

Beholding Nietzsche: , Fate, and Freedom

Christa Davis Acampora

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Abstract and Keywords

Ecce Homo offers Nietzsche's own interpretation of himself, his thoughts, and his works. This article analyzes how the text bears on his ideas about agency, fate, and freedom. It presents an account of "how one becomes what one is." For Nietzsche, a person is a set of drives ordered or ranked a certain way; there is no will or subject separate from these that could carry out the work of becoming. What is most important is that one's drives be coordinated in a single entity. Through these tactics some of us can become what we are.

Keywords: Friedrich Nietzsche, self, thoughts, works, agency, fate, freedom, rank, type

That *Ecce Homo*, with its subtitle "How One Becomes What One is," is Nietzsche's self-presentation of sorts seems rather easy to conclude. But why does Nietzsche do this? What is evident? What do we really learn from the work? Is it primarily a behind-the-scenes peek at Nietzsche's thought, the ideas that *truly* or *actually* motivated him? How complete is it as an autobiography, given that it seems devoted largely to his writings?¹ To what extent can we put much stock in the account at all given that Nietzsche would slip into madness not long after the first draft was complete and while still editing and revising it for publication?² I hope to shed some light on these common concerns about Nietzsche's *Ecce Homo* by focusing on how the text bears on his controversial and seemingly paradoxical ideas about agency, fate, and freedom in his presentation of the *type* he is and how he *evolved*. Ultimately, I think the presentation of himself that Nietzsche advances in *Ecce Homo* offers evidence that he [\(p. 364\)](#) anticipates an achievable form of human freedom,³ although it might be more limited than what the Nietzsche literature sometimes reflects.

How One Becomes What One Is

A host of questions arises from reflection on Nietzsche's citation and evocation of the Pindaric maxim, "become what you are." In the form in which it appears in the subtitle to *Ecce Homo—How One Becomes What One Is* (*Wie man wird, was man ist*)—no paradox need be evident: we could expect the book might have kinship with *Bildungsroman* literature, providing us with that sort of account of Nietzsche's maturation. But, as Nietzsche uses the expression in *Ecce Homo* and elsewhere, as for example in *The Gay Science*, it becomes more problematic and less clear what he intends. About himself and kindred spirits, he writes, "We want to become those we are" (GS 335), and in GS 270, he formulates it as an imperative: "you should become the one you are." Zarathustra, we are told, "once counseled himself, not for nothing, 'Become who you are'" (Z IV: "The Honey Sacrifice"). But how could we *become* what we *already* are in any ordinary sense of those terms? Must it be that Nietzsche is simply referring to what we (already) have the *potential to become* but which we have yet to realize or make manifest?⁴ If we already *are* such selves, how could we *want* to become them, given that wants follow from lack or need? Moreover, if we already *are* such selves, how could it possibly be that things would turn out otherwise, that is, that we might *become* in any other way? And, just how does this curious imperative cohere with his other ideas, including the notion of self as subjective multiplicity and his repeated prioritizing of *becoming* over being?

To gain insight into what it means to become what one is and why and how it is necessary, we can consider an earlier account of the same that Nietzsche provides. Published nearly two decades prior, its subject was Wagner rather than Nietzsche.⁵ In his fourth *Untimely Meditation* titled "Richard Wagner in Bayreuth," Nietzsche endeavors to provide an account of Wagner's development, his evolution: "*wie er wurde, was er ist, was er sein wird*" (UM IV: 1). He depicts Wagner's "powerful striving" (UM IV: 2), his great struggles to identify his (p. 365) life's task and reconcile multiple parts of himself that were in great tension (UM IV: 8). It seems clear that his struggle with and against himself is a significant part of what Nietzsche thinks constitutes his achievement and serves as an indication of his greatness; it is largely what Nietzsche discusses and what he ultimately praises. As we shall see, a curious feature of Nietzsche's account of his own development in *Ecce Homo* will be that he did *not* struggle, was *not* heroic in the way he depicts Wagner, although he does describe his development similarly in terms of unifying multiple, opposing drives.

In his earlier work, Nietzsche sums up the story of Wagner's development as follows: "The struggles that it depicts are simplifications of the real struggles of life; its problems are abbreviations of the endlessly complicated reckoning of human action and aspiration" (UM IV: 4). This gap between aspiration and action, and the necessary adjustment of aspiration to achieve reconciliation, mark an interesting contrast between Nietzsche's account of Wagner's development and the story Nietzsche later tells himself about himself (EH: Interleaf). For Nietzsche's story will have at least two features distinguishing it from Wagner's: Nietzsche "never struggled," as previously mentioned, and in contrast to Wagner's development, which was organized around his various ideas about cultural rev-

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olution and himself as its instigator, *becoming* (*Werden*) of the sort that Nietzsche finds interesting, requires that one *not have the slightest idea what one is*. This opens a complicated set of issues about how Nietzsche thinks one *becomes*—what constitutes becoming and how one goes about it. And it is relevant to a significant disagreement in the scholarly literature as to whether Nietzsche is a fatalist or an advocate of self-creation.⁶ In the works under review here we find crucial clues to what Nietzsche has in mind, for becoming what one is appears to turn on *making oneself necessary*. Becoming what one is involves becoming “not just a piece of chance but rather a necessity” (*EH*: “Why I Am So Clever” 8). This is precisely what Wagner is supposed to have done in his heroic struggles (*UM IV*: 6). But by the time Nietzsche writes *Ecce Homo*, he sees himself as quite different from the man he clearly loved and admired, perhaps above all others (*EH*: “Why I Am So Wise” 3, “Why I Am So Clever” 5), even as he remained his harshest critic (e.g., *The Case of Wagner*). In understanding how Nietzsche’s self-presentation of his development differs from that of Wagner, we also catch a glimpse of how Nietzsche endeavors to become “powerful *through Wagner against Wagner*” (*UM IV*: 7).⁷ In *Ecce Homo*, against the backdrop of Wagner’s exemplary evolution, Nietzsche depicts his (p. 366) own development in terms of a tense opposition between fighting and loving, which Nietzsche respectively links in *EH* to his wisdom and his cleverness.

Nietzsche begins *Ecce Homo* with reference to his “fatality” (*Verhängniss*), and he concludes the work with a section claiming himself as “a destiny” (“*Warum ich ein Schicksal bin*”). He uses this as an entry to explore his descent or ancestry (*Herkunft*), which includes what is both “highest and lowest,” common and noble. Specifically, he focuses on what he inherited from his parents and his “dual descent” (*EH*: “Why I Am So Wise” 1); he describes his life as both ascendant and decadent (*EH*: “Why I Am So Wise” 1). This accounts for the fact that he is a “*Doppelgänger*” (*EH*: “Why I Am So Wise” 3).⁸ His interest in inheritance includes consideration of acquired resources, capabilities, and capacities, and the intensification or diminution of powers, temperament, and inclinations. It includes intellectual, cultural, psychological, and physiological considerations relevant to his reception and criticisms of evolutionary theory⁹ as well as his interest in atavism.¹⁰ His first chapter, titled “Why I Am So Wise,” focuses on the resources and liabilities he inherited from his parents. At the same time, he diminishes their role in determining him when he writes: “to be related to one’s parents is the most typical sign of commonality. Higher types have their origins infinitely further back, on which at long last, an atavism must be unified, retained. Great individuals are the most ancient individuals.”¹¹ This suggests that a higher type, as Nietzsche conceives it, is someone who somehow accesses and taps other, ancient characteristics, and is perhaps distinguished by virtue of the depth and reach of ancestral resources. Indeed, this is how Nietzsche describes himself earlier in the same section when he writes, “But as a Pole I am also an uncanny atavism. One must go back centuries to discover in this noblest race of men pure instincts to the degree that I represent them.”¹² We find the same idea evident in his *UM IV*, in which he links Wagner with Alexander, much as he suggests in *EH* that (p. 367) “Julius Caesar could be my father—or Alexander, that Dionysus incarnate” in (*EH*: “Why I Am So Wise” 3). This inheritance provides Nietzsche with a vast multiplicity of perspectives (*EH*: “Why I Am So

Wise" 1); it does not simply *make* him great. What distinguishes the "well-turned-out person" is that "He instinctively gathers *his* totality from everything he sees, hears, experiences: he is a principle of selection" (EH: "Why I Am So Wise" 3). We might consider just what this multiplicity is and how it becomes something that approximates something singular, something capable of being choosy in the way he describes someone who is, as he puts it, "basically healthy" (EH: "Why I Am So Wise" 2) and has a hearty constitution, as I explore in the sections that follow.

It is not just sheer multiplicity that makes a person rich on Nietzsche's account. Having certain kinds of resources, particularly those that characterize opposing tendencies, so that the strength of their opposition might become a resource, seems to be important to him. Nietzsche identifies and elaborates the notion of subjective multiplicity throughout his writings. Consideration of those discussions allows us to see that he also distinguishes *orders of rank* and *orders of rule*. Those ideas can help us appreciate why he distinguishes these parts of himself in *Ecce Homo*, and how he thinks they became organized and productive in the life he presents in that work.

"Orders of Rank," "Types," and "Ruling Thoughts"

Nietzsche repeatedly offers the view that individuals are composites or conglomerates of multiple, competing drives, affects, and thoughts. These parts become organized, on his view, in terms of "orders of rank." Several "types" of such orders are discussed at length by Nietzsche, including the types of the "master," the "slave," and the "priest."¹³ The "last man" might also be thought a type, and the *Übermensch* could be construed as an as-yet unachieved type (human, transhuman, or more-than-human).¹⁴ We can consider "types" as distinguished by the general "orders of rank" constituting them.¹⁵ What are ranked, as Nietzsche considers such cases, are "drives" (*Triebe*), and the rank ordering reflects the *relations* of the drives: which predominate, which serve the others, etc.

Orders of rank *characterize* individual human beings (BGE 6), on Nietzsche's hypothesis, such that he thinks *who* or *what* one is, strictly speaking, is this collection of drives in the particular order or relation they are. There is no self either *behind* (i.e., other than) the ordering, or *doing* the ordering (see GM I: 13). But if this is what we are, then it is hard to see how there can be anyone to appeal to in Nietzsche's Pindaric imperative to "become who you are." There should be no *one* "there" (*in us*) to answer a call to action, if indeed that is what Nietzsche's imperative is. Is there another way to make sense of Nietzsche's insistence that there (p. 368) is nothing to "us" other than the competing drives of which we are constituted while he repeatedly appeals to some sense of *agency*? I propose we look for such in Nietzsche's accounts of how such drives are organized, how we are not merely a collection or group of drives but *drives organized in a certain way*, characterized by a political arrangement, and how such arrangements can change and take on different characteristics. Orders of rank can be examined from at least two related perspectives: in terms of their specific order, hierarchy, or relative rankings of the drives, as well as *the*

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way in which ruling or dominant drives relate to other drives. That is, there is a political character to such orders, and this allows us to consider *what* rules, *how* it rules, and how it *came to rule*. Indeed, in virtually all of his writings, we find Nietzsche exploring the nature and further implications of a conception of soul that follows from a notion of a “social structure of the drives and affects” (BGE 12).

Thus Nietzsche regards human psychology as a good bit more complex than often recognized by philosophers, particularly in their representations of subjectivity and willing. What philosophers have designated as “will” is, (*minimally*) for Nietzsche, a complicated and multidimensional process of interacting sensations, thoughts, and affects (BGE 19), which includes awareness of various states (“away from which,” “towards which,” “from” and “toward” more generally), thinking (“a ruling thought”), and affect (particularly “the affect of the command” insofar as “a man who *wills* commands something within himself that renders obedience, or that he believes renders obedience”). Another way of accounting for *willing* as Nietzsche depicts it is as shorthand for the *processes of organization* of an entity: what it senses as significant, its orientation, and the structure of ordering it achieves (BGE 19).

Suppositions about the status of human freedom more generally are unwarranted on the basis of this experience, because what is perceived here is not so much the condition of the whole organism in the world (an individual *agent* of activity) but rather *an aspect* or dimension of the interactions of the organism itself: “Freedom of the will’—that is the expression for the complex state of delight of the person exercising volition, who commands and at the same time identifies himself with the executor of the order—who, as such enjoys also the triumph over obstacles, but thinks within himself that it was really his will itself that overcame them” (BGE 19).¹⁶ Yet, we neither simply nor solely command or obey. Willing is complex. We experience ourselves as individual, atomic *willing* agents when actually we are a composite structure of wills and “under-wills,” which is another way of speaking of drives seeking to master other drives: “we are at the same time the commanding *and* the obeying parties, and as the obeying party we know the sensations of constraint, impulsion, pressure, resistance, and motion [...] *we are accustomed to disregard this duality, and to deceive ourselves about it by means of the synthetic concept ‘I’*” (BGE 19; italics mine). Thus, our best *evidence* of our freedom—the felt perception of freedom, our sense of ourselves as agents—is not indexed to our metaphysical or ontological status but rather to the perception of one aspect of a complex process of organization: “our body is but a social structure composed of many souls” in which some obey and others command (BGE 19).¹⁷ These structures of *orders of rank* and their discernible patterns comprise one significant, but not exhaustive, aspect of what might be regarded as Nietzsche’s interest in *types*. (p. 369)

What constitutes a *type* in the sense discussed here is not only the particular drives that comprise the social structure distinguishing an individual but also *how* those drives are ordered and how their organization develops and is maintained—the ruling dynamic, the form of rule that achieves and seeks to preserve that arrangement or ordering of drives.¹⁸

Orders of rank themselves are also not absolutely fixed, not determined, and this is precisely what worries Nietzsche. Drives appear to be there from the start, and seem to be inherited and shaped historically. These can vary among different people and constitutions. Constitutive elements and inheritances are fixed, but their relative strengths and orderings are not. How, then, do they acquire their ordering? Nietzsche's account of himself as both a lover and a fighter in *Ecce Homo* offers some indications of how this might be achieved, and in the process (and in some cases) one becomes what one is by becoming a "necessity," rather than "a piece of chance" (EH: "Why I Am So Clever" 8).

Nietzsche as a Lover: Selfishness vs Selflessness

In his chapter titled "Why I Am So Clever," Nietzsche, finally, directly provides "the real answer to the question, *how one becomes what one is*," and it entails what he calls "the masterpiece of the art of self-preservation or selfishness" (EH: "Why I Am So Clever" 9). Yet this is a curious art, because it does not include deliberate, conscious, active creation in the way that "self-creation" might be thought to require: Nietzsche claims that "to become what one is" "one must not have the faintest notion *what one is*" (EH: "Why I Am So Clever" 9). How can we become what we are if we don't even know what that is, if we *haven't the faintest notion* what that is? This clearly seems to support the fatalist interpretation that we simply become what we *already* are, that there is no conscious *planning* or *creating* at work, and thus there can be no imperative to action of self-creation and no special *kudos* to accrue if and when one happens to succeed.¹⁹ There is, according to Nietzsche, an "organizing idea" that is "destined to rule," which "keeps growing deep down—it begins to command; slowly it (p. 370) leads us *back* from side roads and wrong roads; it prepares *single* qualities and fitnesses that will one day prove to be indispensable as means toward a whole—one by one, it trains all *subservient* capacities before giving any hint of the dominant task, "goal," "aim," or "meaning'" (EH: "Why I Am So Clever" 9).

One way of understanding what is meant by "destined" here is to see it in light of Nietzsche's proposition of will to power (BGE 36): roughly, he proposes that all things seek the full expression of their capacities, the full measure of their powers. In this sense, what is "destined to rule" is simply whatever proves strongest, whatever succeeds in enabling the multifarious drives to be coordinated in a single entity. There is no separate faculty of will in itself that stands independent of the drives that comprise us, no *will* that adjudicates the inevitable conflict and contest of drives we are, such that it could be said to be within our power to have things turn out otherwise. "Destined," then, in this sense does not mean "predetermined," that is, decided already in advance of our becoming the particular organization of drives we are. Thus, in the particular instance in question, "destined" is a loose way of speaking about *eventual* outcomes and does not refer to any particular outcome that necessarily should come to pass (other than that what is strongest determines the order of the others, since that is how strength is expressed).

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But Nietzsche invokes stronger senses of destiny elsewhere in his writings, including in his *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, which is so central to his presentation and recounting of his life. In that context and others, he makes reference to *fate* and links his philosophical practice and axiological project of revaluation with *loving fate*, *amor fati*.²⁰ In *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche writes: “My formula for greatness in a human being is *amor fati*: that one wants nothing to be different, not forward, not backward, not in all eternity. Not merely bear what is necessary, still less conceal it—all idealism is mendaciousness in the face of what is necessary—but *love* it” (*EH*: “Why I Am So Clever” 10). This important idea to Nietzsche receives a variety of treatments in the scholarly literature, and their consideration is beyond the scope of what can be treated in this essay; I wish to focus here on just one sense of love as a form of caring, which complements the general consensus in the scholarly literature that *amor fati* minimally entails a certain form of affirmation. In *Ecce Homo*, *love* and *fate* are united in Nietzsche’s conception of selfishness and its role in his own development.

A major point of difference between Nietzsche’s earlier account of Wagner’s development and his own self-presentation of the type he is is found in Nietzsche’s account of his own selfishness, or self-seeking (*Selbstsucht*).²¹ Rather than engaging in heroic struggles, as he (p. 371) describes Wagner early on, Nietzsche claims he was particularly adept at self-preservation (*Selbsterhaltung*), characterized in this text as selfishness or self-seeking rather than simply self-perpetuation. This is the “ruling thought” he proposes in *EH* as an alternative to the ruling thought of morality and the ruling thought of Wagner, whom he saw as advocating *selflessness*. In *UM IV*, Nietzsche depicts Wagner as seeking *fidelity* (*Treue*) above all else. This loyalty was directed toward both the multitude (to be united as a “people,” *UM IV*: 8) and the multiple and opposing parts of himself. It regards unity as a higher value than any individual needs or desires.

A long-standing concern in Nietzsche’s works is what he regards as the morality of selflessness, which he thinks is ultimately life-denying and a symptom of decadence.²² He attacks it repeatedly in *Ecce Homo*, as when he expresses his suspicion of the “so-called ‘selfless’ drives”: “It always seems a weakness to me, a particular case of being incapable of resisting stimuli: *pity* is considered a virtue only among decadents [...] and sometimes pitying hands can interfere in a downright destructive manner in a great destiny” (*EH*: “Why I Am So Wise” 5).²³ But in his presentation of Wagner’s evolution in *UM IV*, the realization of selflessness marks the pinnacle of Wagner’s development: “we sense how the man Wagner evolved: [...] how the whole current of the man plunged into first one valley, then another, how it plummeted down the darkest ravines. Then, in the night of this half-subterranean frenzy, high overhead appeared a star of melancholy luster. As soon as he saw it, he named it *Fidelity, selfless Fidelity!* [...] Investing it with the utmost splendor he possesses and can realize—that marvelous knowledge and experience by which one sphere of his being remained faithful to another. Through free, utterly selfless love, it preserved fidelity. The creative sphere, luminous and innocent, remained faithful to the dark, indomitable, and tyrannical sphere” (*UM IV*: 2). This is echoed later when he writes: “For Wagner himself the event is a dark cloud of toil, worry, brooding, and grief; a renewed outbreak of conflicting elements, but all irradiated by the star of *selfless fidelity* and, in

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this light, transformed into unspeakable joy” (*UM IV*: 8). The kind of love he praises in his early text on Wagner is one that involves completely relinquishing oneself. In the “soul of the dithyrambic dramatist” (which Nietzsche claims for Wagner in *UM IV* and then for himself in *EH*), “the creative moments of his art” occur “when this conflict of feelings is taut, when his gloomy arrogance and horrified distaste for the world fuse with his passionate urgency to approach the world as a lover. (p. 372) When he now casts his eyes on earth and life, his eyes are like the rays of the sun which ‘draw up the water,’ collect mist, and accumulate towering thunderheads. *Cautiously lucid and selflessly loving* at the same time, his gazing eyes touch earth, and everything illuminated by this binocular vision is compelled by Nature with frightful rapidity to discharge all its powers, and to reveal its most hidden secrets” (*UM IV*: 7). Of course, Nietzsche takes a very different view on Wagner in his later works. In *The Case of Wagner*, for example, Nietzsche accuses Wagner of “disgregation,” being fundamentally unable to bring unity to anything, offering only the superficial appearance of development and form (e.g., *CW* 7, 10), merely stoking up passions and emotions to achieve “effects” and overpower his audience; he seduces rather than creates (*CW*: Postscript 1). But we can’t simply trust Nietzsche in *EH* when he implies that we might resolve the vast difference between his accounts of Wagner in *UM IV* and *CW* by substituting the name “Nietzsche” where the reader finds “Wagner” in the earlier work. Nietzsche offers readers a very different presentation of himself in *EH*, and it largely depends on the differences he identifies in *how* one evolves, what it amounts to, and what it entails.

In contrast to his portrait of Wagner, Nietzsche presents himself as cleverly *selfish*, a theme he treats repeatedly in works published after *UM IV*. Nietzsche highlights his “instinct of self-preservation [*Selbsterhaltung*]” (*EH*: ‘Why I Am So Clever’ 8), which he links with his “art of self-preservation”: “In all these matters—in the choice of nutrition, of place and climate, of recreation—an instinct of self-preservation issues its commandments, and it gains its most unambiguous expression as an instinct of *self-defense* [*Selbstvertheidigung*]” (*EH*: “Why I Am So Clever” 8). This is affected by and engaged with seemingly insignificant matters of nutrition, place, climate, and recreation:

[T]hese small things—nutrition, place, climate, recreation, the whole casuistry of selfishness—are inconceivably more important than everything one has taken to be important so far. Precisely here one must begin to *relearn*. What mankind has so far considered seriously have not even been realities but mere imaginings—more strictly speaking, *lies* prompted by the bad instincts of sick natures that were harmful in the most profound sense. [...] All the problems of politics, of social organization, and of education have been falsified through and through because one mistook the most harmful men for great men—because one learned to despise ‘little’ things, which means the basic concerns of life itself. (*EH*: “Why I Am So Clever” 10)

Looking after these “basic concerns of life” turns out to be important because we otherwise find ourselves expending immense amounts of energy fighting off harmful conditions, and any ruling thought that distracted our attention from such concerns, denigrated them as unimportant or in-

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consequential, would have potentially quite harmful effects. Thus, an important dimension of how one becomes what one is is by preserving oneself, conserving oneself from counterproductive resistance. Though our constitutions may be determined to a certain extent by the drives that we happen to have, and this is qualified below in important ways, we can nevertheless actively contribute to our development by taking care of ourselves in very basic ways, which greatly affect our capacities to act. In *Ecce Homo* and elsewhere, Nietzsche offers examples of a variety of relations and associations that are informative of the type we are, including: inheritance; sensory experiences of smells, touches, and tastes; tempo; experiences with art; diet and nutrition; biorhythms and times of day; conditions of climate, seasons, and weather; geography and topography; nationality; physiological constitution and states of health; (p. 373) characteristics of dwelling places and domiciles; friendships and enemies; sexual relations; and forms of recreation.

The kind of selfishness he seeks to praise and revalue in *Ecce Homo* is not one that eagerly seeks or depends upon exploitation of others. What he links with his cleverness and good fortune in *EH* is much like what he describes as “ideal selfishness” in *Daybreak* 552, where he likens it to pregnancy and ripening. The same passage sheds further light on why it is important not to have the slightest idea what one is: “In this condition we avoid many things without having to force ourself very hard! We know nothing of what is taking place, we wait and try to be *ready*. At the same time, a pure and purifying feeling of profound irresponsibility reigns in us almost like that of the auditor before the curtain has gone up—it is growing, it is coming to light: we have no right to determine either its value or the hour of its coming. All the influence we can exert lies in keeping it safe.” Nietzsche associates this with “a state of consecration” such that “if what is expected is an idea, a deed—towards every bringing forth we have essentially no other relationship than that of pregnancy and ought to blow to the winds all presumptuous talk of ‘willing’ and ‘creating’. This is *ideal selfishness*: continually to watch over and care for and to keep our soul still, so that our fruitfulness shall *come to a happy fulfillment*.” Such happy fulfillment, though, is not an end in itself that is merely self-serving and self-satisfying; it serves and benefits others, as Nietzsche imagines it: “Thus, as intermediaries, we watch over and care for to the *benefit of all*; and the mood in which we live, this mood of pride and gentleness, is a balm which spreads far around us and on to restless souls too.”

The kind of self-preservation that Nietzsche describes aims not at preserving sheer existence or mere survival but rather achieving a certain “self-sufficiency that overflows and gives to men and things” (GS 55). Thus, *Selbstsucht* is not simply self-absorption or withdrawal, but rather is a form of storing up for the purpose of enhancing expressive capacities and sharing them with others. And just what might result that could be regarded as great? Nietzsche provides insight to this throughout his texts, including in GS 143, where he claims that the impulse “to posit [one’s] own ideal and to derive from it his own law, joy, and rights” becomes creative rather than destructive, as in the case of polytheism: “The wonderful art and gift of creating gods—polytheism—was the medium through which this impulse could discharge, purify, perfect, and ennoble itself; for originally it was a very undistinguished impulse, related to stubbornness, disobedience, and envy.” Morality is opposed to it, but the “invention of gods, heroes, and overmen of all kinds, as well as near-men and undermen, dwarfs, fairies, centaurs, satyrs, demons, and devils was

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the inestimable preliminary exercise for the justification of selfishness and self-rule of the individual.”²⁴ He links this with freedom: “the freedom that one conceded to a god in his relation to other gods—one eventually also granted to oneself in relation to laws, customs, and neighbors.” And in this respect self-creation is possible, not in making ourselves whole, but rather in cultivating and maximally expressing our creative powers, which allow us to project ourselves beyond what we presently are: “In polytheism the free-spiriting and many-spiriting of man attained its first preliminary form—the strength to create for ourselves our own new eyes—and ever again new eyes that are even more our own: hence man alone among all the animals has no (p. 374) eternal horizons and perspectives” (GS 143). Thus, Nietzsche regards selfishness as a means to free- and full-spiritedness. In this respect self-preservation is a form of nurturance.²⁵

The idea of selfishness is so important to Nietzsche that he returns to it in his concluding chapter in which he declares himself a destiny. There, the most “severe self-love” is identified as “what is most profoundly necessary for growth” and is contrasted with “the ‘selfless,’ the loss of a center of gravity, ‘depersonalization’ and ‘neighbor love’ (*addiction* to the neighbor)” and that which “would un-self man” in which “un-selfing [...] negates life” (EH: “Why I Am A Destiny” 7). The evidence Nietzsche offers for this in this work is that Christian morality teaches that the basic conditions of life—“nourishment, abode, spiritual diet, treatment of the sick, cleanliness, and weather” are “small things,” trivial matters rather than the most important. For Nietzsche, they are the most important, again, because when we find ourselves in unsuitable states of affairs (unsuitable relative to our constitutions), we are forced to expend great energy simply in *fighting off* what threatens our very existence rather than being able to *fight for* something else (EH: “Why I Am So Clever” 8). The nature of this *fighting for* and how and why it might matter are elaborated in Nietzsche’s account of his *Kriegs-Praxis* in which he presents himself as a kind of fighter.

Nietzsche proposes to revalue the meaning of selfishness and present an account of its fruits in his presentation of himself in *Ecce Homo*. Self-seeking is proposed as a ruling thought that might have an organizing feature and could counter the ruling thought of morality. Orders of rule emerge in moralities in terms of the kinds of struggles they link with the way of life they advance, their interpretation of the struggles of human existence and their purposes, and the ways in which they encourage or discourage struggling more generally, including what they designate as *worthy* struggles. Both the *forms of struggle* and contest they promote and how they promote *action* within those contexts are relevant, and in EH Nietzsche distinguishes struggles that are enervating—“when defensive expenditures, be they ever so small, become the rule and a habit, they entail an extraordinary and entirely superfluous impoverishment [...] energy wasted on negative ends” (EH: “Why I Am So Clever” 8)—from those that are invigorating. In reading Nietzsche’s account of himself as a fighter as he presents his *Kriegs-Praxis*, we come to appreciate how he thinks about productive expenditures as well as how he thinks about our active participation in becoming who we are.

Nietzsche as Fighter: *Kriegs-Praxis*

Nietzsche's *Kriegs-Praxis* is an expression of the organization he *is*. It issues from an order of rule that organizes his various drives and is expressed in his engagements with others and their ideas. In articulating his *Kriegs-Praxis*, Nietzsche identifies *what* rules in him as well as *how* it does so. This provides another window on *how one becomes what one is*. One does not simply realize a potency that is already there, fully formed, from the start; nor does one make oneself into something other than what one already is. Rather, becoming what one is (p. 375) is realized through an interactive process in which the constitutive rank ordering of drives is achieved by virtue of a form of ruling expressed in engaging others.

Nietzsche's *Kriegs-Praxis* is a particular manifestation of a phenomenon that he thinks is characteristic of all living things, namely that every "living thing seeks above all to *discharge* its strength" (BGE 13). This entails "Being *able* to be an enemy"—that is, being prepared to resist and engage combat and *in a certain way*, as we shall see—as well as "*being* an enemy"—that is, seeking out arenas in which such engagements can occur and participating in them (EH: "Why I Am So Wise" 7). Repeatedly, he links this with "*Natur*," which might suggest he thinks it is strictly the result of a particular type he already is. But that is not the whole story, for it was not necessary that Nietzsche turn out to be a fighter; he became one only because he sufficiently sought himself, sufficiently loved himself, realized his ideal selfishness, as described above.

In *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche describes a strong nature as one that "needs objects of resistance." In such cases what is wanted is "what requires us to stake all our strength, suppleness, and fighting skill" (EH: "Why I Am So Wise" 7). The right sorts of fights provide conditions in which one potentially gathers and expresses one's strength. To achieve the conditions most conducive to this sort of activity, Nietzsche claims he applies four principles of engagement. A brief survey of these provides a more complex portrait of Nietzsche's "practice of war" and how it constituted him as an author who produced the works he did:²⁶ (1) he attacks causes or ideas and not individuals; (2) those ideas or causes have to be regarded as "victorious" such that the struggle against them is of monumental significance; (3) he attacks only that against which he lacks any personal grudges; and (4) his attacks are his alone and not something done as part of some mass movement.²⁷

This gives some insight into what he thinks are healthy or invigorating kinds of fighting in contrast with sources of resistance that are merely draining, destructive, and diminishing. The second principle indicates the importance of taking on a worthy competitor. The engagement must truly test him if it is to bring out the best in him. It is important that he strives to surpass what he engages rather than simply destroy or denigrate it. This latter point is further advanced by the third principle, which prohibits utilizing these struggles to settle personal grudges. The fourth principle concerning his individual pursuit might be regarded as also contributing to the form of personal cultivation possible in agonistic encounters. Mass movements do not necessarily require the same sort of personal invest-

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ment. Concerning the first and third principles, we might question whether Nietzsche, in fact, actually applied them. It is hard to see how Nietzsche's attacks on Strauss and Wagner are not directed at the individuals, despite his claim in *EH* that he uses the names of persons as indicative of types, as magnifying glasses for broader concerns; and it is hard to see how Nietzsche's lifelong and repeated engagement with Wagner does not take on the character of trying to settle a score. Nevertheless, in *Ecce Homo* as well as *The Case of Wagner*, Nietzsche clearly states that he is supremely grateful for Wagner, cherishes his relationship with him above all others, and he considers him a "windfall" for philosophy insofar as he provides (p. 376) an exemplary psychological type that crystallizes the problems with modern human beings (*CW*: "Epilogue").

Although the confines of this essay do not permit extensive analysis of how, in challenging "problems [...] to single combat" (*EH*: "Why I Am So Wise" 7), Nietzsche became the philosopher he was and had the thoughts he did, we can note that this is precisely how Nietzsche *presents* himself in *Ecce Homo*. In defining his problems, Nietzsche establishes mammoth challenges that he sets out to surmount. He endeavors to show how these engagements required him "to stake all [his] strength, suppleness, and fighting skill," and summon all of his abilities. These struggles not only tested qualities and capacities Nietzsche already had but also facilitated his development of new or enhanced powers he would not have had otherwise.²⁸ It is hard to imagine how Nietzsche's views on the task of the creative affirmation of life, for example, could form without the contrast evident in his analyses of the moralization and denigration of human existence he finds in Platonic metaphysics, for example. Virtually all of Nietzsche's positive views are inseparable from the positions he battles such that his *Kriegs-Praxis* appears to play a significant role in shaping both *what* ideas he expressed and *how* he did so.

Throughout *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche clarifies and qualifies these principles as he repeatedly makes reference to how his agonistic practice unfolds and is evident in his writings. He locates "the real opposition" he generates in *The Birth of Tragedy* in his effort to fight "the degenerating instinct that turns life against life," which he contrasts with "a formula for the highest affirmation, born of fullness, of overfullness, a Yes-saying without reservation" (*EH*: "The Birth of Tragedy" 2). He describes his *Untimely Meditations* as "warlike" (*EH*: "The Untimely Ones" 1) and makes frequent use of martial metaphors, describing himself as "quick on the draw," taking "pleasure in fencing," making "attempts at assassination" in which "paradise lies in the shadow of my sword" (*EH*: "The Untimely Ones" 2). He links *Human, All too Human* with war, but he qualifies and distinguishes it as "war without powder and smoke, without warlike poses, without pathos and strained limbs" (*EH*: "Human, All-Too-Human" 1). Concerning *Daybreak*, he writes that it is the beginning of his "campaign against morality," but we see further evidence of his agonistic ethos as he emphasizes his affirmative motivations and intentions when he claims he accomplishes his mission with "no negative word, no attack, no spite—that it lies in the sun, round, happy, like some sea animal basking among rocks" (*EH*: "Daybreak" 1).

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It is possible to vanquish opposition by superseding it rather than destroying or committing violence against it, and this is what Nietzsche thinks he does: “morality is not attacked, it is merely no longer in the picture” (EH: “Daybreak” 1). Concerning his *Zarathustra*, he explains that while it inaugurates a “revaluation of values,” which he also calls “the great war” (EH: “Beyond Good and Evil” 1), his goal is not simply defeating his opponent but rather creating a new entity, one in which “all opposites are blended into a new unity” (EH: “Thus Spoke Zarathustra” 6). In other words, Nietzsche’s practice of his philosophical (p. 377) martial art aims to incorporate his opposition and not only to destroy or incapacitate it.²⁹ And yet, despite what he represents as the overall affirmative project of his writings, he acknowledges that it is not solely creative and certainly not passive: “I know the pleasure in destroying to a degree that accords with my powers to destroy—in both respects I obey my Dionysian nature which does not know how to separate doing No from saying Yes. I am the first immoralist: that makes me the annihilator *par excellence*” (EH: “Why I Am a Destiny” 2). So, destruction is an inevitable dimension and consequence, if not a primary aim, of his agonistic practice. This is so not simply as a by-product, as his remarks about the overcoming of morality suggest, but as a necessary condition: “negating and destroying are conditions of saying Yes” (EH: “Why I Am a Destiny” 4). This makes it challenging to assess Nietzsche’s *Kriegs-Praxis* both in terms of how well he applied his principles as he specified them in *EH* and in terms of how they square with his long-term project to analyze and assess oppositional structures and forms of organization, such as those evident in types.³⁰

In addition to elaborating his agonistic principles and their evidence in practice in his writings, Nietzsche tries to account for the fitness necessary to engage his *Kriegs-Praxis*. Nietzsche emphasizes he is resistant without being reactive. Thus, he thinks his exposure to German decadence has the effect of strengthening him insofar as he resists it (EH: “Why I Am So Clever” 6), but he claims he is not merely oppositional and defiant and he repeatedly describes himself as “the opposite of a no-saying spirit” (EH: “Why I Am a Destiny” 1).³¹ He describes himself as “full” of opposites, and believes a source of his strength can be found in what it takes to coordinate the expression of (rather than simply *unifying*) such great diversity; he repeatedly champions his diversity rather than singularity of type.³² To be sure, this is not *sheer* diversity and individuality does not disappear. Nietzsche emphasizes how his diversity constitutes a plentitude by virtue of his *sublimation* of differing tastes (EH: “Beyond Good and Evil” 1). This sense of unity is more like a manifold than a synthesis. He directly links the potency he acquires with enhanced capacities: “For the task of a *revaluation of all values* more capacities may have been needed than have ever dwelt together in a single individual—above all, even contrary capacities that had to be kept from disturbing, destroying one another. An order of rank among these capacities; distance; the art of separating without setting against one another; to mix nothing, to ‘reconcile’ nothing; a tremendous variety that is nevertheless the opposite of chaos—this was the precondition, the long secret work and artistry of my instinct.” And yet, he claims there is “no trace of struggle,” no difficult challenge he sought to surmount (“I cannot remember that I ever tried hard”). In this activity, (p. 378) he refers to himself as “the opposite of a heroic nature”; “there is no ripple of desire.” But this is because he

has successfully sought himself, preserved and defended himself through his practice of selfishness and self-protection. Thus, Nietzsche's account of his own *becoming* suggests that it did not entail becoming something other than what he already is, or at least that much was not his intent: "I do not want in the least that anything should become different than it is; I myself do not want to become different."

How One Becomes What One Is Redux

Nietzsche's presentation of himself as both a lover and a fighter suggests that becoming what one is is a process that involves both more and less action on our parts than what accounts of Nietzsche's philosophy sometimes suggest. It is less, because it is not a matter of us having a definite plan, a fixed notion of what we might become, or even sufficient will to bring about an alignment between our ambitions and our actions, as Nietzsche seems to have previously thought in his account of Wagner's development. It is more, because even though we can neither change the particular set of drives that constitute us nor deliberately arrange them as we might a bouquet of flowers or oil on a canvas, we can nevertheless influence whether our constitutive parts take a form capable of powerfully expressing the organization it becomes or whether we waste ourselves away through various forms of trivial and fruitless resistance, remaining nothing more than a bit of chance.³³ Becoming what one is involves becoming a necessity, and this is how Nietzsche depicts himself in his work.

How does one become a necessity rather than a piece of chance? And what light does this shed on Nietzsche's views about the human subject and its possibilities for freedom? It seems odd to think that necessity is somehow optional or at least contingent. How could necessity be anything other than—*necessary*? In *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche repeatedly describes his development in terms of "self-preservation" rather than self-creation, and he characterizes the former as a way of conserving and harnessing energy so that it might be used for extraordinary tasks of the sort we find in his *Kriegs-Praxis*. Self-preservation consists in cultivation, including disciplining oneself to avoid what is enervating. Becoming necessary, for Nietzsche, is a form of freedom, perhaps the highest form achievable by human beings, because it entails becoming capable, becoming enabled, activated, and enlivened. This conception of freedom as being-capable allows us to see how Nietzsche's views about self-preservation and selfishness concern not sheer survival but rather a way of tapping creative powers. This allows us to see how both fatalistic and existential dimensions are evident in Nietzsche's works even though they are incomplete without their complement.³⁴

We have seen that Nietzsche thinks individuals are characterized by both orders of rank and ruling orders that maintain them. Orders of rank are more than *arrangements*, because there are also abiding *relations* (i.e., various ways of holding together and maintaining such arrangements) that distinguish organizations. Constitutions are distinguished by the (p. 379) relative strength of the drive or drives that are dominant *and* its (or their) expressive efficacy and efficiency—that is how and how well it is able to order the other dri-

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ves to pursue and achieve its ends.³⁵ Organizations form on the basis of the nature of their constituent parts (drives) and the kinds of possible relations that are thereby circumscribed. They are also constituted in and through their external relations.

Nietzsche's presentation of his *Kriegs-Praxis* shows that he not only *organizes* fights, but also, by virtue of that activity *becomes organized*; he becomes what he is.³⁶ His "practice of war" is both *expressive* of the order of rank he is and *effective* in rendering that ordering so that in the course of such activity he becomes ordered in a certain way. It is not, however, the only relation that has this sort of constitutional character, and in *Ecce Homo* Nietzsche identifies and refers to a variety of relations that are similarly (if not more so) constitutive, including nutrition, climate, geography, topography, friendship, and a variety of other associations and experiences. Nietzsche thinks that philosophical (particularly moral and religious) ideas can *literally* make us sick, physically decadent, and it is on this basis that he anticipates that a revaluation of the body and all related dimensions of what is "this worldly" (as opposed to *otherworldly*) might be reinvigorating, revitalizing. This is evident in Nietzsche's discussions of a wide range of physical and sensory experiences in *Ecce Homo* and other late writings and how they bear on psycho-physiological orders or constitutions. This sheds light on how he envisions the dynamic development of psychophysiology and how orders of rank emerge, develop, and change.³⁷

For example, when describing "why he writes such good books," Nietzsche nearly always mentions the *places* where they were written (e.g., St Moritz, Naumburg, Genoa), and he frequently comments on the conditions of lighting and topography.³⁸ He mentions specific locations where ideas "come" to him, such as his famous declaration about the origin of the idea of eternal recurrence "6000 feet beyond man and time" in Silvaplana near Surlei (*EH*: "Thus Spoke Zarathustra" 1).³⁹ Nietzsche's Mediterranean experiences are virtually inseparable from his writing *Zarathustra*: the climate; the proximity to sea and mountains; the life-ways of the inhabitants, especially the fishermen; means of locomotion, health, vitality, particularly in terms of constitutional fitness; and the typography, which provided sweeping and vast "vistas" (*EH*: "Thus Spoke Zarathustra" 2). He associates these physiological and cultural experiences with his development of a capacity for *feeling* that he describes (p. 380) as the *pathos of distance*: feeling something below or beneath as part of a process of heightening that is characteristic of the pathos of distance, for example Christianity as beneath, "altogether unheard-of psychological depth and profundity" (*EH*: "Why I Am a Destiny" 6). Nietzsche claims this feeling gave him a particularly sharp sense of difference that facilitates rank ordering, it provides the conditions that make possible the exercise of judgment concerning what is higher and lower, nearer and further, and which allows one, at least potentially, to achieve a new order of relation "within" and "without," e.g., *BGE* 57.

Nietzsche appears to hold that there is a wealth of human resources, a trove belonging to humanity as such, to the "household of the soul" (*BGE* 20), which one may tap, educe, activate, and bring to life in the order one is. One of the ways in which we tap these resources and facilitate their development and organization is through seeking out a variety of experiences and other relations that can make it possible to cultivate what he calls a

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“second nature” early in his writings (*UM* II: 3). In *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche presents himself as doing precisely this in his account of the dual (even triple) nature he heralds in *EH* (“Why I Am So Wise” 3). What is significant is that Nietzsche does not simply claim the distinction of *having* such a dual nature—much less willing it or simply creating or fashioning it for himself—he *acquires* it through experiences that access and cultivate resources that emerged through larger related historical, cultural, and physiological evolutionary and developmental processes.⁴⁰

In his *Untimely Meditation* “The Use and Abuse of History for Life,” Nietzsche describes a process of change in which we “plant in ourselves a new habit, a new instinct, a second nature, so that the first nature withers” (*UM* II: 3). This suggests a deep level of change is possible, but we should inquire into *how* it is possible, particularly given that we do not have recourse to a true self or orchestrating agent behind the scenes who could be “responsible” for such cultivation. Moreover, any desire for a second nature, for a reordering of the drives that we are, can be nothing other than the expression of yet another drive that longs to be dominant and thus we might wonder whether *deeper* is really the right way to think of it.⁴¹ Wouldn’t the dominant drive simply seek to reproduce itself albeit perhaps in a somewhat different pattern or taking on a somewhat different form of expression of what is essentially *the same* drive? If “nature” here refers simply to the nature of the dominant drive, then it does not seem to be the case that the second nature is a distinction that makes a difference. But if a being’s “nature” is characterized by both the order of rank one is *and* the ruling order that abides in its constitution and preservation, then perhaps a genuine difference can be possible, not just because one wills it and not simply by force of accident or chance.

Acquiring a second nature or undergoing some sort of change in one’s constitutive rank order, we might imagine, is something quite rare and is not easily accomplished. In the first place, rank orders are inclined to preserve themselves: they tend toward *Selbsterhaltung*, as noted above. Moreover, that to which one is drawn to interact or interrelate reflects preferences that accord with desires one *already* has on account of the order one *already* is. (p. 381) And yet, it does seem possible to change what it is that one typically wants, to develop new desires as well as new tastes, and thereby to be drawn into new relations. While the orientations of the drives might well be self-preserving, the effect of new relations among them is not entirely within any single drive’s or collection’s control. Organizations are constituted by their activities *in relation*, both internally and externally, and these relations potentially affect the ordering one is.

There are things we do that affect or influence the rank ordering we are, and these are deliberate without being deterministic: we select climates, foods, natural and constructed environments, friends, lovers, books, and music, etc., experiment with new and different relations, try to develop new tastes and new loves, and stubbornly and relentlessly cling to others. In sum, we *are* amidst a whole host of attachments, some of which can change and expand. But the “we” here should be regarded as shorthand for “the order of drives that constitutes us as agents, and the ruling order that abides therein.”⁴² That “we” that selects and experiments is itself an order that has come to rule and be powerful enough

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to do the selecting, and it will select in ways compatible with the orientation of the drive or drives that prevail. It is the result of a process in which some parts strengthen relative to others, and that ruling order henceforth interacts with others and potentially seeks to refine or refigure *the order one is*. In this respect we can see that change is possible, indeed likely, given the complexity of the constitutive elements, which Nietzsche characterizes as involved in a perpetual struggle for superiority over other drives and supremacy over the whole. In this respect, I think it is appropriate to regard Nietzsche's view of types as dynamic and fluid with considerable possibilities for change. This does not mean that any individual drive or the whole itself deliberately seeks fundamental change; rather the individual drives pursue only their further enhancement. The order is characterized by a certain *manner of ruling*: its organization is maintained in a certain sort of way, which has been briefly explored above. An important dimension to explore is how these constitutional characteristics can change, evolve, dissolve, or devolve. There is evidence in Nietzsche's texts that suggests he thinks they can and this explains his interest in more mundane, biologically material conditions such as climate, food, domicile, topography, and so on. Like Socrates in Plato's *Republic*, where we find the famous discussion of the different constitutions, Nietzsche is preoccupied with exploring how constitutional changes are possible and the role that philosophy might (p. 382) play in bringing about such. In this context Nietzsche finds *necessity*, does not commit me to either essentialism or sheer affirmation.

It is through and within networks of interrelations that the particular perspectives and sets of orientations reflective of constitutive orders of rank come to be. As relations among drives change, relative to the strengthening or weakening of drives, so too can the orders of rank change relative to their more general *orientations* or how the more powerful drives maintain their strength. What we call "I" is constituted, takes on a specific character and form, and becomes individual rather than a diffuse mix of competing forces in these contexts. One can, Nietzsche thinks, amplify, heighten, and pique such relations through a variety of physiological, historical, and psychological experiences and relationships. Some people appear to do this more readily and more ably than others. Predisposition to seeking out such relations appears to contribute to the process while not determining it. In other words, whether one *becomes* in a certain way does not simply reduce to whether one was such a type from the start.

Thus, we can see that becoming what one is also involves becoming able to act as some *one* entity that draws resources and gathers strength from having a great variety of dimensions. Becoming what one is, then, is also from many things becoming one. This is a form of sovereignty, which for Nietzsche, at least in some contexts, refers to the form, efficiency, and efficacy of the activity of ruling that characterizes the organization of the constitutive drives, the order of rank *one is*.⁴³ At the same time that Nietzsche undermines the conception of the unitary, atomic, metaphysical substratum "I" (and in so doing emphasizes the multiplicity of drives and the potency of their *expression*), he nevertheless envisions orders or forms of ruling that give any particular organization *integrity*, durability, and expansive capabilities. This makes it more than a mere collection of multiple parts that might be properly called an individual. Nietzsche makes it clear he thinks

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persons are many things, that rather than a singular agent there are many, but in great individuals, particularly, they are able to achieve a certain form of coordination of that multiplicity that maximizes the expression of the diversity. Nietzsche expends great effort in examining effective and potent structures of ruling as well as various possible ways of educating the drives and effecting new possibilities for relations. It is an expressive activity that refers to the effective ruling of the order of rank that constitutes a person and allows us to “become what one is.” An explicit appreciation for both orders of rank and means of achieving and maintaining such ruling orders is essential to understanding how Nietzsche thinks about moral psychology and related philosophical concerns. Fatalistic views conceived in terms of types are too rigid and too simplistic: we are both *orders of rank* and ruling orders. Self-creationist models can too easily dismisses the *durability* of orders of rank, and too readily overlook the fact that Nietzsche has undermined the very conceptual resources needed for the kinds of projects they envision. The highly interactive activity of ordering is dependent not simply on acts of will but also on the variety of relations of which we are a part, including “small things” that nurture us and the actions we are thereby able to take.

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Notes:

(1) It has often been noted that Nietzsche's autobiography focuses primarily on his literary and philosophical productions. *EH* has been read as a book about Nietzsche's books, about his assessment of his own writings, despite the title that announces the presentation of a life—*homo*, not *biblio*—and his profession that his life and his books should not be confused (*EH*: "Why I Write Such Good Books" 1). And there has been much attention

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given to the literary qualities of the text itself and what they indicate about Nietzsche's views about literature as a model for "giving style to one's character" (Nehamas 1985 ; cf. Sarah Kofman 1992).

(2) Walter Kaufmann's editorial introduction and notes claim Nietzsche collapsed before completing his revisions to the text. More extensive philological research has shown, in fact, Nietzsche continued to make alterations to the text, including its concluding poems, as late as January 2, 1889 (Montinari 2003 : 111), though the scholarly opinion is still divided on the question of whether Nietzsche himself thought *EH* was finished and whether the text as it was published was that text or some near approximation. Compare, for example, Erich Podach's claim "What is certain is that Nietzsche did not leave behind a finished *Ecce Homo*, but we have one" with Mazzino Montinari's: "What is certain is that Nietzsche left behind a finished *Ecce Homo*, but we do not have it" (Montinari 2003 : 120; Podach cited by Montinari 2003 : 125 n. 35).

(3) Ken Gemes (2006) has recently argued that Nietzsche has an "achievement" conception of freedom, specifically, that one *becomes* free in becoming a full-fledged agent, which is something accomplished rather than a *de facto* human condition. In general, I agree, but puzzles remain about how such accomplishment is possible. For example, the account appears to presume some sort of agency for the *achievement* to occur (for it to be properly understood as an *achievement* rather than an *event* or *occurrence*), and thus it appears to require at least some of the very powers that are supposed to be lacking and serve as the basis for distinction. A similar concern is addressed by Robert Pippin (2009: 86; see also p. 79). The puzzle persists in John Richardson's (2009) analysis in which he explores agency as a capacity that arises in response to social demands and which acts like a drive and is capable of both acting upon and interacting with other constitutive (largely antecedent) drives (2009: 137, 140-2). This essay is my effort to contribute to this important discussion. See also the final chapter of my *Contesting Nietzsche*, which incorporates and slightly revises some of the material that follows.

(4) Alexander Nehamas (1985) discusses problems with this interpretation on p. 175.

(5) Although Nietzsche might be thought to minimize Wagner's significance when he writes in *Ecce Homo* that "Richard Wagner in Bayreuth" is really about himself rather than Wagner (*EH*: "The Birth of Tragedy" 4), it is nevertheless illuminating to explore the similarities and differences in these two works because they provide insight into the process Nietzsche envisions as well as its (and his) task.

(6) Brian Leiter (1998) reads Nietzsche's anti-metaphysical comments about the soul and concludes that "there is [...] no 'self' in 'self-mastery,'" whereas Nehamas (1985) regards the self as something that *becomes* by virtue of some special activity one engages in that allows for self-transformation and transfiguration, self-becoming. Though these views seem at odds, perhaps it is a mistake to think that we must embrace only one or the other. A third option might grant subjective multiplicity while locating agency in the various powers of the contributors, claiming *multiple agencies*, as one finds in Parkes 1994 (e.g., pp. 320, 325), who claims Nietzsche presents a "a multiplicity [of subjective entities] be-

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hind which it is not necessary to posit a unity: it suffices to conceive the multiplicity as a regency” (Parkes 1994 : 354; cf. *KSA* 11: 40 [38]). I find Parkes’ account illuminating and supported by the text, but I think the *pattern* of the organization of the drives, which he claims is fated, is not fixed, and I think there is potentially greater unity than what his ultimate claim of the “play of masks” suggests, even though I recognize he thinks this occurs on the basis of what he calls “enlightened spontaneity” (Parkes 1994 : 459 n. 74).

(7) The confines of this essay do not permit a fuller development of Nietzsche’s relationship to Wagner, although I wish to point out that it is more complicated than often depicted. It is not an overstatement to claim that Wagner influenced Nietzsche from the beginning to the end of his career, and he appears by name or in the guise of a “type” in each and every work he wrote. While Nietzsche is immensely interested in the lives and works of other persons he thinks are greatly important (for better and for worse)—such as Homer, Socrates, Paul, Goethe, Beethoven, and Napoleon, to name just a few—only Wagner is analyzed in such detail in terms of his development. Wagner becomes increasingly important to Nietzsche after Wagner’s death, at which time Nietzsche both writes his harshest criticisms and professes his deepest affection for Wagner.

(8) A preoccupation with genealogies, in terms of ancestry as well as the evolution and development of values and institutions, is evident throughout Nietzsche’s works in his analyses of other cultures and types of individuals. It famously underlies his account of the emergence and conflict of noble and slavish morality and his examination of the modern European inheritance in Book VIII of *Beyond Good and Evil*, “On Peoples and Fatherlands” (see especially *BGE* 264 and 268). There is considerable discussion in the scholarly literature about Nietzsche’s use of the terms *Herkunft*, *Ursprung* (origin), and *Entstehung* (emergence), particularly as it relates to Nietzsche’s conception and practice of genealogy. The most famous, if not most illuminating, is Michel Foucault’s “Nietzsche, Genealogy, History” (1977). See also Pizer 1990 .

(9) See Moore 2002 and Richardson 2004 .

(10) On Nietzsche’s atavism, see Lingis 2000 -1.

(11) Translated by Greg Whitlock in Montinari 2003 . The passage cited is part of a replacement text he submitted for “Why I Am So Wise” 3, when he returned the first and second signatures of *EH* to the publisher on December 18, 1888. It does not appear in the Kaufmann translation on which I most often rely. This passage is somewhat at odds with *BGE* 264, mentioned above, which underscores that it is “absolutely impossible” not to embody the “qualities and preferences” of one’s parents. These can be reconciled if one grants that Nietzsche holds that one is not *merely* what one inherits most immediately and that in higher types the ancient inheritances are enhanced and more pronounced.

(12) Translated by Greg Whitlock. “*Aber auch als Pole bin ich ein ungeheurer Atavismus. Man würde Jahrhunderte zurückzugehen haben, um diese vornehmste Rasse, die es auf Erden gab, in dem Masse instinktrein zu finden, wie ich sie darstelle*” (*KSA* 6: 268).

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- (13) See Richardson 2004 and 2009 for discussion of types as orders of drives.
- (14) For the view that Nietzsche conceives the *Übermensch* as a future (or at least more-than-human) life form, see Loeb 2010 . For the view that the *Übermensch* is neither a future life form nor a specific type of human being but rather a set of attributes or capacities, see Conway 1998 .
- (15) Brian Leiter attributes a “doctrine of Types” to Nietzsche (1998, 2002, 2007).
- (16) See the interesting debate about whether Nietzsche’s discussion of the will in *BGE* 19 is an account of the *phenomenology* of willing (and linked with dismissal of the efficiency of the will) or an alternative account of what constitutes willing and the circumstances in which it occurs in Leiter 2007 and Clark and Dudrick 2009 .
- (17) Nietzsche repeatedly refers to the idea of the subject as a multiplicity; see also *GM I*: 13. For further comments by Nietzsche on the aptness of political organizations as metaphors for the subject, see for example *KSA* 11: 40 [21], which is discussed briefly by Nehamas 1985 : 181–2 (as *WP* 492).
- (18) For example, strictly speaking, the master and the slave in Nietzsche’s *On the Genealogy of Morality* reflect *different ways of ruling* and not simply different types of people. Missing from Leiter’s account is discussion of “orders of rank,” and this idea that is so important to Nietzsche seems more relevant to determining what one is than the “type facts” associated with such orders. The “type facts” themselves do not *determine* what one does; rather they are themselves *determinations* of the rank order of drives. What Leiter calls “type-facts” might be better understood as statements about conditions of a rank ordering (rather than particular features of such orderings). Each individual is a myriad of type facts, which are perhaps innumerable. They are fixed or determined *in relation to* the order of rank one is, not fixed or determined for the entire duration of the life of the organism. Type facts themselves do not determine but rather are themselves *determinations* of this ordering.
- (19) One might also place the emphasis on an implied restraint against our tendency to *want* to know and to fabricate such answers that seek to unify conflicting and contrasting traits and characteristics. This is explored at length in Gary Shapiro’s chapter on *Ecce Homo* (1989), which emphasizes the importance of the *Dopplegänger* in Nietzsche.
- (20) Contrasting positions on Nietzsche’s views about fate are evident in the different accounts given by Brian Leiter (1999, 2007) and Robert Solomon (2003). For Leiter, what he calls “type-facts” play a “crucial role [...] in determining what one does, even what morality one accepts” (2007: 9). While events are not determined in advance for Leiter—and thus, there is no predestination in that sense—“facts” about a person, which limit and determine a range of possibilities, *are*. Thus Leiter regards his view as attributing a form of “causal essentialism” to Nietzsche (Leiter 1998 : 225). Solomon emphasizes distinctions between fatalism and determinism, whereby determinism is focused on necessary causal connections and fatalism emphasizes the necessity of eventual outcomes without

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commitment to any specific causes that lead to such outcomes. Solomon thinks Nietzsche's fatalism is most closely related to ancient views, and that it is decidedly not a form of determinism in the contemporary sense.

(21) Kaufmann and others translate *Selbstsucht* quite reasonably as "selfishness," but I think self-seeking, conceived as part of a process of self-formation, is also appropriate. It resonates with the opening of Nietzsche's *On the Genealogy of Morality*, where he writes, "*Wir sind uns unbekannt, wir Erkennenden, wir selbst uns selbst: das hat seinen guten Grund. Wir haben nie nach uns gesucht,—wie sollte es geschehn, dass wir eines Tags uns fänden?*" (GM Preface: 1).

(22) Extensive discussion of Nietzsche's wrestling with and ultimate rejection of "selflessness" is found in Janaway 2007 .

(23) Nietzsche repeatedly expresses the view that hostility to selfishness leads to decadence, declining life: "The best is lacking when self-interest begins to be lacking. Instinctively to choose what is harmful for *oneself*, to feel attracted by 'disinterested' motives, that is virtually the formula for decadence. [...] 'I no longer know how to *find* my own advantage.' Disgregation of the instincts! Man is finished when he becomes altruistic" (TI: "Skirmishes of an Untimely Man" 35). Cf. NCW 7; TI: "The Four Great Errors" 2; and for discussion see Müller-Lauter 1999a . Part of what is so problematic with pity is that it can motivate us to conserve what ought to perish, and in *Ecce Homo* he presents himself as a physiologist who is experienced in understanding organic degeneration and can apply those insights to psychological health. Nietzsche writes: "When the least organ in an organism fails, however slightly, to enforce with complete assurance its self-preservation, its 'egoism,' restitution of its energies—the whole degenerates. The physiologist demands *excision* of the degenerating part; he denies all solidarity with what degenerates; he is worlds removed from pity for it. But the priest desires precisely the degeneration of the whole, of humanity: for that reason he *conserves* what degenerates—at this price he rules."

(24) Kaufmann's translation amended: "*Die Erfindung von Göttern, Heroen und Uebermenschen aller Art, sowie von Neben- und Untermenschen, von Zwergen, Feen, Centauren, Satyrn, Dämonen und Teufeln, war die unschätzbare Vorübung zur Rechtfertigung der Selbstsucht und Selbstherrlichkeit des Einzelnen.*"

(25) See also an earlier draft of the main concept for *EH* (1888), which focuses on the "problem of nutrition" [*Ernährung*]; KGW VIII.3: 24[1]; cf. BGE 36; D 171; GS 347.

(26) I have listed these in an order that differs from Nietzsche's because I do not think his sequence indicates any particular priority.

(27) Whether or not Nietzsche *actually* put these principles into action is another matter. I discuss these concerns at some length in Acampora 2003b .

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(28) Promising cases to consider are his *agones* with Homer, Socrates, and Paul, which arguably affected Nietzsche's ideas about art and culture (the contest with Homer as the basis of his *The Birth of Tragedy*), philosophy and science (the contest with Socrates as the basis of his views on philosophy and science, particularly as evident in his *The Gay Science, Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, and *Beyond Good and Evil*), and morality and Christianity (the contest with Paul as evident in his *On the Genealogy of Morality* and *The Anti-Christ*). I discuss these at length in Acampora 2013 .

(29) On the importance of affirming (even supporting and cultivating) one's opponent in Nietzsche's agonism, see Hatab 1995 and 2008, and Acampora 2002b and 2003a .

(30) The argument that Nietzsche progressively developed and applied such analyses throughout his career is advanced in Acampora 2013 .

(31) See also *BGE* 31.

(32) Nietzsche also regards Wagner as a great mixture of types (*EH*: "Why I Am So Clever" 7). See also the discussion of mixture and hybridity in *BGE* "On Peoples and Fatherlands." The discussion in the latter text, particularly, shows that Nietzsche considers such a condition with ambivalence. On the one hand, he thinks it is a quintessential condition of modern human beings that they are great mixtures of types and tastes and that largely this is deforming and incapacitating. On the other hand, Nietzsche seems to think that such a condition might be potentially enhancing provided there is some way of yoking the multifarious tastes in such a way that allows them to be individually preserved and intensified.

(33) Cf. *EH*: "Why I Write Such Good Books" 4: "multiplicity of inward states is exceptionally large in my case, I have many stylistic possibilities—the most multifarious art of style that has ever been at the disposal of one man."

(34) See Nehamas 1985 , especially pp. 177–86; and Leiter 1998 : 255.

(35) Maudemarie Clark and David Dudrick (2009) emphasize without elaborating the significance of what they call "political authority" in organizations of drives. They write, "the viewpoint of the person who experiences willing is constituted by, in the sense that it simply is, the viewpoint of the drives who use the trappings of political authority to get their way in conflicts with the other drives" (256). I certainly agree that "political authority" is an appropriate way to understand how Nietzsche conceives the relations of the drives, but it is more than "using" "trappings." The drives *are* successful on the basis of their participation in the political arrangements. This means that no drive gets its way by sheer strength alone; it is (and thus *we* are) inherently social and political all the way down, so to speak.

(36) See Siemens 2006 for discussion of Nietzsche's "socio-physiology," in which Siemens explores how agonistic social relations can be constitutive.

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(37) For other discussions of how “small things” potentially influence and affect orders of relations such that we can see individuals as constituted *in relation* to their environments, see Domino 2002 , Hutter 2006 , and, in Nietzsche’s own case, Krell and Bates 1997 .

(38) Rich detail of Nietzsche’s travels can be found in Krell and Bates 1997 .

(39) Other examples in *EH* include his reference to the facts that “Songs of Prince Free Bird” was written in Sicily, *HAH* was written in Sorrento, and *D* was written in Genoa.

(40) Nietzsche’s works are replete with references to “what has been achieved in us,” not by dint of our own will but rather “by nature.” He uses this formulation in a frequently discussed passage on the “sovereign individual,” who is “permitted to promise” (*GM* II: 2). Robert Pippin’s discussion (2009) is particularly illuminating.

(41) This idea is most clearly reflected in *D* 109, which numerous commentators cite. See, for example, Parkes 1994 : 290-2.

(42) In his discussion of the sort of unity that is possible for the assemblages that Nietzsche thinks human beings are, Nehamas explores whether Nietzsche has in mind unity as coherence or unity as numerical identity. He sees a much greater fluidity than I would grant in what *rules* in such orders with the effect that they might be thought roughly to constitute some specific or distinctive collectivity. Here is where Leiter’s emphasis on types could be instructive if modified to pertain not exclusively or even primarily to “type facts” but rather to orders of rank that consider both what is ordered *and* what rules so as to preserve that order. What I find missing from both accounts is an emphasis on the nature of the ruling that abides in the composite under consideration. See Nehamas 1985 , especially pp. 181-2, and Leiter *passim*. There is also significant disagreement between the two concerning how unity is achieved in this multiplicity. For Nehamas, literature supplies an artistic creative model for producing the unity of the self. For Leiter, it is simply given. Also instructive is Richardson 2009 on unity as “that synthesis of a stable power-system of drives [...] accomplished by a single drive taking control, and imposing its single command” (135), though I do not see why it must be a single drive that does this rather than a regency or oligarchy. The political and agonistic character of the soul indicates greater possibilities.

(43) This kind of sovereignty differs from that frequently attributed to Nietzsche on the basis of interpretations of *GM* II:2. See my discussion in Acampora 2006 .

Christa Davis Acampora

Christa Acampora: Hunter College, City University of New York