

ONTOLOGICAL AND ETHICO-POLITICAL READINGS OF NIETZSCHE: DELEUZE VERSUS HEIDEGGER

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ABSTRACT

This article will focus on two different readings of Friedrich W. Nietzsche. The first is the ontological reading of Heidegger, who establishes his discussion on Nietzsche on the issue of forgottenness of being and places him in the tradition of Western metaphysics. With reference to Nietzsche's concepts, such as eternal return, will to power, and the overman, Heidegger argues that Nietzsche cannot overcome Western metaphysics. This argument poses a problem in two respects. First, the entire discussion on Nietzschean philosophy becomes stuck on the question of whether he overcomes metaphysics. By extension, the second problem occurs as the discussion moves to the field of ontology and the ethico-political possibilities, which Nietzsche's work may offer, go unnoticed. In this regard, Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche becomes more of an issue in the sense that it designates the uniqueness of Nietzschean philosophy by drawing upon its ethico-political basis and conducts an analysis that brings the crucial ethico-political dimension of his philosophy to light. Thus, the main aim of this article is to reveal how Nietzschean philosophy, which became barren due to Heidegger's reading, has provided us with new opportunities by virtue of Deleuze.

Keywords: *Forgottenness of being, will to power, eternal return of the same, difference, affirmation, multiplicity*

NIETZSCHE'NİN ONTOLOJİK VE ETİK-POLİTİK OKUMALARI: HEIDEGGER'E KARŞI DELEUZE

ÖZ

Bu makalede Friedrich W. Nietzsche'nin iki farklı okumasına odaklanılacaktır. Bunlardan ilki, Nietzsche üzerine tartışmasını varlığın unutulmuşluğu bağlamına oturtan ve onu Batı metafiziği geleneğinde konumlandıran Heidegger'in ontolojik okumasıdır. Heidegger, Nietzsche'nin, ebedi dönüş, güç istemi ve üst insan gibi kavramlarına gönderme yaparak onun Batı metafiziğini aşmadığını iddia eder. Bu argüman iki bakımdan sorunlu görünmektedir. İlk olarak Nietzsche felsefesi üzerine bütün tartışma, Nietzsche'nin metafiziği aşır aşmadığı sorununa indirgenmiş hale gelmektedir. Buna bağlı olarak ikinci sorun Nietzsche'yle ilgili tartışmanın ontoloji alanına kaymış olması ve onun eserinin sunabileceği etik-politik olanakların göz ardı edilmesidir. Bu bakımdan Deleuze'ün Nietzsche okuması, Nietzsche felsefesinin özgünlüğünü, onun etik-politik zeminine başvurarak ve felsefesinin etik-politik boyutunu gün yüzüne çıkaran bir çözümlenmeye girişerek göstermesi bakımından önem kazanır. Dolayısıyla bu makalenin temel amacı Heidegger'in okumasıyla kısırlaşan Nietzsche felsefesinin Deleuze aracılığıyla nasıl yeni olanaklar sunduğunu ortaya koymaktır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: *Varlığın unutulmuşluğu, güç istemi, aynı olanın ebedi dönüşü, fark, olumlama, çokluk*

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I

In his lectures on Nietzsche—which were later compiled as a complete work—Martin Heidegger clamps him on the problem of truth of being in such a distinctive way that many thinkers whose paths crossed with Nietzsche in one way or another endeavor to become his savior. However, no one can be accused of this attitude because the discussion conducted on Nietzsche has been narrowed down due to Heidegger. We all focus on the fields of discussion Nietzsche brought forward in the history of philosophy, finding ourselves trying to answer one question: "Has Nietzsche overcome Western metaphysics?" We can simply note that Heidegger's answer to this question was negative, and we can acknowledge him to be right. However, we should confess that although answering this question is quite significant for discussing the Heideggerian theme of forgottenness of being, it paralyzes all other fields of discussion.

While Heidegger was pushing Nietzsche to the depths of being, Deleuze, in his *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, makes an effort to bring him into the sphere of ethics and politics, so to speak, he attempts to create appropriate conditions for Nietzsche to breathe again. The philosophy of Nietzsche turns out to be a dead end in Heidegger's reading, whereas Deleuze provides new opportunities to discuss him in a more fruitful way. Thus, our aim here is to elaborate on Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche and to display this roughly mentioned picture throughout this article.

II

Initially, we should note that Deleuze's relation with Nietzsche cannot be placed in the frame of an interpreter–interpreted status. To describe Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche, we should utilize the verb "to use" instead of "to interpret." Thus, asking the question of how Deleuze interprets Nietzsche amounts to asking how Deleuze uses him. Answering this question requires a closer inspection of Deleuze's position. During this investigation, the first thing to notice is the discomfort felt against the tradition of rationalist philosophy, which reaches its height in Hegelianism. Deleuze complains about the history of philosophy that reposes on a rationalist tradition because for him, this attitude restricts the possibilities and potentialities of philosophy to some extent:

I belong to a generation, one of the last generations, that was more or less bludgeoned to death with the history of philosophy. The history of philosophy plays a patently repressive role in philosophy, it's philosophy's own version of the Oedipus complex (...) I myself "did" history of philosophy for a long time, read books on this or that author. But I compensated in various ways:

by concentrating, in the first place, on authors who challenged the rationalist tradition in this history.¹

Reading the history of philosophy from within a certain line and condemning it thoroughly is a familiar attitude from Nietzsche to Heidegger and Derrida. However, Deleuze avoids this attitude although he is no less disturbed by the history of philosophy than the thinkers we have mentioned. While he endeavors to find conditions for breaking free of the domination in the very history of philosophy, he weaves an alternative philosophical line out of the veins the rationalist tradition kept in the dark. All his readings, ranging from Hume to Spinoza and from Nietzsche to Bergson, turn out to be the threads in this weaving. Engaging in such a project enables Deleuze to lay the foundations of an affirmative philosophy and form a view of the struggle against his archenemy: Hegel and Hegelianism. As Hardt notes, one of the issues that most disturbs Deleuze is the ruling of Hegelian philosophy in continental Europe. This disturbance is not intrinsic to Deleuze; it is also the issue of an intellectual circle that can be called post-structuralist philosophy.² What we need to do here is more or less obvious. We either ignore Hegelianism and change our course in every encounter with it because it is difficult to compete with and criticize Hegel entirely, given that he appended his signature to perhaps the most impeccable work of the history of philosophy. Alternatively, we struggle with it by criticizing him partially rather than entirely in such a manner that we do not abstain from articulating “the enemy’s” name. It is not hard to see which stance Deleuze adopts.

We can now declare that Deleuze’s reading of philosophers is characterized by an anti-Hegelian attitude. In a manner of speaking, the most significant reason behind Deleuze’s examination of Bergson is that he rejects a negative ontology in a Hegelian sense and puts the affirmative difference, the irreducible multiplicity of becoming, up against the Hegelian negative determination and the dialectical unity of the One and Multiple.

According to Deleuze, Bergsonism is the defense of diversity against the identity stemming from unity. Difference is the central component that constitutes being and grants concreteness to it. If so, the relationship between identity and difference should be reversed. If we are to consult the rightful detection of Eugene W. Holland, Deleuze insists on handling difference and multiplicity as primary categories and handling identity and Oneness as

¹ Gilles Deleuze, *Negotiations*, tr. Martin Joughin, Columbia University Press, New York: 1995, pp. 5-6.

² Michael Hardt, *Gilles Deleuze-An Apprenticeship in Philosophy*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis & London: 1993, p. x-xi.

secondary categories.³ On the other hand, constantly describing being in an abstract way even causes a renunciation of uniqueness and the singularity of concrete reality. The dialectical method should be discarded in the first place because it claims to establish reality by means of abstract and general concepts:

We are told that the Self is one (thesis) and it is multiple (antithesis), then it is the unity of the multiple (synthesis). Or else we are told that the One is already multiple, that Being passes into nonbeing and produces becoming. The passages where Bergson condemns this movement of abstract thought are among the finest in his oeuvre. To Bergson, it seems that in this type of dialectical method, one begins with concepts that, like baggy clothes, are much too big. The One in general, the multiple in general, nonbeing in general....⁴

According to Deleuze, the dialectical movement in the Hegelian sense always operates out of countenance to the concrete relations of being. Another danger emerges within the triangle of state, society, and individual. As is known, according to Hegel, the thesis–antithesis relationship between the One and the Multiple is dissolved in the synthesis of unity of the multiplicity. Deleuze reads this as the degradation of multiplicity to the unity of state; therefore, according to Hardt, attacking the Hegelian connection of the One and the Multiple means attacking the priority of the state against citizens and persisting on the multiple structure of the social sphere.⁵ While tracing the identification practices that state apparatus spreads around the social sphere and the perception of monotypical citizenship legitimized by these practices in the dialectical logic of Hegelian ontology, Deleuze uses Bergson to short-circuit this logic and knocks on the door of Nietzsche to develop philosophical arguments that affirm singularity and difference in not just ontology but ethics and politics as well.

III

With reference to Deleuze and Guattari’s expression that “Spinoza is the Christ of philosophers” in *What is Philosophy*, Todd May makes a speculative inference: “If Spinoza is the Christ among Deleuze’s philosophers,

³ Eugene W. Holland, *Deleuze and Guattari’s Anti-Oedipus-Introduction to Schizoanalysis*, Routledge, London & New York: 1999, p. 27.

⁴ Gilles Deleuze, *Bergsonism*, tr. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam, Zone Books, New York: 1988, p. 44.

⁵ Michael Hardt, *Gilles Deleuze-An Apprenticeship in Philosophy*, p. 13.

then Bergson is the Father, and Nietzsche is the Holy Ghost."⁶ While Spinoza points to immanence, Bergson reveals the temporality of duration, which is the only means in which immanence can occur. Nietzsche, with his active and creative affirmation of difference that cannot be compensated for with any form of identity, enters all sides of the Deleuzian project. Thus, he reaches the position of the Holy Ghost in the eyes of Todd May.

According to Deleuze, at first glance, Nietzsche's uniqueness may be depicted by his distrust in "truth." It is fairly easy to predict how far apart Nietzsche is from a tradition in which the dominant attitude is characterized by establishing a connection with thought and truth, associating the concept of truth with a true world beyond question, positioning the truth-seeking human being at the center of this world, and insistently articulating that the visible world corresponds to a certain number of obstacles. From the beginning, Nietzsche protests the manner that associates the intelligible world with truth and the visible one with what is erroneous. Deleuze also objects to this manner as such:

1) We are told that the thinker as thinker wants and loves truth (truthfulness of the thinker); that thought as thought possesses or formally contains truth (innateness of the idea, a priori nature of concepts); that thinking is the natural exercise of a faculty, that it is therefore sufficient to think "truly" or "really" in order to think with truth (sincere nature of the truth, universally shared good sense).

2) We are also told that we are "diverted" from the truth but by forces which are foreign to it (body, passions, sensuous interests). We fall into error, we take falsehood to be truth, because we are not merely thinking beings.⁷

In each situation in which the truth is extracted from the visible world, erroneousness is assigned to this world doubtlessly. Thus, the Western philosophical tradition loses favor in the eyes of Nietzsche, to whom we can conveniently ascribe the adjective of "the philosopher of life." According to him, the essence of truth is not pertinent to knowledge or concepts; instead, it is an issue about the determination of power, which makes it vital (and political):

⁶ Todd May, *Gilles Deleuze-An Introduction*, Cambridge University Press, New York: 2005, p. 26.

⁷ Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, tr. Hugh Tomlinson, Columbia University Press, New York: 2006, p. 103.

Truth, as a concept, is entirely undetermined. Everything depends on the value and sense of what we think (...) Clearly thought cannot think by itself, any more than it can find truth by itself. The truth of a thought must be interpreted and evaluated according to the forces or power that determine it to think and to think this rather than that.⁸

For him, what is to be revealed is not the truth but the powers behind it. In that redescription of truth in the Nietzschean sense, Deleuze concerns the breaking all the relations that took hold between thought and truth. Because of Nietzsche, the truth no longer emerges as the primary component of thought; it tends towards meaning and value. Through an evaluation of value, the structure of an object can be detected as *noble* or *base*, and through an interpretation of meaning, the nature of power or powers that dominate the object can be detected. Thus, the question here is what is that power that is to be revealed by interpretation? Or rather, what it is not?

Nietzsche asks: who conceives of the will to power as a will to get oneself recognised? Who conceives of power itself as the object of a recognition? Who essentially wants to be represented as superior and even wants his inferiority to be represented as superiority? It is the sick who want “to represent superiority under any form whatsoever” (GM III 1 4) (...) What we present to ourselves as power itself is merely the representation of power formed by the slave.⁹

Deleuze argues that Nietzsche rescues power from the narrow pass of representation and recognition. Because Nietzsche gives a determinant meaning to power over life, thought, history, and becoming, he treats it as an essential component; in this sense, the history of nature is written through the dominant struggles of powers in becoming processes; each object undertakes different meanings depending on the determination of the power.¹⁰ However, power brings along will and shares the scene with will. Nietzsche not only restores the value of power but also defines the will appropriately. Thus, he significantly considers Deleuze’s thought. Except Schopenhauer, many thinkers have handled the will within the frame of conflict and struggle. Unlike them, Schopenhauer presents will as the essence of things and ties it to the sphere of visibilities. The essence of the world is

⁸ *ibid*, s. 104.

⁹ *ibid*, pp. 80-81.

¹⁰ *ibid*, p. 3.

certainly the will, and when the world is portrayed as a sphere of illusions and visibilities, the will becomes something to be offended and rejected.¹¹ Deleuze argues that all philosophical determinations of the period about the will are the last stands of metaphysics. At such a time, Nietzsche revealed that the will is collateral to the act of creation; it is a motive for power with its potential to create, and it opens a horizon for the creation of new meanings and values.

It is obvious that when Deleuze claims that Nietzsche surpassed traditional metaphysics with his understanding of the will, he underhandedly challenges Heidegger’s reading of him. Since Heidegger asserts that although Nietzsche’s approach to the will seems like a separation from the tradition, it follows the same line regarding the basic lines of his thought. At this point, it is necessary to change our route to a degree and elaborate on Heidegger’s reading of Nietzsche.

According to Heidegger, the will to power in Nietzsche’s philosophy is roughly an “affect” signifying the urge to reach beyond itself. All the affects are appearances of the will to power; however, the will to power corresponds to the originary affect itself.¹² The will illuminates where it verges and uncovers the hidden things. Thus, we reach our most essential being through the will and know ourselves beyond; for Heidegger, this is called “consciousness of difference” in Nietzsche’s thought. However, Nietzsche attributes an emotional attitude rather than an observation to the basis of that essential being’s emergence, which presents consciousness of difference. The process is neither cognitive nor informational; consciousness of difference is rather the manifestation of an emotion for him.¹³ If so, we can say at first glance that Nietzsche’s understanding of the will is dominated by the multiplicity of emotions. In this way, he emphasizes the irrational aspect of physical life. However, Heidegger warns us that things are not what they look like. Although Nietzsche tried his best, he could not move beyond the idealist interpretation that plainly fills the content of the will with thought. The will differentiates itself in this aspect from the animal instincts that do not have the knowledge of what they aim at. By extension, the will is not a blind orientation. Instead, it is an act that functions consciously because it already owns the representation of what it desires and struggles for.¹⁴ In Nietzsche’s thought, although the determinant of the will is the multiple structure of emotions, thought situates itself just behind it, and he never dismisses it. There may arise an objection that at least Nietzsche’s understanding of will goes beyond that of German Idealism. However,

¹¹ *ibid*, p. 83.

¹² Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche Volume I: The Will to Power as Art*, tr. David Farrell Krell, HarperCollins Publishers, New York: 1991, p. 42.

¹³ *ibid*, pp. 52-53.

¹⁴ *ibid*, p. 54.

Heidegger rejects this objection. Like Hegel, who thinks of knowing and the will in relation to each other, or Schelling, who argues that the will stems from the intellect, Nietzsche deals with the will in its relation to thought. Thus, claiming that Nietzsche rejects the traditional understanding of the will or endeavoring to challenge the strength of the concept is a mistake:

If by an “idealistic interpretation of the will” we understand every conception that in any way emphasizes representation, thought, knowledge, and concept as essential components of will, then Aristotle’s interpretation of will is undoubtedly idealistic. So in the same way are those of Leibniz and Kant; but then so too is that of Nietzsche.¹⁵

We cannot be sure of how the perspective that manifests itself in these words spreads through Nietzsche’s thought, but it is certain that these words open the way for Heidegger to tie him into Western metaphysics. According to Heidegger, in addition to dissolving the metaphysical tradition by his perspective on the will, Nietzsche has reformed this tradition by simplifying, deforming, and banalizing it.¹⁶

Against this strong argument of Heidegger, Deleuze insists that the determining aspect in avoiding handling the will together with thought is the act of creation. Because creation is always in the forefront of thought in Nietzsche’s philosophy, we should give Deleuze his dues for his attempt. Moreover, Deleuze develops his discussion on the will in such a way that he always regards it as the will to power, thus distinguishing Nietzsche’s wanderings from the traditional philosophy, which becomes possible only by dealing with these two philosophers together.

IV

Affirmation and negation, which constantly emerge in Deleuze’s thought, find their meanings in the quantitative and qualitative forms of will to power. Power arises either as a structure consisting of the dominant and the dominated by its quantitative meaning or as a structure consisting of the active and the reactive by its qualitative meaning. In this positioning of power, the master comes into existence due to the dominant and active powers and the slave comes into existence due to the dominated and reactive powers. However, we must bear in mind that will to power is in charge of the

¹⁵ *ibid*, pp. 56-57.

¹⁶ Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche Volume III: The Will to Power as Knowledge and as Metaphysics*, tr. Joan Stambaugh, David Farrel Krell, Frank A. Capuzzi, HarperCollins Publishers, New York: 1987, p. 161.

emergence of these two figures. The distinctive factor in here is the inclination of the slave to the nothingness.¹⁷ The life of the slave finds its value in nothingness to the extent that life itself is denied. Thus, nihilism is the outcome of such a will that moves away from life as far as it inclines to nothing.

This process of polarization is the starting point for power and for the politics of will to power.¹⁸ The reactive powers that find their forms in nihilism spread to demarcate the active powers, while the active powers affirm their own distinctions and render themselves a center of affirmation. The reactive powers aim at harmony and demarcation, seem to retain the active powers from their capabilities, negate the essence of power, and come out against them. On the other hand, the active powers aim at a dominant and plastic structure, push to the limits of possibilities, and tend to affirm difference with reference to power. In this picture, the glory of reactive powers amount for the active powers to miss out on possibilities to be actualized and be stripped of the means through which they maximize themselves.

Ressentiment can render the reactive powers dominant. Ressentiment is the unique means that reiterates the authority of reactive powers on the active ones, i.e., "the triumph of the weak *as* weak, the revolt of the slaves and their victory *as* slaves."¹⁹ Deleuze explains how and by whom resentment is used as a weapon against the powerful as follows:

The one who gives resentment form, the one who conducts the prosecution and pursues the enterprise of revenge even further, the one who dares to reverse values, is the priest (...) It is he, the master of dialectics, who gives the slave the idea of the reactive

¹⁷ Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, p. 54.

¹⁸ Deleuze avoids reading power and will to power from a purely ontological perspective as Heidegger did. He instead endeavors to draw a line throughout the philosophy of Nietzsche by pointing out the effects of active and reactive powers on the social sphere. In addition, Deleuze objects to the understanding of will as oriented toward itself or as a desire to dominate: "If the will to power meant wanting power, it would clearly depend on long established values, such as honor, money, or social influence, since these values determine the attribution and recognition of power as an object of desire and will. And this power, which the will desired, could be obtained only by throwing itself into the struggle or fight. More to the point, we ask: who wants such power? Who wants to dominate? Precisely those whom Nietzsche calls slaves and the weak. Wanting power is the image of the will to power which the impotent invent for themselves. Nietzsche always saw in struggle, in fighting, a means of selection that worked in reverse, turning to the advantage of slaves and herds." (Gilles Deleuze, "Conclusions on the Will to Power and the Eternal Return", *Desert Island and Other Texts 1953-1974*, tr. Michael Taormina, Semiotext(e) Foreign Agents Series, New York p. 119.)

¹⁹ *ibid*, p. 111.

syllogism. It is he who forges the negative premises. It is he who conceives of love, a new love that the Christians take up, as the conclusion, the crowning glory, the venomous flower of an unbelievable hatred.²⁰

We can note here that the human type, which is characterized by ressentiment, is an enemy to life itself because it constantly attributes its weakness to the outside world and to the sinners and convicts while embracing inertia as an attitude. Therefore, it tends to envisage a world of enemies, i.e., a human type that turns against it. However, we should keep sight of the concept Deleuze uses as "master of dialectics" in describing a priest who gives ressentiment its form. Deleuze sends the Nietzschean contradiction of negation/affirmation in a different direction and derives a Nietzsche/Hegel contradiction. In his philosophy, Nietzsche affirms the figure of the "Overman," who affirms life and difference and embraces both the act of creating and activity against the Hegelian dialectical method, in the background of which he sees negation and negative consciousness.²¹ More precisely, according to Deleuze, Nietzsche positions himself against Hegel. Although Nietzsche does not mention him often, he challenges Hegelian themes throughout his work:

Nietzsche never stops attacking the theological and Christian character of German philosophy (the "Tubingen seminary") -the powerlessness of this philosophy to extricate itself from the nihilistic perspective (Hegel's negative nihilism, Feuerbach's reactive nihilism, Stirner's extreme nihilism)- the incapacity of this philosophy to end in anything but the ego, man or phantasms of the human (the Nietzschean overman against the dialectic) - the mystifying character of so-called dialectical transformations (transvaluation against reappropriation and abstract permutations).²²

Now it is time for Deleuze to lower the boom on Hegelian dialectics. This dialectic draws its strength from the determination of each constituent by another negative item; thus, dialectical precession is fundamentally a motion of negation fed by its counterparts. It dissolves every contradiction in a synthesis and consecrates identity and sameness against difference. Thus, slave morality, which wages war against what is different, finds a new manifestation of itself in the dialectic. Like Socratic culture and Christian

²⁰ *ibid*, p. 126.

²¹ *ibid*, p. 147.

²² *ibid*, p. 162.

ideology, modern dialectics represents the death of tragic culture, which makes room for multiplicity, difference, and affirmation. Above all, in a moment when reactive powers turn humankind into a herd, Hegelian philosophy presents the ideal of humankind as the identity of individual interest with the interests of society and the state, replacing the autonomous individual with domesticated man in Deleuze's words and sublimating the latter. In this sense, Hegelian dialectics is the name of a process that transforms humankind into a herd animal rather than into an independent, autonomous being.²³

In the eyes of Deleuze, Nietzsche's work finds its value and significance in being the first and greatest step toward abandoning Hegelian dialectics. Nietzsche's argument against Hegel becomes the defense of difference against the same; it is a call for new life and new possibilities of consideration and sensation. However, once Heidegger impeded the Deleuzian "happy ending" of Nietzsche's philosophy and read the doctrine of the eternal return as the eternal return of the same, he argued that Nietzsche became stuck under the influence of the same. Consequently, we should turn back to Heidegger and elaborate on how Deleuze goes one step beyond the narrow Heideggerian pass.

V

According to Heidegger, "The doctrine of the eternal return of the same is the fundamental doctrine in Nietzsche's philosophy. Bereft of this teaching as its ground, Nietzsche's philosophy is like a tree without roots."²⁴ These words show that Heidegger attributes a central role to the idea of the eternal return in Nietzsche's philosophy. The doctrine of the eternal return together with the will to power, form the metaphysical foundation of Nietzsche's philosophy. He intends to answer the question of how beings come into being as a whole by getting to the root of these beings and inquiring as to the limits of being in there. The essence of being is a process of happening by the participation of organic and inorganic beings. Therefore, according to Heidegger, Nietzsche's intention in presenting the doctrine of eternal return is to affirm the description of being as being with reference to becoming. Becoming brings about chaos, while chaos brings about an understanding of a constantly flowing world and, doubtlessly, brings about criticism of envisioning a world in which multiplicity comes out of unity or out of a creator.²⁵ For Heidegger, the rejection of this envisaged world is a *sine qua non* for Nietzsche. Explanation of the world with reference to a creative

²³ *ibid*, p. 139.

²⁴ Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche Volume II: The Eternal Recurrence of the Same*, tr. David Farrel Krell, HarperCollins Publishers, New York: 1984, p. 6.

²⁵ *ibid*, p. 91.

agent comes to mean the humanization of being as a whole and its concordant moralization. According to this attitude, a certain rationality is ascribed to the beings, and a certain rationally developing progress is ascribed to the world. Nietzsche's aim is not to show that neither such a rationality nor any kind of rationality can be ascribed to beings. He rather aims at revealing the anthropomorphic perspective that hides behind such efforts. According to Heidegger, that is why Nietzsche pursues the idea of becoming based on chaos:

For Nietzsche the representation of the totality of the world as "chaos" is to engineer a defense against the "humanization" of being as a whole. Humanization includes both the moral explanation of the world as the result of a creator's resolve and the technical explanation pertaining to it which appeals to the actions of some grand craftsman (the demiurge). But humanization also extends to every imposition of order, articulation, beauty, and wisdom on the "world." These are all results of the "human esthetic habit." It is also a humanization when we ascribe "reason" to beings and aver that the world proceeds rationally, as Hegel does in a statement which, to be sure, says a great deal more than what common sense is able to glean from it: "*Whatever is rational, is real; and whatever is real, is rational.*"... Yet even when we posit irrationality as the principle of the cosmos, that too is a humanization.²⁶

Chaos is a process in which all beings, whether organic or inorganic, come to being together, without any boundaries or any humanist categorizations among them. And the eternal return, which refers to the undetermined and endless return of everything, becomes the doctrine of this process. Until now, it would not have been wrong to say that Deleuze has no problem with Heidegger. The moment of truth comes immediately after Heidegger attaches a character of subjectivity via Zarathustra and a metaphysical one via *presence* to the eternal return. That is to say, for Heidegger, Zarathustra is the *sine qua non* of the eternal return doctrine; he is the one who reaches and reveals the essence of this doctrine and the tragic side of being thereby awakens within him.²⁷ Zarathustra represents a journey to the hidden side of being or to the unvisited; in other words, he represents an effort to think the unthought, and Nietzsche's doctrine of eternal return may find its value in this very effort. However, Heidegger argues that Nietzsche stumbles over this point as he helplessly falls into the trap he seeks

²⁶ *ibid.* p. 92.

²⁷ *ibid.*, p. 35.

to avoid. By positioning Zarathustra at the basis of this doctrine, the eternal return again comes to center on the determining role of humankind.

Nietzsche's road metaphor in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* seems to corroborate Heidegger's argument. In the metaphor, Zarathustra walks along a road that passes a mountain; the distance he covers represents the past, while the remainder indicates the future. In a passage that links the past and the future to each other and where "moment" is written, Zarathustra stops. Here what constitutes the eternal return turns out to be the decision Zarathustra makes in that moment. The determining aspect of this decision embodies a sort of responsibility; therefore, the eternal return no longer seems to be a process in which everything revolves endlessly in such a way that the effort to render things better than they actually are comes to mean nothing at all. The decision is made at a moment in which the past and the future are in touch with each other, which also determines how things will continue to revolve.

Heidegger argues that for Nietzsche and in reference to all these points, Zarathustra corresponds to a founding subject that gives the eternal return its form.²⁸ This envisioning of a founding subject leads Nietzsche to a dead end. Heidegger rightfully suggests that Nietzsche falls prey to the anthropomorphic perspective as he positions an image of a founding subject into the heart of the eternal return, while he strictly criticizes any philosophical/metaphysical perspective that positions all beings from the viewpoint of humankind:

The world interpretation that devolves upon the thought of eternal return of the same shows that a relation to man announces itself in the essence of eternity as midday and moment. Here that very circle plays a role, requiring that man be thought on the basis of world, and world on the basis of man. To all appearances that would suggest that the thought of eternal return of the same bears traces of the uttermost humanization; the thought nevertheless is and wants to be the very opposite.²⁹

On the other hand, Heidegger notes that in his idea of the eternal return, Nietzsche brings a presence into becoming. From this perspective, the eternal return of the same leads to a constant stability. Nietzsche's doctrine of the eternal return may make room for the non-stationary, the becoming, and the constantly changing ones, but the very permanency of these aspects indicates a consanguinity between the doctrine and the Western metaphysical tradition. Western metaphysics, which is characterized by the

²⁸ *ibid*, p. 57.

²⁹ *ibid*, p. 105.

permanence of existence, embodies Nietzsche’s eternal return doctrine by virtue of its previously mentioned characteristics. Accordingly, the Nietzschean eternal return doctrine fails both in terms of attributing a leading role to a founding subject and of constituting a metaphysics of existence by making the becoming itself permanent.³⁰

While rejecting the Heideggerian reading of the eternal return entirely, Deleuze embraces difference and the affirmation of difference as a starting point again. In *Difference and Repetition*, he argues that the eliminative character of the eternal return shows itself not in the Whole or the Same but in extreme forms.³¹ What comes back is only the extreme one, i.e., the one that exceeds the limits. Thus, what recurs in the eternal return is not the same; instead, it is different: “The wheel in the eternal return is at once both production of repetition on the basis of difference and selection of difference on the basis of repetition.”³² If it were the other way around, namely, if the same were to return repeatedly, the victory of this process would be reactive powers; weak and slave-like forms of life would recur constantly. In contrast, in the wheel of the eternal return, there is only room for the affirmation of difference, will, and creation. Anything beyond this would be discarded from the wheel. In other words, negation in the eternal return takes the form of negation of reactive powers.³³ Therefore, the eternal return is neither the realm of reactive powers nor the place in which the same recurs. On this plane, only active becoming prevails, in an ontology that sorts those that affirm its difference by its will and creation only:

[T]he eternal return is essentially selective, indeed selective par excellence (...) Essentially, the unequal, the different is the true rationale for the eternal return. It is because nothing is equal, or the same, that “it” comes back. In other words, the eternal return is predicated only of becoming and the multiple. It is the law of a world without being, without unity, without identity (...) Consequently, the function of the eternal return as Being is never to identify, but to authenticate.³⁴

Thus, in Deleuze’s objection to Hegel and with reference to Nietzsche based on the affirmation of difference, the crisis the Heideggerian reading of the eternal return creates with the help of the theme of sameness is

³⁰ Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche Volume III: The Will to Power as Knowledge and as Metaphysics*, p. 212.

³¹ Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, tr. Paul Patton, Columbia University Press, New York: 1994, p. 41.

³² *ibid*, p. 42.

³³ Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, pp. 70-72.

³⁴ Gilles Deleuze, “Conclusions on the Will to Power and the Eternal Return,” p. 124.

overcome. In the last instance, the eternal return is a process of becoming from which the same, the reactive, and the weak is discarded and the different, the active, and the powerful is picked and repeated. Its main principle relies on affirmation rather than negation.

VI

Ultimately, Heidegger and Deleuze offer two alternative readings of Nietzsche. We can follow Heidegger's arguments and tie Nietzsche into Western metaphysics, characterized by a forgottenness of being. However, before being charmed by Heidegger's arguments, we should keep in mind Derrida's detection of the danger of formalizing a discussion in this manner: "In saving Nietzsche, Heidegger loses him too; he wants at the same time to save him and let go of him. At the very moment of affirming the uniqueness of Nietzsche's thinking, he does everything he can to show that it repeats the mightiest (and therefore the most general) schema of metaphysics".³⁵

The second option is to put this alternative aside, despite Heidegger's strength, for the sake of Nietzsche and to elaborate on the reading of Deleuze in which Nietzsche is led to ethical and political spheres that are to be recovered. Although he objects to Heidegger implicitly and to Hegel explicitly, Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche may not be strong enough to overcome these two thinkers. However, it cannot be denied that Deleuze offers a rich political line based on concepts of Nietzschean philosophy.³⁶ Along with Guattari, Deleuze is the only thinker who tells us that we can find in Nietzsche procedures to transform thoughts into a war machine in political space. This is one of the significant aims of *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* as a whole.³⁷ The only place Nietzsche can breathe is the sphere of ethics and politics. If he has anything to say, he can say it there. Expecting Nietzsche to reveal the essence of the truth of being (as Heidegger did) and then tying him to the history of Western metaphysics (lines of which he himself draws), means sabotaging his whole project. This being the case, we should not watch a line of thought drowning in a safe Heideggerian port; instead, we should give Deleuze credit

³⁵ Jacques Derrida, "Interpreting Signatures (Nietzsche/Heidegger): Two Questions", tr. Diane Michelfelder and Richard E. Palmer, *Philosophy and Literature* Volume 10, Number 2, John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore: October, 1986, p. 254.

³⁶ Brian Massumi, in his preface to *A Thousand Plateaus*, brings this line to light. According to him, this work is an effort to establish a smooth space of thought and is not the first attempt in this sense. What Nietzsche calls "gay science" is the name of such an attempt (Brian Massumi, "Pleasures of Philosophy", *Capitalism and Schizophrenia-A Thousand Plateaus*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis: 1988, p. xiii).

³⁷ Gilles Deleuze & Félix Guattari, *Capitalism and Schizophrenia- A Thousand Plateaus*, tr. Brian Massumi, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis: 1988, pp. 376-378).

for his venture to save a line of thought which is about to be lost amid the waves.

VII

The ethical and political possibilities that Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche offers are at first hand contributory to the configuration of Deleuze's political philosophy. The constituent elements of Deleuze's affirmative philosophy of difference find their basis on Nietzschean philosophy to a large extent. The reason why concepts of difference and affirmation have a prominence in the reading of Nietzsche is that; these concepts do form the backbone of Deleuzian political philosophy too. *Anti-Oedipus* points out oedipal domination's restricting procedures over the productive, affirmative, revolutionary and creative potential of desire in its entirety. The oedipal domination over the creative and affirmative desire, rests precisely on Nietzschean idea that the practices of reactive forces deprive active ones of their abilities to act. The practices of domination enacted by slavery evaluation over the exceptional and creative ones in Nietzsche, corresponds to Oedipus' restriction of the revolutionary and creative desire in *Anti-Oedipus*.³⁸

In *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, published in 1962, Deleuze asserts that the question on the essence of truth rests upon the determinations of power rather than concerning knowledge or concepts. Subsequently, Michel Foucault publishes his *Order of Things* in 1966 and suggests that the process of truth production can not be construed regardless of power relations. Foucault depicts the historical adventure of human being as an epistemological output by concentrating on the forms of relationship between gnoseological practices claiming to assert the truth (i.e. biology, philology and economy) and the power.³⁹ The Nietzschean link between the truth and power ensouls Foucault's projects of archeology of human sciences. The link is made enormously visible by Deleuze's reading of Nietzsche. Foucault also follows the model of *On the Genealogy of Morals* while unveiling the norm-alization procedures in *Discipline and Punish*. Conformably with Nietzsche's depictions on how the human being is constructed as a domestic animal through penalizing procedures, Foucault focuses on the modern punishment techniques as a medium of production of the normal and the

³⁸ See. "A Materyalist Psychiatry" (pp. 22-36), "The Imperialism of Oedipus" (pp. 51-56) and "Social Repression and Psychic Repression" (pp. 113-122) in *Anti-Oedipus*.

³⁹ See. "Labour, Life, Language", "Man and His Doubles" and "The Human Sciences" (pp. 272-421) in *The Order of Things*.

same.⁴⁰ Definitely, in Foucault's establishment of a link with Nietzsche, Deleuze's role is enormous.

Moreover, Deleuze and Guattari's discussion on debt, which has a central place in their analysis on flows of capital, specifically on territorial and despotic machine, arises out of the conception of debt in *On the Genealogy of Morals*.⁴¹ By highlighting the concept of debt while explaining the construction of an ordinary, tame and average subject, Nietzsche gets involved not just in Deleuze and Guattari's political theory, but he also becomes the central figure of debt analysis in *The Making of Indebted Man* by Maurizio Lazzarato, a prominent figure of contemporary left politics. In fact, Lazzarato describes the basic dynamic of today's global capital with reference to the production of indebted man. While he is claiming that the ethico-political subjectivity of indebted man constitutes the core of power today, he appeals to three theoretical lines of Marx, Deleuze&Guattari and Nietzsche.⁴²

Negri and Hardt, who are also prominent figures of Italian Post-Marxist autonomist line like Lazzarato, do heavily rely on Nietzsche -though they do not explicitly mention it- as well as Spinoza when conceptualizing the new revolutionary social subject in *Multitude*. Because while Deleuze attempts to erode Hegelian dialectical logic by the help of Nietzschean doctrine of the eternal return and thus putting affirmation, difference and multiplicity up against negation, same and One in order to wage war against the Hegelian idea of priority of state over citizen, he constructs one of the main theoretical veins, to which Hardt and Negri resort much in their conceptualization of the multitude.⁴³

Following this political theoretical line ranging from Deleuze, Guattari, Foucault, Lazzarato, Hardt and Negri, it becomes clear that the elements Deleuze excerpts from Nietzsche's philosophy, provide substantial possibilities for the prominent theoreticians of Post-Structuralist and Post-Marxist lines. On the other hand, Heidegger's reading of Nietzsche ties him into question of the forgottenness of being as well as degrading all the discussion to the problem of overpassing metaphysics, and thus, ultimately serves to impoverish Nietzsche's philosophy.

⁴⁰ See. "The Body of the Condemned" (pp. 3-32), "The Control of Activity" (pp. 149-156), "The Composition of Forces" (pp. 162-170) and "Normalizing Judgement" (pp. 177-184) in *Discipline and Punish*.

⁴¹ See. "The Primitive Territorial Machine" (pp. 145-154), "Territorial Representation" (pp. 184-192), "The Barbaric Despotic Machine" and "Barbarian or Imperial Representation" (pp. 192-217) in *Anti-Oedipus*

⁴² See. "Debt and Subjectivity" under title of "The Genealogy of Debt and Debtor" (pp. 37-54) in *The Making of the Indebted Man*.

⁴³ See. "Traces of the Multitude" (pp. 189-229) and "Democracy of the Multitude" (pp. 328-359) in *Multitude* and "The Decline and Fall of Empire" (pp. 351-415) in *Empire*.

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