trans. D.E. Cartwright and E.E. Erdmann

PP1 = *Parerga and Paralipomena*, Vol. 1, trans. E.F.J. Payne
PP2 = *Parerga and Paralipomena*, Vol. 2, trans. E.F.J. Payne

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