

THE HISTORY OF
CONTINENTAL PHILOSOPHY

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VOLUME 6

POSTSTRUCTURALISM AND
CRITICAL THEORY'S SECOND GENERATION

Edited by Alan D. Schrift

ACUMEN

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1

FRENCH NIETZSCHEANISM

Alan D. Schrift

As an artist one has no home in Europe, except Paris ...
(*Ecce Homo*, "Why I Am So Clever," §5)

When philosophers think of "French Nietzscheanism," they tend to associate this development with the 1960s. But French Nietzscheanism has, in fact, a long history in which one can locate three particular moments: first among writers of both the avant-garde Left and neoroyalist Right from the early 1890s until the First World War; then among nonconformist intellectuals in the years before and after the Second World War; and finally among philosophers in the 1960s and 1970s. Nietzsche¹ himself was drawn to France and his works found there an early and welcome home. *Richard Wagner à Bayreuth*, the first translation of any of Nietzsche's works, appeared in French in January 1877, barely six months after it first appeared in German.² And by the time Nietzsche's first works appeared in English (*Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and *The Case of Wagner* were published in 1896), Henri Albert already had plans to publish a translation of Nietzsche's complete works through *Mercure de France*, a project he completed in 1909 with the French translation of *Ecce Homo*.³ But this initial enthusiastic reception of

*1. See the essay on Nietzsche by Daniel Conway in *The History of Continental Philosophy: Volume 2*.

2. The fourth and final of Nietzsche's *Untimely Meditations*, *Richard Wagner in Bayreuth* was published in July 1876 by Verlag Ernst Schmeitzner. Schmeitzner also published *Richard Wagner à Bayreuth*, translated into French by Marie Baumgartner.

3. Louis Pinto suggests these plans were envisaged as early as 1894; see Louis Pinto, *Les Neveux de Zarathoustra* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1998), 25 n. By contrast, the first English translation of the complete works, edited by Oscar Levy, was published between 1909 and 1911.

Nietzsche's works in France should not obscure the fact that the association of Nietzscheanism in France with the emergence of poststructuralism in the 1960s is not mistaken, because it was not until the late 1950s that Nietzsche's work was taken seriously by French *philosophers* as *philosophy*. Before we examine this uniquely *philosophical* moment of French Nietzscheanism, therefore, a few comments on the two earlier moments are in order.

Early in the twentieth century, there was considerable interest in France in Nietzsche's thought, but this was located primarily outside the university and, when in the university, outside the faculty in philosophy.⁴ Professor of German Literature Henri Lichtenberger (1864–1941) taught the Sorbonne's one full-year course in German language and literature in 1902–1903 on Nietzsche, and Lichtenberger's *La Philosophie de Nietzsche*,⁵ first published in 1898, was already in its ninth edition by 1905. Charles Andler (1866–1933), also a professor of German literature, published a magisterial six-volume study of Nietzsche between 1920 and 1931.⁶ Outside the university, from the 1890s into the early twentieth century, Nietzsche was widely read by and associated with the literary avant-garde, most notably André Gide (1869–1951) and his circle, many of whom studied with Andler at the École Normale Supérieure and were later associated with *La Nouvelle Revue Française*. There was also an attraction to Nietzsche among certain literary and political circles associated with the Right that began in the 1890s and was later associated with Charles Maurras (1868–1952) and the Action Française, and which continued until the approach of the First World War, when their nationalistic and anti-German attitudes

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4. Laure Verbaere, in *La Réception française de Nietzsche 1890–1910 (Thèse de doctorat d'histoire, University of Nantes, 1999)*, notes that between 1890 and 1910 more than 1,100 references to Nietzsche appear in French, with forty-seven books and more than six hundred articles or studies discussing his thought (cited in Jacques Le Rider, *Nietzsche en France de la fin du XIXe siècle au temps présent* [Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1999], 104). Geneviève Bianquis's *Nietzsche en France: L'Influence de Nietzsche sur la pensée française* (1929) remains the best source of information on Nietzsche's early reception in France.
 5. Henri Lichtenberger, *La Philosophie de Nietzsche* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1898). In 1910, this work was the first French text on Nietzsche to be translated into English, as *The Gospel of Superman: The Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche*.
 6. Charles Andler, *Les Précurseurs de Nietzsche* (Paris: Bossard, 1920); *La Jeunesse de Nietzsche: Jusqu'à la rupture avec Bayreuth* (Paris: Bossard, 1921); *Le Pessimisme esthétique de Nietzsche: Sa philosophie à l'époque wagnérienne* (Paris: Bossard, 1921); *Nietzsche et le transformisme intellectualiste: La Philosophie de sa période française* (Paris: Bossard, 1922); *La Maturité de Nietzsche: Jusqu'à sa mort* (Paris: Bossard, 1928); *La Dernière philosophie de Nietzsche: Le Renouveau de toutes les valeurs* (Paris: Bossard, 1931). Andler's first two volumes were sent to the publisher Félix Alcan in 1913, but publication at that time was impossible because of the war (see Le Rider, *Nietzsche en France*, 84). The six volumes were published together in three volumes as *Nietzsche, sa vie et sa pensée* (Paris: Gallimard, 1958).

made it impossible for them to any longer look on Nietzsche with favor.⁷ While the literary Left welcomed Nietzsche as a philosopher-poet who challenged the strictures of contemporary morality, the philosophical establishment was dismissive of Nietzsche's stylistic transgressions, his "irrationalism," and his "immoralism." Where Gide promoted his association with Nietzsche in his *L'Immoraliste*, published in 1902, Alfred Fouillée's *Nietzsche et l'immoralisme*,⁸ one of the few works on Nietzsche written by a philosopher during this period, also appeared in 1902, went through four editions by 1920, and was extremely critical of Nietzsche, questioning why any serious philosopher would attend to his thought. In fact, Nietzsche was so closely identified with "immoralism" that the term was introduced and defined as "Nietzsche's doctrine" in the prestigious philosophical dictionary *Vocabulaire technique et critique de la philosophie*, compiled from 1902 to 1923 by members of the Société Française de Philosophie, under the direction of their General Secretary André Lalande.⁹

The near total failure by university philosophers to acknowledge Nietzsche's work from 1890 through the First World War and beyond is less the result of unfamiliarity with his work than a consequence of their decision to "professionalize" philosophy both by emphasizing its logical and scientific rigor and by distinguishing sharply between philosophy and literature.¹⁰ During this period, although there were serious antagonisms between the three dominant "schools" within French academic philosophy – the positivists, neo-Kantians, and spiritualists¹¹ – the university professors were united in thinking that the university was the only space for "serious" philosophical discussion. As a consequence, Nietzsche's popularity among so-called philosophical "amateurs" was taken as

7. For a discussion of the literary attraction to Nietzsche among the Right and Left during this period, see Christopher E. Forth, *Zarathustra in Paris: The Nietzsche Vogue in France 1891–1918* (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 2001); for a discussion of Nietzsche's appropriation by the Action Française, see Reino Virtanen, "Nietzsche and the Action Française: Nietzsche's Significance for French Rightist Thought," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 11 (April 1950).

8. Alfred Fouillée, *Nietzsche et l'immoralisme* (Paris: Félix Alcan, 1902).

9. The members of the Société Française de Philosophie met regularly to discuss the meanings of key philosophical terminology, and they published their proceedings in two issues each year of the *Bulletin de la Société Française de Philosophie*. Lalande collected and annotated these proceedings and published them with Félix Alcan in a single volume in 1925–26. The *Vocabulaire's* eighteenth edition was published by Presses Universitaires de France in 1996.

10. Pinto makes this point in *Les Neveux de Zarathoustra*, 38ff. One might relate the university philosophers' hostility to Nietzsche to the similar animosity philosophers at the Sorbonne and École Normale Supérieure showed to the work of Henri Bergson.

11. I discuss the tensions between these "schools" and their leading representatives – Émile Durkheim, Léon Brunschvicg, and Henri Bergson, respectively – in the opening chapter of my *Twentieth-Century French Philosophy* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2006).

evidence of his philosophical unworthiness within the academy.¹² Even after the First World War, although Nietzsche remained a canonical figure within German studies¹³ and was very much a part of the cultural debate between the Right and the Left, there was almost no philosophical scholarship on his thought.

From the 1930s to the 1950s, Nietzsche continued to be ignored by the university philosophers.¹⁴ But during these years, the “second moment” of French Nietzscheanism took shape as his thought emerged as an important reference for avant-garde theorists who would, in the 1960s, become associated with philosophers. The most significant figure here was Georges Bataille,¹⁵ for whom Nietzsche was a constant object of reflection from the foundation of the journal *Acéphale* in 1936 through his *Sur Nietzsche*, published in 1945.¹⁶ Through Bataille, Pierre Klossowski, and others, including the philosopher Jean Wahl, Nietzsche was a constant presence in the activities of the Collège de Sociologie. Two features distinguish Bataille’s approach to Nietzsche: his attempt to read Nietzsche in relation to Hegel, and his desire to challenge the association of Nietzsche’s thought with fascism and National Socialism. These features come together in Bataille’s framing Nietzsche as “the *hero* of everything human that is not enslaved,”¹⁷ and as he develops these features, Bataille emphasizes, more than earlier French readings, the place of the eternal return in Nietzsche’s thought. Bataille and his collaborators at *Acéphale* were all influenced by Karl Löwith’s

12. The general point of the hostility between “professional,” that is university, philosophers and philosophical “amateurs” is discussed in Jean-Louis Fabiani, “Enjeux et usages de la ‘crise’ dans la philosophie universitaire en France au tournant du siècle,” *Annales ESC* (March–April 1985).

13. Beginning in 1903, Nietzsche appears roughly every four or five years on the *Programme* of the *agrégation d’allemand*, even through the Second World War, appearing on the *Programmes* in 1940 and 1942. For further information on the French institution of the *agrégation*, see note 25.

14. In 1946, the Société Française d’Etudes Nietzscheennes was founded by Armand Quinot and Geneviève Bianquis and its eight founding members were all Germanists with the exception of the philosopher Félicien Challaye. The society continued until 1965 and eventually included among its members the philosophers Jean Wahl, Angèle Kremer-Marietti, Gilles Deleuze, Richard Roos, Pierre Boudot, and Jacques Derrida.

*15. For a discussion of Georges Bataille and the Collège de Sociologie, see the essay by Peter Tracy Connor in *The History of Continental Philosophy: Volume 5*.

16. Georges Bataille, *Sur Nietzsche* (Paris: Gallimard, 1945); published in English as *On Nietzsche*, Bruce Boone (trans.) (New York: Paragon House, 1992). Vincent Descombes regards Bataille as the central figure in Nietzsche’s “second French moment.” See Vincent Descombes, “Nietzsche’s French Moment,” Robert de Loaiza (trans.), in *Why We Are Not Nietzscheans*, Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut (eds) (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1999). While I do not share Descombes’s unsympathetic view of Nietzsche’s third, “philosophical” moment, my chronology here basically agrees with his.

17. Georges Bataille, “Nietzschean Chronicle,” in *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927–1939*, Allan Stoekl (ed. and trans.) (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), 203.

Nietzsches Philosophie der ewigen Wiederkehr des Gleichens, which appeared in 1935 and was reviewed by Klossowski in the second issue of *Acéphale* (January 1937).¹⁸ For Bataille, where Hegel's philosophy is directed by an unflinching teleology, Nietzsche's thought of eternal return affirms the immanence of each moment as an unmotivated end in itself.¹⁹ And where Hegel's dialectic of determinate negation leaves nothing to chance, Nietzsche's emphasis on the death of God and the immanent, excessive possibilities of the moment leaves everything to chance. By attending to the will to chance at the core of the eternal return, Bataille deemphasized the significance of the will to power, which he saw as central to the fascists' willful misappropriation of Nietzsche and which he criticized for being motivated by an instrumental rationality that mistakenly reduced all value to use-value instead of affirming the transvaluation of all values that opens the future to the possibility of the new.

The other significant work on Nietzsche written during this period, sociologist Henri Lefebvre's *Nietzsche*, shares with Bataille the desire to read Nietzsche against the fascists, arguing that "The Nietzschean idea of the future is not fascist. 'Surpass! Overcome!' This Nietzschean imperative is precisely the contrary of the fascist postulate, according to which conflicts are eternal and human problems don't have solutions."²⁰ But unlike Bataille, Lefebvre also sought to emphasize both Nietzsche's existentialism and his compatibility with Marx. A committed Marxist and member of the Parti Communist Française until he was expelled in 1958, Lefebvre²¹ opens his text with an epigraph from Marx's *1844 Manuscripts*, and goes on to argue that Nietzsche's account of human alienation raises important themes that are insufficiently addressed by Marx's exclusively economic account of alienation. At the same time, he argues that Nietzsche lacks a coherent theory of alienation, which would require that he see the alienation of thought from life "as the result of social differentiation and the division of labor" (144). Because Lefebvre finds Nietzsche's revaluation of values easy to "integrate with the Marxist concept of man," he concludes that "it is absurd to write [as Drieu la Rochelle did in his *Socialisme fasciste* (1934)] Nietzsche contre Marx" (164). Lefebvre's Marxist vision drifts toward existentialism as he notes that in Nietzsche's magnificent future, "the men of our epoch will, suffer, despair, and always return to hope. And it is this which gives their life its unique

18. Titled "Réparation à Nietzsche," the second issue of *Acéphale* also included Bataille's important essay "Nietzsche et les fascistes," translated as "Nietzsche and the Fascists," in Bataille, *Visions of Excess*, 182-96.

19. See Bataille, *On Nietzsche*, xxxii-xxxiii.

20. Henri Lefebvre, *Nietzsche* (Paris: Éditions Sociales Internationales, 1939), 162. Hereafter cited in the text by page number.

*21. For a discussion of Lefebvre, see the essay by William L. McBride in *The History of Continental Philosophy: Volume 5*.

character” (*ibid.*). Even the eternal recurrence squares with Lefebvre’s existentialist Marxist vision of the future, as the eternal recurrence gives rise to the Nietzschean Imperative, “an imperative that gives existence an infinite density: ‘Live each moment in a way that you will to relive it eternally’ [‘*Vis tout instant de sorte que tu veuilles toujours le revivre*’]. There doesn’t exist an eternity and a pre-existent truth that fatalistically determines us. On the contrary: we create eternity, our eternity!” (87).²²

Somewhat surprisingly, given Nietzsche’s early association in the English-speaking world with existentialism, the second Nietzschean moment in France, while emerging at the same time as French existentialism, is not particularly associated with that movement. Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, and Beauvoir were no doubt familiar with Nietzsche’s works, but Nietzsche’s thought did not play nearly as influential a role in existentialist philosophy as that played by Hegel, Husserl, or Heidegger. Even Wahl, who was the figure at the Sorbonne most closely associated with contemporary German philosophy, devoted far more time to Kierkegaard than to Nietzsche during these years. The existentialist who was most comfortable appealing to Nietzsche was Albert Camus,²³ but he did so more from the perspective of a literary rather than philosophical writer. Sartre, on the other hand, was quite hostile to the idea of Nietzsche’s philosophical importance. In an essay on the work of Brice Parain, Sartre wrote that “We know that Nietzsche was not a philosopher.”²⁴ And Sartre follows this comment about Nietzsche not being a philosopher with the following: “But why does Parain, who is a professional philosopher, quote this crackbrained nonsense?”

In contrast to the two earlier moments, what distinguishes the *third* Nietzschean moment in France is precisely that Nietzsche’s thought is for the first time taken up by professional philosophers. Nietzsche’s *philosophical* moment in France begins in 1958, when *La Généalogie de la morale* appeared on the reading list in French translation for the *agrégation de philosophie*.²⁵

22. For a discussion of Lefebvre’s interpretation of Nietzsche, see Douglas Smith, *Transvaluations: Nietzsche in France 1872–1972* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 81–8.

*23. For a discussion of Camus, see the essay by S. K. Keltner and Samuel J. Julian in *The History of Continental Philosophy: Volume 4*.

24. Jean-Paul Sartre, “Departure and Return,” in *Literary and Philosophical Essays*, Annette Michelson (trans.) (New York: Criterion Books, 1955), 171; originally published as “Aller et retour,” first published in *Les Cahiers du Sud* (1944), reprinted in *Situations I* (Paris: Gallimard, 1947), 217.

25. The *agrégation de philosophie* is a competitive annual exam that certifies students to teach philosophy in secondary and postsecondary schools. Appearing on the *Programme*, or reading list, for the *agrégation* insures that all students taking the examination, normally taken on completion of one’s studies at a *grand école* or university, will spend the year reading one’s work; in addition, a significant component of the teaching corps will offer *lycée* or university courses that address figures and texts on the annual reading list. I discuss the history and

Appearing again in 1959, these were Nietzsche's first appearances on the examination since 1929, and they began a series of his appearances over the next two decades.²⁶ In precisely those years when Nietzsche's *Genealogy* was one of the required texts (1958–59), Deleuze was beginning his university career at the Sorbonne, where he taught as *Maître-assistant* in the history of philosophy from 1957 to 1960, and where he offered a course on the *Genealogy* in the fall of 1958,²⁷ which surely explains why the *Genealogy* plays such a central role in Deleuze's *Nietzsche et la philosophie*.²⁸ To appreciate the novelty of Nietzsche's *philosophical* moment, consider the following: in 1959 and 1961, Wahl gave the first lecture courses on Nietzsche ever offered by a professor of philosophy at the Sorbonne,²⁹ and during precisely these years, 1958–62, we see appear the first six articles on Nietzsche ever to be published in France's prestigious philosophical journals.³⁰ And to appreciate the novelty of Deleuze's 1962 publication of *Nietzsche et la philosophie*,³¹ consider that there were only three books on Nietzsche published in France by philosophers in the preceding four decades.

influence of the *agrégation de philosophie*, examining in detail the role it played in the emergence of French Nietzscheanism, elsewhere; see "The Effects of the *Agrégation de Philosophie* on Twentieth-Century French Philosophy," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 46(3) (July 2008).

26. *Also sprach Zarathustra* appeared as a German option, in 1962 and 1963, and Nietzsche is listed for the written examination in 1970 and 1971, and again in 1976 and 1977.
27. I thank Giuseppe Bianco for providing me a copy of a student's notes from Deleuze's 1958 course, which offered a "*Commentaire de 'La Généalogie de la morale.'*"
28. Published in English as *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Hugh Tomlinson (trans.) (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1983). Among the other philosophers who are on the *Programmes* for the written examination or French explication while Deleuze taught at the Sorbonne are Bergson, Kant, and the Stoics (1957), and Spinoza, Hume, and Kant (1958, 1959). Deleuze published on all of these figures in the following decade.
29. Jean Wahl, *La Pensée philosophique de Nietzsche des années 1885–1888* (Paris: Centre de documentation universitaire, 1959), and *L'Avant-dernière pensée de Nietzsche* (Paris: Centre de documentation universitaire, 1961).
30. Before Deleuze's book appeared, articles by Henri Birault ("En quoi, nous aussi, nous sommes encore pieux"; 1962), Angèle Kremer-Marietti ("Nietzsche et quelques-uns de ses interprètes actuels"; 1959), Pierre Klossowski ("Nietzsche, le polythéisme et la parodie"; 1958), Jean Wahl ("Le Problème du temps chez Nietzsche"; 1961), and Hermann Wein ("Métaphysique et anti-métaphysique: accompagné de quelques réflexions pour la défense de l'œuvre de Nietzsche"; 1958) appeared in *Revue de métaphysique et de morale*. Prior to 1958, the last article on Nietzsche published in the *Revue de métaphysique et de morale* was Marie-Anne Cochet's "Nietzsche d'après son plus récent interprète," a review of Charles Andler's six-volume study published in two parts in 1931 and 1932. Only one other article on Nietzsche appeared in a philosophy journal between 1958 and 1962: Pierre Fruchon's "Note sur l'idée de création dans la dernière pensée de Nietzsche," which appeared in *Études philosophiques* in 1962.
31. For another indication of how French scholarship has changed since the early 1960s, consider that Wahl's 1963 review of *Nietzsche et la philosophie* in *Revue de métaphysique et de morale* begins by saying that Deleuze's book belongs alongside the most important books on Nietzsche, which he then names: those of Jaspers, Heidegger, Fink, and Lou Salomé.

Two of these were introductory texts written by philosophy teachers at the Lycée Condorcet: Félicien Challaye's *Nietzsche* (1933), and André Cresson's *Nietzsche, sa vie, son œuvre, avec un exposé de sa philosophie et des extraits de ses œuvres* (1942). It is not until much later, in Angèle Kremer-Marietti's *Thèmes et structures dans l'œuvre de Nietzsche* (1957), that Nietzsche's work receives a more philosophically sophisticated treatment.³²

Along with Nietzsche's appearance on the *agrégation*, Deleuze's book, and the German publication of Heidegger's two-volume *Nietzsche* in 1961,³³ the emergence of French Nietzscheanism is marked by two major conferences. The first, at which Nietzsche was treated for the first time in France as a serious philosopher, was held at the Abbey at Royaumont, July 4–8, 1964, and this conference played a significant role in legitimating Nietzsche's philosophical reputation.³⁴ Organized by Deleuze and presided over by the distinguished historian of philosophy Martial Guérout,³⁵ in addition to papers by younger philosophers (Gilles Deleuze, Michel Foucault, Gianni Vattimo³⁶), and literary or avant-garde writers (including Klossowski), presentations were also made by distinguished senior academic philosophers Jean Wahl, Jean Beaufret, Karl Löwith, Eugen Fink, and Henri Birault, the prestigious nonacademic philosopher Gabriel Marcel, and Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari, the editors who were just beginning work on a new critical edition of Nietzsche's works.³⁷ In his

32. Another indication of Nietzsche's position within the academic philosophical world can be gleaned from Armand Cuvillier's *Manuel de Philosophie à l'usage des Classes de Philosophie et de Première Supérieure* (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1944), a preparatory text for students studying for either the *baccalauréat* or the entrance examinations for the *grandes écoles*, including the École Normale Supérieure. Cuvillier's text mentions Nietzsche only four times in over 650 pages, and does not include any of Nietzsche's texts in a list of one hundred "Important Works Published since 1870" (*ibid.*, 668).

33. Heidegger's *Nietzsche* was not translated into French until 1971, in two volumes, by Pierre Klossowski and published by Gallimard.

34. The proceedings were published as *Nietzsche: Cahiers de Royaumont* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1967).

*35. For brief discussions of Guérout, see the essay by Derek Robbins in this volume, and the essay by Simon Duffy on French and Italian Spinozism in *The History of Continental Philosophy: Volume 7*.

*36. For a discussion of Vattimo, see the essay by Silvia Benso and Brian Schroeder in *The History of Continental Philosophy: Volume 7*.

37. Colli and Montinari's original edition was to appear in Italian, published by Adelphi Edizioni, and French, published by Gallimard, and edited by Foucault and Deleuze. Montinari had been trying unsuccessfully since 1961 to get a German publisher to agree to publish a German edition; conversations at the Royaumont conference with Karl Löwith led him to intervene and persuade de Gruyter to acquire the rights from Adelphi and Gallimard to publish the Colli–Montinari edition in its original language. I discuss this in a history of the English translation of the Critical Edition, which I am currently editing, in my "Translating the Colli–Montinari *Kritische Studienausgabe*," *Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 33 (2007).

own presentation, as was customary for the organizer of a conference, Deleuze gave a closing address in which he surveyed the presentations of the preceding days.³⁸ He noted five themes that were addressed throughout the papers and discussions: Nietzsche's masks and the necessity of interpretation; the will to power as that which remains behind the masks; relations of affirmation and negation; the Dionysian affirmation in eternal return; and Nietzsche's relations with other thinkers (Dostoevsky, Hesse, Marx, and Freud, among others). What Deleuze could not say, but what became clear soon after, was that the conference at Royaumont marked the confirmation of Nietzsche's philosophical reputation in France as he took his place in the philosophical canon, an event affirmed by the fact that his name made its initial appearance on the written examination of the *agrégation de philosophie* in 1970, reappearing three more times in the following seven years.³⁹

Where the Royaumont conference acknowledged Nietzsche's place in the canon, the second major conference, for ten days at Cerisy-la-Salle in July 1972,⁴⁰ placed Nietzsche at the center of contemporary French philosophy. Under the title *Nietzsche aujourd'hui* (Nietzsche today), the Cerisy conference included presentations by several of the participants who were at the Royaumont colloquium (including Deleuze, Fink, Klossowski, and Löwith). In addition to presentations by scholars associated with Nietzsche's work such as Eugen Biser, Eric Blondel, Pierre Boudot, Richard Roos, and Paul Valadier, it also included a significant presentation by Jacques Derrida, "La Question du style," which would later be revised and published as *Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles*, as well as presentations by a number of younger scholars associated with Derrida, including Sarah Kofman, Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe, Jean-Luc Nancy, Bernard Pautrat, and Jean-Michel Rey.⁴¹ And while some presentations, like the vast majority of presentations at

38. See Gilles Deleuze, "Sur la volonté de puissance et l'éternel retour," in *Nietzsche: Cahiers de Royaumont*; published in English as "Conclusions on the Will to Power and the Eternal Return," in *Desert Islands and Other Texts (1953–1974)*, David Lapoujade (ed.), Mike Taormina (trans.) (New York: Semiotext(e), 2004).

39. When a philosopher is named on the reading list for the written examination, this means that candidates preparing for the exam will be expected to know the entirety of that philosopher's corpus. It also assures that this philosopher will be the focus of a wide range of university and *lycée* courses in philosophy. This further suggests a link between Nietzsche's first appearance on the written *Programme* in 1970 and the organization of the Cerisy conference for the summer of 1972.

40. Over eight hundred pages of presentations and subsequent discussions from this conference were published in two volumes as *Nietzsche aujourd'hui* (Paris: Union Générale d'Éditions, 1973).

41. Many of these philosophers participated in the open seminar Derrida directed at the École Normale Supérieure, in the winter of 1969–70, devoted to a "Theory of Philosophical Discourse" with a particular emphasis on "The Status of Metaphor in Philosophy." Both Pautrat and Kofman note that preliminary drafts of their first books on Nietzsche – Bernard

Royaumont, addressed standard themes in Nietzsche's philosophy, many others reflected the latest philosophical, literary, aesthetic, and political trends.⁴²

Although English-speaking theorists have tended to credit Derrida with inaugurating the Nietzsche renaissance in France, it is really Deleuze who, more than anyone else, deserves that distinction. As François Ewald comments in the 1992 *Magazine littéraire* special issue on "Les Vies de Nietzsche," without Deleuze's two books on Nietzsche,⁴³ without his text on the reversal of Platonism,⁴⁴ and without his co-organizing the 1964 Royaumont colloquium, "Nietzsche would not be what he has become for us today."⁴⁵ And Kofman, whose work is often too quickly and inaccurately situated as derivative on Derrida's, notes in the opening lines of her second book on Nietzsche that it was Deleuze's *Nietzsche et la philosophie* that first gave to Nietzsche his rightful place in philosophy.⁴⁶ What is clear is that French philosophical Nietzscheanism came into its own in the ten years following Royaumont, with books dealing exclusively or primarily with Nietzsche by, among others, Maurice Blanchot, Boudot, Jean Granier, Klossowski, Kofman, Pautrat, Rey, and Valadier, and special issues on Nietzsche by some of France's leading journals.⁴⁷

Pautrat's *Versions du soleil: Figures et système de Nietzsche* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1971) and Sarah Kofman's *Nietzsche et la métaphore* (Paris: Payot, 1972) – were initially presented in that seminar. Derrida's own contributions to the seminar formed the basis of his essay "La Mythologie blanche," published in *Poétique* 5 (1971) and republished in *Marges de la philosophie*; published in English as "White Mythology," in *Margins of Philosophy*, Alan Bass (trans.) (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

42. A case in point is Jean-François Lyotard's presentation "Notes sur le retour et le Kapital," in *Nietzsche aujourd'hui*, vol. 1: *Intensités* (Paris: Union Générale d'Éditions, 1973); published in English as "Notes on the Return and Kapital," *Semiotext(e)* 3(1) (1978).
43. In addition to *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Deleuze published a second, shorter work on Nietzsche, *Nietzsche: sa vie, son œuvre, avec un exposé de sa philosophie* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1965).
44. Ewald refers here to Deleuze's essay "Renverser le Platonisme," *Revue de métaphysique et de morale* 71(4) (1966). This essay was revised and reprinted as "Plato et le Simulacre" in an appendix to *Logique du sens*, and is translated by Mark Lester as "Plato and the Simulacrum," in *The Logic of Sense*, Constantin Boundas (ed.) (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).
45. François Ewald, *Magazine littéraire* 298, "Les Vies de Nietzsche" (1992), 20.
46. Sarah Kofman, *Nietzsche et la scène philosophique* (Paris: Union Générale d'Éditions, 1979), 7. Deleuze himself, in *Difference and Repetition*, credits two essays by Pierre Klossowski for "renovating or reviving the interpretation of Nietzsche" (*Difference and Repetition*, Paul Patton [trans.] [New York: Columbia University Press, 1994], 81–2): "Nietzsche, le polythéisme et la parodie" (1958; see note 30), republished in *Un si funeste désir* (Paris: NRF, 1963), published in English as "Nietzsche, Polytheism, and Parody," in *Such a Deathly Desire*, Russell Ford (ed. and trans.) (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 2007); and "Oubli et anamnèse dans l'expérience vécue de l'éternel retour du Même," presented at the Royaumont conference on Nietzsche in 1964 and published in *Nietzsche: Cahiers de Royaumont*.
47. For books, see: Maurice Blanchot, *L'Entretien infini* (Paris: Gallimard, 1969); Pierre Boudot, *Nietzsche et les écrivains français 1930–1960* (Paris: Aubier-Montaigne, 1970), and *L'Ontologie*

“French Nietzscheanism” refers to more than the production of an enormous amount of French philosophical scholarship on Nietzsche, however, and to discuss “French Nietzscheanism” in its third moment is, I would argue, to go to the heart of poststructuralist philosophy because in many ways it was in their appropriation of Nietzschean themes that the dominant poststructuralist philosophers – Foucault, Deleuze, and Derrida – distinguished themselves both from the structuralists who preceded them and from the more traditional philosophical establishment in France, whose authority they sought to challenge. As Pierre Bourdieu has noted, although the influence of philosophy had declined within French academic institutions in the wake of the structuralists focusing their critical attention on the discursive and analytic practices of the human sciences, Nietzsche’s appeal to the new generation of philosophers lay to a large extent in his having been overlooked, as we saw in the preceding discussion of Nietzsche’s first and second French moments, by the more “traditional” university philosophers.⁴⁸ It was precisely Nietzsche’s “marginal” status as a philosopher that made him, according to Bourdieu, “an acceptable philosophical sponsor” at a time – the late 1950s and early 1960s – when it was no longer fashionable in France to be a “philosopher.”⁴⁹

It was, in other words, by virtue of their appeal to Nietzsche that this new generation of philosophers both “escaped” from philosophy and returned to philosophy. Both Deleuze and Foucault acknowledge explicitly the emancipatory role Nietzsche played at the time. In a 1983 interview, for example, Foucault commented that:

The actual history of Nietzsche’s thought interests me less than the kind of challenge I felt one day, a long time ago, reading Nietzsche for the first time. When you open *The Gay Science* after you have been

de Nietzsche (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1971); Jean Granier, *Le Problème de la Vérité dans la philosophie de Nietzsche* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1966); Pierre Klossowski, *Nietzsche et le cercle vicieux* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1969); Jean-Michel Rey, *L’Enjeu des signes: Lecture de Nietzsche* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1971); Paul Valadier, *Nietzsche et la critique du christianisme* (Paris: Éditions du Cerf, 1974). For Kofman and Pautrat, see note 41. For journals, see, for example: *Bulletin de la Société Française de philosophie* 4 (October–December 1969), on “Nietzsche et ses interprètes”; *Poétique* 5 (1971), on “Rhétorique et philosophie”; *Revue Philosophique* 3 (1971), on “Nietzsche”; and *Critique* 313 (1973), on “Lectures de Nietzsche.”

48. See Pierre Bourdieu, *Homo Academicus*, Peter Collier (trans.) (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988), xviii–xxv.

49. *Ibid.*, xxiv. Michel Foucault made a similar point concerning Nietzsche’s relation to “mainstream” academic philosophy in a 1975 interview, translated as “The Functions of Literature,” Alan Sheridan (trans.), in *Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings, 1977–1984*, Lawrence D. Kritzman (ed.) (New York: Routledge, 1988), 312.

trained in the great, time-honored university traditions – Descartes, Kant, Hegel, Husserl – and you come across these rather strange, witty, graceful texts, you say: Well I won't do what my contemporaries, colleagues or professors are doing; I won't just dismiss this. What is the maximum of philosophical intensity and what are the current philosophical effects to be found in these texts? That, for me, was the challenge of Nietzsche.⁵⁰

Deleuze says something similar, confessing that he “belongs to a generation, one of the last generations, that was more or less bludgeoned to death with the history of philosophy,” adding that within philosophy “the history of philosophy plays a patently repressive role.”⁵¹ But, he continues, “It was Nietzsche, who I read only later, who extricated me from all this. Because you can't deal with him in the same sort of way.”⁵²

While Bourdieu's observation of the poststructuralists' desire to keep their distance from “the philosophical high priests of the Sorbonne”⁵³ is important, it should not obscure the fact that for all the rhetoric concerning the “end of philosophy,” one of the most obvious differences between the discourses of the structuralists and those of the poststructuralists is the degree to which the latter remain philosophical. The role Nietzsche plays in this renewal of philosophical discourse is not insignificant. Unlike the rigid, scientific, and constraining systems of structuralism, Nietzsche appeared to his new readers to be both philosophically inspired and philosophically inspiring. Derrida, for example, provides the following list of themes to look for in Nietzsche:

the systematic mistrust as concerns the entirety of metaphysics, the formal vision of philosophical discourse, the concept of the philosopher-artist, the rhetorical and philological questions put to the history of philosophy, the suspiciousness concerning the values of truth (“a well applied convention”), of meaning and of Being, of “meaning of Being,” the attention to the economic phenomena of force and of difference of forces, etc.⁵⁴

And in *Of Grammatology*, he credits Nietzsche with contributing:

50. Michel Foucault, “Critical Theory/Intellectual History,” Jeremy Harding (trans.), in *Politics, Philosophy, Culture*, 33.

51. Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations, 1972–1990*, Martin Joughin (trans.) (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 5.

52. *Ibid.*, 6.

53. Bourdieu, *Homo Academicus*, xix.

54. Derrida, *Margins of Philosophy*, 305.

a great deal to the liberation of the signifier from its dependence or derivation with respect to the logos and the related concept of truth or the primary signified, in whatever sense that is understood [by his] radicalizing of the concepts of *interpretation, perspective, evaluation, difference* ...⁵⁵

Moreover, by addressing questions concerning human existence without centering his reflection on human consciousness, Nietzsche indicated how one might respond to structuralism's sloganistic "death of the subject" by showing a way to raise anew questions of individual agency without succumbing to an existentialist voluntarism or subjectivism. At the same time, the poststructuralists saw in the notion of eternal recurrence⁵⁶ a way to again entertain questions of history and historicity, questions that had been devalued within the structuralists' ahistorical emphasis on synchronic structural analyses.⁵⁷ That is to say, where the structuralists responded to existentialism's privileging of consciousness and history by eliminating them both, the poststructuralists took from structuralism insights concerning the workings of linguistic and systemic forces and returned with these insights to reinvolve the question of the subject in terms of a notion of constituted-constitutive-constituting agency situated and operating within a complex network of sociohistorical and intersubjective relations. In this way, Nietzsche's emergence as a philosophical voice played an unparalleled role in the development of poststructuralism as a historical corrective to the excesses of both its predecessor movements.

Nietzsche's philosophical importance for the emergence of *post-structuralist* French philosophy becomes apparent, as I indicated in the Introduction, above, when one considers the way Foucault plays Nietzsche against Kant in *The Order of Things*, Deleuze plays Nietzsche against Hegel in any number of his works, and Derrida plays Nietzsche against Lévi-Strauss in "Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences,"⁵⁸ first presented in October 1966 at the conference at Johns Hopkins University on "Languages of Criticism and the

55. Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (trans.) (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 19.

56. One cannot overestimate the role played here by Klossowski's work, in particular "Oubli et anamnèse dans l'expérience" (see note 46), and *Nietzsche et le cercle vicieux*, published in English as *Nietzsche and the Vicious Circle*, Daniel W. Smith (trans.) (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1997).

57. In their introduction to *Post-structuralism and the Question of History*, Geoff Bennington and Robert Young also make this point, noting that where structuralism sought to efface history, "it could be said that the 'post' of post-structuralism contrives to reintroduce it" (Derek Attridge, Geoff Bennington, and Robert Young [eds], *Post-structuralism and the Question of History* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987], 1).

*58. This essay is discussed in detail in the essay by Jeffrey T. Nealon in this volume.

Sciences of Man.”⁵⁹ What these appeals to Nietzsche announce is the posting of structuralism, that is, a distinctly *philosophical* response to the challenge posed to philosophical thinking by the emergence of structuralism as the dominant intellectual paradigm in the late 1950s, and collectively they set the philosophical agenda for much of what we, outside France, refer to as “poststructuralism.” Rather than speak, then, in generalities about French Nietzscheanism, as is often done by its critics,⁶⁰ we can explore the dimensions of this Nietzscheanism by looking at its instantiation in the work of these three dominant figures in French philosophy during the period of Nietzsche’s third French moment.⁶¹

I. FOUCAULT

If I wanted to be pretentious, I would use “the genealogy of morals” as the general title of what I am doing. It was Nietzsche who specified the power relation as the general focus, shall we say, of philosophical discourse – whereas for Marx it was the productive relation. Nietzsche is the philosopher of power, a philosopher who managed to think of power without having to confine himself within a political theory in order to do so.

(Foucault, “Prison Talk,” 1975)⁶²

Michel Foucault is perhaps the clearest example of how Nietzschean themes were integrated into the core of French philosophizing in the 1960s and 1970s insofar as Foucault consistently inscribed his thinking in a space opened by Nietzsche. Foucault first read Nietzsche in 1953 “by chance,” having been led to him by his reading Bataille. But as he was to say later, “curious as it may seem,” he read Nietzsche “from the perspective of an inquiry into the history of knowledge – the history of reason.” It was, in other words, his effort to “elaborate a history of rationality,” and not his interrogation of power, that first led him to read Nietzsche.⁶³ Reading Nietzsche made possible one of the decisive events

59. See Jacques Derrida, “Structure, Sign, and Play in the Discourse of the Human Sciences,” Richard Macksey (trans.), in *The Structuralist Controversy*, Richard Macksey and Eugenio Donato (eds) (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972).

60. See, for example, the essays in Ferry and Renaut (eds), *Why We Are Not Nietzscheans*.

61. While I will focus on Foucault, Deleuze, and Derrida, one could also look, in this context, at the work of Maurice Blanchot or Luce Irigaray.

62. Michel Foucault, “Prison Talk,” Colin Gordon (trans.), in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972–1977*, Colin Gordon (ed.) (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 53.

63. Michel Foucault, “Structuralism and Post-structuralism,” in *The Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984. Volume 2: Aesthetics, Method, Epistemology*, James D. Faubion (ed.) (New York: New Press, 1998), 438; originally published as “Structuralisme et poststructuralisme,” in *Dits*

in Foucault's development insofar as Nietzsche showed the way beyond the phenomenological, transhistorical subject. Nietzsche showed, in other words, that "There is a history of the subject just as there is a history of reason; but we can never demand that the history of reason unfold as a first and founding act of the rationalist subject."⁶⁴

Although Nietzsche is usually associated with his genealogical works – *Discipline and Punish* and *The History of Sexuality, Volume One* – Foucault himself acknowledged that his archaeological project "owes more to the Nietzschean genealogy than to structuralism properly so called."⁶⁵ For example, in *The Order of Things*, Nietzsche figures prominently as the precursor of the *epistēmē* of the twentieth century, the *epistēmē* that erupted with the question of language as "an enigmatic multiplicity that must be mastered."⁶⁶ For Foucault, it was "Nietzsche the philologist" who first connected "the philosophical task with a radical reflection upon language" (OT 305); it was Nietzsche, in other words, who recognized that a culture's metaphysics could be traced back to the rules of its grammar, and who recognized that, for example, Descartes's proof of the *cogito* rested on the linguistic rule that a verb – thinking – requires a subject – a thinker – and that the very same linguistic prejudice leads to the metaphysical error of adding a doer to the deed.⁶⁷ Insofar as the structuralists all based their theories on the view of language as a system of differences, we can therefore understand why Foucault could regard the question of language as the single most important question confronting the contemporary *epistēmē*. And insofar as Nietzsche viewed our metaphysical assumptions to be a function of our linguistic rules (grammar as "the metaphysics of the people"⁶⁸), and he understood both our metaphysics and our language in terms of the difference between forces, one can understand why Foucault traces the roots of the contemporary *epistēmē*, which no longer views man as the privileged center of representational thinking and discourse, back to Nietzsche.

In much the same way, Foucault discovers in Nietzsche the first attempt at the dissolution of man:

et écrits 1954–1988, tomes 1–4, Daniel Defert and François Ewald (eds) (Paris: Gallimard, 1994), vol. 4, 436.

64. *Ibid.*

65. Michel Foucault, "The Discourse of History," John Johnston (trans.), in *Foucault Live (Interviews, 1966–1984)*, Sylvère Lotringer (ed.) (New York: Semiotext(e), 1989), 31.

66. Michel Foucault, *The Order of Things: An Archeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage, 1970), 305. Hereafter cited as OT followed by the page number.

67. See, for example, Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, §17, and *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Essay I, §13.

68. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, §354.

Perhaps we should see the first attempt at this uprooting of Anthropology – to which, no doubt, contemporary thought is dedicated – in the Nietzschean experience: by means of a philological critique, by means of a certain form of biologism, Nietzsche rediscovered the point at which man and God belong to one another, at which the death of the second is synonymous with the disappearance of the first, and at which the promise of the superman signifies first and foremost the imminence of the death of man. (OT 342)

When speaking of the “disappearance” or the “death” of “man,” Foucault means something quite specific, and it is a mistake to equate the referent of “man” in these early remarks with what Foucault means in general by the “subject.” This is precisely what he indicated when he noted that it was Nietzsche who showed that there is a “history of the subject.” This is to say, there is no question that the subject named “man” in philosophical discourse, from Descartes’s Archimedean *cogito* to Kant’s autonomous rational moral agent, is a concept toward which Foucault has little sympathy. But this subject named “man” functions in this context as a technical term, the name for a certain conceptual determination of human being that serves to stabilize the increasingly disorganized representations of the classical *epistēmē* and that, as such, comes to be the privileged object of philosophical anthropology (see OT 312–13). The passage quoted above, relating Nietzsche to the uprooting of anthropology, follows by one page a reference to Kant’s formulation in his *Logic* (1800) of anthropology – which asks the question “What is Man?” – as the foundation of philosophy. Only by understanding Foucault’s talk of “man” as designating a foundational concept of Kantian anthropology can we make sense of his provocative claim that “man is a recent invention, a figure not yet two centuries old” (OT xxiii; see also 308, 386–7). While “man” has been privileged in the discourse of the human sciences since Kant, Foucault locates the beginning of this end of man in Nietzsche’s doctrines of the *Übermensch* and eternal return, as we see clearly in Foucault’s final reference to Nietzsche in *The Order of Things*, where he couples Nietzsche’s death of God with the death of man: “Rather than the death of God – or, rather, in the wake of that death and in profound correlation with it – what Nietzsche’s thought heralds is the end of his murderer; ... it is the identity of the Return of the Same with the absolute dispersion of man” (OT 385).

Turning from Foucault’s early work to his genealogical period, we again see the Nietzschean inspiration at the heart of Foucault’s thinking about truth, power, and the subject. For Foucault, Nietzsche was the first to address a certain kind of question to “truth,” a question that no longer restricted truth to the domain of epistemic inquiry nor took the value of “truth” as a given. By posing ethical and political questions to “truth,” Nietzsche saw “truth” as an ensemble

of discursive rules “linked in a circular relation with systems of power which produce and sustain it, and to effects of power which it induces and which extend it.”⁶⁹ When Nietzsche claimed, in *On the Genealogy of Morals*, that philosophy must for the first time confront the question of the value of truth,⁷⁰ he recognized that “Truth” was not something given in the order of things, and in so doing, Foucault credits him with being the first to recognize “truth” as something produced within a complex sociopolitical institutional regime. “The problem,” Foucault writes:

is not changing people’s consciousness – or what’s in their head – but the political, economic, institutional regime of the production of truth. ... The political question, to sum up, is not error, illusion, alienated consciousness, or ideology; it is truth itself. Hence the importance of Nietzsche.⁷¹

Throughout his career, Foucault drew inspiration both from Nietzsche’s insights linking power, truth, and knowledge (“Knowledge functions as an instrument of power”⁷²), and from his rhetoric of will to power, which drew attention away from substances, subjects, and things, and focused that attention instead on the relations of forces *between* these substantives. For Foucault, “power means relations,”⁷³ and where Nietzsche saw a continuum of will to power and sought to incite a becoming-stronger of will to power to rival the progressive becoming-weaker he associated with modernity, Foucault saw power relations operating along a continuum of repression and production, and he drew attention to the multiple ways that power operates through the social order and to the becoming-productive of power that accompanies the increasingly repressive power of that normalizing, disciplinary, carceral society we call “modern.” Foucault shares with Nietzsche an emphasis on the productivity of power: contrary to the “repressive hypothesis” that functions as one of the privileged myths of modernity, Foucault argues that power relations are not preeminently repressive, nor do they manifest themselves only in laws that say “no.” They are also productive, traversing and producing things, inducing pleasures, constructing knowledge, forming discourses, and creating truths.⁷⁴ It is this

69. Michel Foucault, “Truth and Power,” in *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*, Colin Gordon (ed.) (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977), 133.

70. See Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Essay III, §24.

71. Foucault, “Truth and Power,” 133.

72. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, §480; *Kritische Studienausgabe*, vol. 13, 14[122].

73. Michel Foucault, “The Confession of the Flesh,” in *Power/Knowledge*, 198.

74. Cf. Foucault, “Truth and Power,” 118–19.

fundamental ambivalence between repression and production that led Foucault to conclude that resistance is internal to power as a permanent possibility.⁷⁵

The final dimension of Foucault's Nietzscheanism we will examine is his thinking on the subject, which as we saw above was what first led him to read Nietzsche. Foucault's desire to deflate the subject as epistemically and discursively privileged is not conjoined with an attempt to eliminate the subject entirely. Instead, Foucault seeks to analyze the subject as a variable and complex function of discourse and power. What this means, and what has been largely misunderstood by many of Foucault's critics, is that his so-called "anti-humanism" was not a rejection of the human *per se*; it was instead an assault on the philosophically modern idea that sought to remove "man" from the natural world and place him in a position of epistemic, metaphysical, and moral privilege that earlier thought has set aside for God. This is why Foucault ends *The Order of Things* by associating the "death of God" with the "end of man," as the passage cited above suggests. But this was not to be Foucault's final position on this matter. While Foucault has no sympathy for the phenomenological-existential and, in particular, the Sartrean subject,⁷⁶ he does retrieve a more ambivalent subject whose constitution takes place within the constraints of institutional forces that exceed its grasp and, at times, its recognition.

This is the subject whose genealogy Nietzsche traced in *On the Genealogy of Morals* (Essay I, §13). In an analysis that Foucault discusses in his important early essay "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," Nietzsche focuses not on the valorization of origins (*Ursprung*) but on a critical analysis of the conditions of the subject's emergence (*Entstehung*) and descent (*Herkunft*). Pursuing this genealogy, Nietzsche locates the subject not as a metaphysical given but as a historical construct whose conditions of emergence are far from innocent. The "subject" is not only a superfluous postulation of a "'being' behind doing," a "doer" fictionally added to the deed. In addition, the belief in this postulate is exploited by slave morality both to convince the strong that they are free to be weak – and therefore are accountable for their failure to be weak – and to convince the weak that they are, in reality, strong and should therefore take pride in having freely chosen – by refraining from action – to be weak. For Nietzsche, "the subject (or, to use a more popular expression, the soul) ... makes possible to the majority of mortals, the weak and oppressed of every kind, the sublime self-deception that interprets weakness as freedom, and

75. See Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Volume One: An Introduction*, Robert Hurley (trans.) (New York: Vintage, 1980), 95, 100–101.

76. See, for example, Michel Foucault, "The Ethics of the Concern for the Self as a Practice of Freedom," in *The Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984. Volume 1: Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth*, Paul Rabinow (ed.) (New York: New Press, 1997), 290.

their being thus-and-thus as a merit.”⁷⁷ For this reason, Nietzsche directs his genealogical gaze to the life-negating uses made of the principle of subjectivity in the service of a “hangman’s metaphysics” that invented the concept of the responsible subject in order to hold it accountable and judge it guilty.⁷⁸

This account of the subject inspires Foucault to link the modern form of power with subjects and subjection:

It is a form of power that makes individuals subjects. There are two meanings of the word subject: subject to someone else by control and dependence, and tied to his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge. Both meanings suggest a form of power which subjugates and makes subject to.⁷⁹

In *Discipline and Punish*, his most Nietzschean text, Foucault notes the link between power and the subject while arguing that the history of the micro-physics of punitive power would be an element in the genealogy of the modern “soul.”⁸⁰ Foucault addresses this soul most explicitly in the discussion of the construction of the delinquent as a responsible subject, arguing in Nietzschean fashion that there is a subtle transformation in the exercise of power when punishment no longer is directed at the delinquent’s actions (his “doing”), but at his very person, his “being” as (a) delinquent.⁸¹

By the end of his career, as his attention turned, in the second and third volumes of *The History of Sexuality*, specifically to sexuality, his thinking moved from the constitution of the subject as an *object* of knowledge and discipline to the ethical practices of subjectivation (*assujétissement*) and “the kind of relationship you ought to have with yourself, *rappor à soi*, which [he calls] ethics, and which determines how the individual is supposed to constitute himself as an ethical subject of his own actions.”⁸² In thinking about the construction of the ethical subject, Foucault himself came to see that the question of the subject, or

77. Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Essay I, §13.

78. See Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, “The Four Great Errors,” §7.

79. Michel Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” in *The Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984. Volume 3: Power*, James D. Faubion (ed.) (New York: New Press, 2000), 331. That Foucault might also have been influenced here by Althusser is suggested by Warren Montag’s discussion of Althusser’s position on the interpellated subject elsewhere in this volume.

80. Cf. Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, Alan Sheridan (trans.) (New York: Vintage, 1977), 29.

81. Foucault repeats this argument at a crucial moment in *The History of Sexuality, Volume One*, noting the point at which the homosexual, no longer simply the performer of certain “forbidden acts,” emerges as a subject with a “singular nature,” a new “species” (*ibid.*, 43).

82. Michel Foucault, “On the Genealogy of Ethics: An Overview of Work in Progress,” in *The Essential Works of Foucault, 1954–1984. Volume 1*, Rabinow (ed.), 263, translation modified.

more accurately, the question of subjectivation – the transformation of human beings into subjects of knowledge, subjects of power, and subjects to themselves – had been “the general theme of [his] research.”⁸³ Even here, however, as his thinking turned to the Greeks and his overt references to Nietzsche diminished, I would argue that Foucault continued to see his own trajectory framed by the Nietzschean project of creatively constructing oneself through giving style to one’s life.⁸⁴

II. DELEUZE

It is clear that modern philosophy has largely lived off Nietzsche.
(Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, 1)

Like Foucault, the degree to which Deleuze brings Nietzschean themes to bear within his work is extensive. For example, a recurrent theme throughout Deleuze’s works is the desire to remain within the plane of immanence and refuse any move to a transcendental or theological plane that takes us away from bodies and what they can do. On several occasions, he addresses this point by noting a distinction between ethics and morality. In a 1986 interview, Deleuze put the distinction this way:

Morality presents us with a set of constraining rules of a special sort, ones that judge actions and intentions by considering them in relation to transcendent values (this is good, that’s evil ...); ethics is a set of optional rules that assess what we do, what we say, in relation to the ways of existing involved.⁸⁵

This distinction, which Deleuze also sees in Foucault and Spinoza,⁸⁶ he sees first and foremost in Nietzsche. Deleuze opens *Nietzsche and Philosophy* by addressing this point, as he recasts Nietzsche’s distinction between “Good and Bad” and “Good and Evil” – the ostensible topic of *On the Genealogy of Morals*⁸⁷

83. Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” 327. This is reflected as well in the titles Foucault gave to the last two courses he taught at the Collège de France for which he completed the required resumé: “Subjectivity and Truth” (1980–81) and “The Hermeneutic of the Subject” (1981–82).

84. See the reference in this context to *The Gay Science* §290 in Foucault, “On the Genealogy of Ethics,” 292.

85. Deleuze, *Negotiations*, 100, translation modified.

86. See, for example, the chapter “On the Difference between the *Ethics* and a *Morality*,” in Gilles Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, Robert Hurley (trans.) (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1988), 17–29.

First Essay – by distinguishing between the immanent, ethical difference between noble and base that grounds evaluative judgments on one’s “way of being or style of life,” and the transcendent moral opposition between good and evil that grounds evaluative judgment on an absolute and otherworldly ideal.⁸⁷ When Deleuze returns to this point later in the text, he distinguishes “good and bad” from “good and evil” precisely in terms of the distinction between the ethical and the moral: “This is how good and evil are born: ethical determination, that of good and bad, gives way to moral judgment. The good of ethics becomes the evil of morality, the bad has become the good of morality” (NP 122).

Deleuze’s book, we should recall, is not titled *Nietzsche’s Philosophy* but *Nietzsche “and” Philosophy*, and in addition to providing an interpretation of Nietzsche, it highlights what Nietzsche offers to philosophy: on the one hand, a “new image of thought” and, on the other, an understanding of a body as any relationship of forces. This *new* image of thought is put forward in contrast to the “dogmatic image of thought” that has dominated philosophy and that Deleuze summarizes in “three essential theses” (NP 103):

1. Thinkers, *qua* thinkers, want and love truth.
2. We are diverted from the truth by forces foreign to it, in particular, the body, passions, and sensuous interest.
3. The way to ward off this diversion into error is through a method.

That Nietzsche would be Deleuze’s guide out of the dogmatic image of thought is not surprising, given that the questioning of the “will to truth” is perhaps his most consistent task in his mature, post-*Zarathustra* writings. According to Deleuze, for Nietzsche meaning and value precede truth, and for that reason it is not so much our “truths” that are of interest to Nietzsche; what interests him instead are the values that give rise to the truths that have meaning for us, which is why the epistemological question of truth leads directly to a genealogy of values. The question of value takes us out of the realm of metaphysics and confronts us with the problem of a genealogy of forces. Where the question that guides metaphysics is “what is?” and the answers that are sought take the form of essences, genealogy, on the other hand, is guided according to Deleuze by the question “which one?” (*qui?*), and the answers sought take the form not of metaphysical essences but relations of forces and capabilities, that is, what this *one* can do.

87. Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, 1; cf. 121–2. Hereafter cited as NP followed by the page number.

This leads us directly to Nietzsche's second contribution to contemporary philosophy: understanding a body as any relationship of forces, with forces understood as either dominant/active or dominated/reactive. Relations of forces are, for Deleuze, one of the two great axes in terms of which Nietzsche's philosophy is organized (NP x). In fact, Deleuze notes that Foucault and Nietzsche share a conception of force in terms of "the relation of force with other forces that it affects or that affect it."⁸⁸ Nietzsche's originality, for Deleuze, is located in part in his "delineation of a genuinely reactive type of forces" (NP x) that has taken the form of the man of *ressentiment*, in whom reactive forces have come to prevail over active forces (NP 111).

Power is, for Deleuze, the second axis along which Nietzsche's philosophy is organized, and the one that is most misunderstood insofar as the question of power is thought to result in a politics, while in Nietzsche it "forms an ethics and an ontology" (NP x-xi). What Nietzsche means by "will to power," according to Deleuze, is not the desire to have some thing – power – but the having of this power in order to act on the world. Life, for Nietzsche, is the incessant process of acting on and being acted on, which is expressed in terms of the forces of strength and the forces of weakness. In order to mark the difference between Nietzschean affirmation and Hegelian negativity – and one should never lose sight of the fact that Deleuze's Nietzsche book is written in part to challenge the dominance in the early 1960s of Hegelianism in French philosophy – Deleuze reframes this distinction between the forces of strength that Nietzsche associates with the noble and the forces of weakness he associates with the slave in terms of the forces of action and reaction: where the noble *actively* and affirmatively differentiates himself from his rivals, the slave *reactively* opposes all that is other than himself. Hegel's dialectic of the master and the slave thus emerges in this context as an example of the triumph of reactive forces, of the becoming-reactive of active forces, insofar as Hegel's master, no less than his slave, is capable only of reaction in the struggle for recognition.

Deleuze uses this distinction throughout his work to advance the cause of immanence and, true to his affirmative spirit, Deleuze refuses the negative, and replaces it with critique, a critique that confronts the triumph and reign of the base in which the triumphant reactive forces, now separated from what they can do, both deny active forces and turn against themselves. The goal of critique is not to negate but to transmute these reactive forces: only through transvaluation, through the becoming-active of reactive forces, will critique succeed and will force, now active, take its place as force that affirms its difference and makes its difference an object of enjoyment and affirmation (NP 61). In other words, while Nietzsche's critique might look dialectical, he departs from Hegel and

88. Deleuze, *Negotiations*, 117.

the Hegelian tradition precisely here. In place of Hegel's "speculative element of negation, opposition or contradiction, Nietzsche substitutes the practical element of *difference*" (NP 9). Where the dialectic is engaged in the "*labor of the negative*," and seeks to sublimate all difference and alterity, Nietzsche offers a theory of forces in which active force does not negate or deny the other but "affirms its own difference and enjoys this difference" (NP 9).

For Deleuze, when Nietzsche interrogates history in terms of a history of nihilism, he is examining history from the perspective of the triumph of reactive forces, and we see Deleuze mobilize this Nietzschean critique of reactive forces not only in his critique of Hegelianism but also in his and Guattari's critique of the philosophical and psychoanalytic tradition's view of desire as lack,⁸⁹ which assumes that desire is derivative, arising in reaction to the perceived lack of the object desired or as a state produced in the subject by the lack of the object.⁹⁰ For Deleuze and Guattari, on the other hand, desire is a part of the perceptual infrastructure:⁹¹ it is constitutive of the objects desired as well as the social field in which they appear. It is, in other words, what first introduces the affective connections that make it possible to navigate through the social world. This is to say that desire, like Nietzsche's will to power, is productive – it is always already at work within the social field, preceding and "producing" objects as desirable.

In contrast to the view of desire as lack, Deleuze and Guattari understand desire as the *willing* of power. In *Anti-Oedipus*, they introduce the desiring machine as a machinic, functionalist translation of Nietzschean will to power: insofar as a desiring machine is a functional assemblage of a desiring will and the object desired, they are able to avoid the personification/subjectivation of desire in a substantive will, consciousness, ego, unconscious, or self. They are also able to escape the problem of interiority that gives rise to the understanding of desire

*89. For further discussion of this point, see my essay with Rosi Braidotti in this volume.

90. Viewing desire in terms of lack is not exclusive to the psychoanalytic tradition; rather, it has dominated the Western philosophical and psychological tradition since Plato's *Symposium* (200a–d), where Socrates remarks that one who desires something is necessarily in want of that thing. Rejecting this understanding of desire as lack is a view shared by several of Deleuze's contemporaries; see, for example, Jean-François Lyotard, *Économie libidinale* (Paris: Éditions de Minuit, 1974), published in English as *Libidinal Economy*, Iain Hamilton Grant (trans.) (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1993); and Hélène Cixous, "Sorties," in Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clément, *La Jeune née* (Paris: Union Générale d'Éditions, 1975), published in English as *The Newly Born Woman*, Betsy Wing (trans.) (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1986). I discuss the Deleuzian critique of "desire as lack" in more detail elsewhere; see my "Spinoza, Nietzsche, Deleuze: An Other Discourse of Desire," in *Philosophy and the Discourse of Desire*, Hugh J. Silverman (ed.) (New York: Routledge, 2000).

91. See the discussion of this point in Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, Robert Hurley et al. (trans.) (New York: Viking, 1977), 348.

as lack because insofar as desire and the object desired arise together, connections with the outside are always already being made. “Who, except priests,” Deleuze remarks, “would want to call [desire] ‘lack’? Nietzsche called it ‘Will to Power’. . . . Those who link desire to lack, the long column of crooners of castration, clearly indicate a long resentment [*ressentiment*] like an interminable bad conscience.”⁹² The psychoanalyst thus appears in *Anti-Oedipus* as the latest incarnation of the ascetic priest,⁹³ and to Nietzsche’s account of the “internalization [*Verinnerlichung*] of man,”⁹⁴ Deleuze and Guattari add man’s Oedipalization: Oedipus repeats the split movement of Nietzschean bad conscience that at once projected onto the other while turning its hostility back against itself, as the failure to satisfy the desire to eliminate and replace the father is accompanied by guilt for having such desire.

Transforming Nietzsche’s will to power into a desiring-machine, Deleuze and Guattari’s affirmation of desiring-production emerges as a post-Freudian repetition of Nietzsche’s affirmation of healthy will to power. And as Nietzsche sought to keep will to power multiple so that it might appear in multiple forms, at once producer and product, a monism and a pluralism, so too Deleuze wants desire to be multiple, polyvocal, operating in multiple ways and capable of multiple and multiplying productions.⁹⁵ While Nietzsche encouraged the maximizing of strong, healthy will to power, he acknowledged the necessity – indeed, the inevitability – of weak, decadent will to power. Similarly, Deleuze and Guattari advocate that desire be productive while recognizing that desire will sometimes be destructive and will sometimes have to be repressed, while at other times it will seek and produce its own repression. Analyzing this phenomenon of desire seeking its own repression is one of the goals of Deleuze and Guattari’s schizoanalysis, and the Nietzschean inspiration for this analysis is revealed in the structural similarity between desire desiring its own repression and Nietzsche’s “discovery” in *On the Genealogy of Morals* of the meaning of ascetic ideals: the will would rather will nothingness than not will.⁹⁶

92. Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues*, Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (trans.) (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987), 91.

93. See, for example, Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus*, 108–12, 269, 332–3; see also Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus*, Brian Massumi (trans.) (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), 154. I have discussed Nietzsche’s influence on Deleuze and Guattari’s critique of psychoanalysis elsewhere; see my *Nietzsche’s French Legacy: A Genealogy of Poststructuralism* (New York: Routledge, 1995).

94. Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Essay II, §16.

95. Cf. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Kafka: Toward a Minor Literature*, Dana Polan (trans.) (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 57.

96. See Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Essay II, §§1 and 28.

III. DERRIDA

On what we are speaking about at this very moment, as on everything else, Nietzsche is for me, as you know, a very important reference. (Derrida, *Positions*)⁹⁷

We have already seen, in broad strokes, the range of issues that Derrida locates as the Nietzschean themata within French thought in the 1960s. In addition, he makes numerous other remarks concerning Nietzsche's rhetorical strategies and multiplicity of styles, the *différance* of force and power, the playfulness of interpretive multiplicity, and what Derrida calls "the axial intention of [Nietzsche's] concept of interpretation": the emancipation of interpretation from the constraints of a truth "which always implies the presence of the signified (*aletheia* or *adequatio*)."⁹⁸ When one looks more specifically for the Nietzscheanism within Derrida's own work, one theme stands out: the Nietzschean roots of his deconstruction of the philosophical binarism at the heart of the Western metaphysical tradition.

The "typical prejudice" and "fundamental faith" of all metaphysicians, Nietzsche wrote, "is the *faith in opposite values*."⁹⁹ Throughout his critique of morality, philosophy, and religion, Nietzsche attempted to dismantle such oppositional hierarchies as good/evil, truth/error, being/becoming. This refusal to sanction the hierarchical relations among those privileged conceptual oppositions transmitted within the Western metaphysical tradition was pervasive in French philosophical writing in the 1960s and 1970s,¹⁰⁰ and the critique of binary, oppositional thinking is, in particular, an essential component in Derrida's critical project.¹⁰¹ For Derrida, the history of philosophy unfolds as a history of certain classical philosophical oppositions: intelligible/sensible, truth/error,

97. Jacques Derrida, *Positions*, Alan Bass (trans.) (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 105 n.32.

98. On the multiplicity of styles, see Derrida, "The Ends of Man," in *Margins of Philosophy*, 135, and *Spurs: Nietzsche's Styles*, Barbara Harlow (trans.) (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1979); on the *différance* of force, see "Différance," in *Margins of Philosophy*, 17–18; on the *différance* of power, see *The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond*, Alan Bass (trans.) (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1987) 403–5; on the playfulness of interpretive multiplicity, see *Writing and Difference*, Alan Bass (trans.) (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 292; and on the "axial intention," see *Of Grammatology*, 287.

99. Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, §2.

100. See, for example, Lyotard's remark that "oppositional thinking ... is out of step with the most vital modes of postmodern knowledge," in *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (trans.) (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), 14.

*101. This is discussed in this volume in the essay on Derrida by Samir Haddad.

speech/writing, literal/figurative, presence/absence, and so on. These oppositional concepts do not coexist on equal grounds, however; rather, one side of each binary opposition has been privileged while the other side has been devalued. Within these oppositions, a hierarchical “order of subordination”¹⁰² has been established and truth has come to be valued over error, presence has come to be valued over absence, and so on. Derrida’s task is to dismantle or deconstruct these binary oppositions. In practice, their deconstruction involves a biphasic movement that Derrida called “double writing” or “double science.” In the first phase, he overturns the hierarchy and values those poles traditionally subordinated by the history of philosophy. Although Derrida is often read as privileging, for example, writing over speech, absence over presence, or the figurative over the literal, such a reading is overly simplistic, as Derrida realizes it is the hierarchical oppositional structure itself that is metaphysical. Therefore, when overturning a metaphysical hierarchy, one must avoid reappropriating the hierarchical structure if one wishes to avoid reestablishing the closed field of these binary oppositions.

To view deconstruction as a simple inversion of these classical philosophical oppositions ignores the second phase of deconstruction’s “double writing”: “we must also mark the interval between inversion, which brings low what was high, and the irruptive emergence of a new ‘concept,’ a concept that can no longer be, and never could be, included in the previous regime.”¹⁰³ These new “concepts” are the Derridean “undecidables” (e.g. “*différance*,” “trace,” “*supplément*,” “*pharmakon*”): marks that in one way or another resist the formal structure imposed by the binary logic of philosophical opposition while exposing the optional and contingent character of those choices that the tradition has privileged as dominant. Throughout Derrida’s early work, we find as a recurrent motif his charting the play of these undecidables: the play of the trace, which is both present and absent; the play of the *pharmakon*, which is both poison and cure; the play of the *supplément*, which is both surplus and lack.

Returning now to Nietzsche, we can see this same critique of oppositional thinking in his assessment of traditional values, as he often proceeds by disassembling the privileged hierarchical relation that has been established among the values in question. Nietzsche’s disassembling, like Derridean deconstruction, operates in two phases.¹⁰⁴ The first phase overturns the traditionally privileged relation between the two values while the second seeks to displace the opposition

102. See Derrida, “Signature, Event, Context,” in *Margins of Philosophy*, 329.

103. Jacques Derrida, *Positions*, Alan Bass (trans.) (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 42; see also *Margins of Philosophy*, 329.

104. For a more detailed discussion of the methodological affinities between Nietzschean genealogy and Derridean deconstruction, see the first chapter on Derrida in my *Nietzsche’s French Legacy*, 9–32.

altogether by showing it to result from a prior value imposition that itself requires critique. For example, regarding the genealogy of the will to truth, we find Nietzsche inverting the traditional hierarchy of truth over falsity. Investigating the origin of the positive value placed on truth, Nietzsche finds that it is simply a moral prejudice to affirm truth over error or appearance.¹⁰⁵ To this, he suggests that error might be more valuable than truth, that error might be a necessary condition of life. His analysis does not stop here, however, as Heidegger assumed when he accused Nietzsche of “completing” the history of metaphysics through an “inversion” of Platonism.¹⁰⁶ By adopting a perspectival attitude and denying the possibility of an unmediated, noninterpretive apprehension of “reality,” Nietzsche displaces the truth/falsity opposition altogether. The question is no longer whether a perspective is “true” or “false”; the sole question that interests the genealogist is whether or not a perspective enhances life. This same critical strategy operates in the closing stage of the famous chapter of *Twilight of the Idols* where Nietzsche traces the history of the belief in the “true world”: “The true world we have abolished: what world then remains? The apparent one perhaps? ... But no! with the true world we also abolished the apparent one!”¹⁰⁷ We have abolished the apparent world because it was defined as “apparent” only in terms of its opposition to the “true” world. Without the “true world” to serve as a standard, the designation “apparent” loses its meaning and the opposition “true versus apparent” itself loses its critical force. In other words, the traditional (de)valuation of “appearance” depends on its being the negation of that which the tradition has affirmed as “truth,” and, like Derrida, Nietzsche is not satisfied with simply inverting the traditional valuation of truth over appearance but wants instead to dismantle the entire hierarchical opposition between truth and appearance.

Nietzsche discovers a certain faith in binary thinking at the center of philosophical discourse. By genealogically uncovering the will to power whose imposition of a certain value gave rise to the two poles of the opposition in question, genealogy obviates the force the opposition is believed to have. The clearest example of this strategy is his deconstruction of the good/evil opposition. Nietzsche moves beyond good and evil precisely by showing that both “good” and “evil” owe their meaning to a certain type of will to power: the slavish, reactive will to power of herd morality. To simply invert the values of slave morality, making “good” what the slave judges to be “evil,” is no less reactive than the original imposition of value by the slave, who judges all that differs from himself to be “evil” and defines the good in reactionary opposition to what

105. See Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, §34.

106. For a discussion of Heidegger’s reading of Nietzsche, see my *Nietzsche and the Question of Interpretation: Between Hermeneutics and Deconstruction* (New York: Routledge, 1990).

107. Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, “How the ‘True World’ Finally Became a Fable.”

is other than himself. A reading of Nietzsche as an “immoralist” or “nihilist” remains at this level of mere inversion, failing to acknowledge Nietzsche’s insight that by conforming to the oppositional structure, one inevitably confirms its validity and its repressive, hierarchizing power. But a reading of Nietzsche as the “transvaluer of values” locates a second movement in the Nietzschean critique of morality. This second movement flows from the active imposition of new values arising from a healthy will to power that has displaced the hierarchy of good/evil altogether. In rejecting the binary structure of moral evaluation, Nietzsche’s transvaluation inaugurates a playful experimentation with values and multiplication of perspectives that previews Derrida’s own approach to deconstructive reading, which he contrasts sharply with the textual doubling of commentary.¹⁰⁸ Nietzsche’s affirmation of perspectival multiplicity thus emerges as the life-enhancing alternative for those with a will to power sufficient to go beyond the reactive decadence of binary morality, and this life-enhancing multiplicity continues to function within Derrida’s own interpretive practice in his call for a productive style of reading that does not merely “protect” but “opens” texts to new interpretive possibilities.¹⁰⁹

That the twentieth century would be marked by three distinct moments of “French Nietzscheanism” would not have displeased Nietzsche, as he felt a special kinship with both the French language and French culture,¹¹⁰ and he included the French among his “most natural readers and listeners.”¹¹¹ While these moments, and in particular the latest one, have not been universally regarded as a good development for French philosophy, as the work of both Jürgen Habermas and the French neo-conservatives Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut attest,¹¹² there can be little doubt that the intense engagement with Nietzsche’s thought by French philosophers from the late 1950s through the early 1980s is one of the defining features of what has come in the English-speaking world to be known as French poststructuralism.

108. See Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, 157–64.

109. See *ibid.*, 158ff.

110. See, for example, *Beyond Good and Evil*, §§253–4; *Twilight of the Idols*, “What the Germans Lack,” §4; *The Wanderer and His Shadow*, in *Human, All-Too-Human. Volumes One and Two*, §214.

111. Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, “The Case of Wagner,” §3.

112. See Jürgen Habermas, *The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity: Twelve Lectures*, Frederick Lawrence (trans.) (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1987); Luc Ferry and Alain Renaut, *La Pensée 68: Essai sur l’anti-humanisme contemporain* (Paris: Gallimard, 1985), published in English as *French Philosophy of the Sixties: An Essay on Antihumanism*, Mary Schnackenberg Cattani (trans.) (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1990).