
Nietzsche on Epistemology and Metaphysics

The World in View

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Introduction

In *Beyond Good and Evil* Nietzsche emphasises the organic interrelatedness of all concepts, arguing that every concept emerges in a specific historical context, an appreciation of which is necessary to understand the concept.¹ In light of this view it is incumbent on any interpreter of Nietzsche's writings to attempt to understand those writings in the historical context in which they emerged and developed. Writing in a letter dated 1866, 'Kant, Schopenhauer and this book by Lange – I do not need anything else', Nietzsche tells us quite clearly that the historical soil and climate in which his own ideas are given birth and nourished are those of modern philosophy, with the writings of Immanuel Kant at the top of the list.²

In the course of the present study I seek to engage in an issue-led investigation of Nietzsche's writings, viewing them in terms of their interaction with and response to the philosophy of Kant. Our aim here is to disclose philosophical issues that were of concern to Nietzsche, using Kant 'as a strong magnifying glass with which one can make visible a general but furtive state of distress which is hard to get hold of'.³ Allowing Nietzsche's engagement with Kant to light the way, the study excavates the specifically philosophical side of Nietzsche, the side of him that celebrates a '*basic will* of knowledge which commands from deep within . . . something ever more precise', a characteristic which, Nietzsche claims, 'alone is fitting for a philosopher'.⁴ Despite the fact that Nietzsche employs a notoriously unsystematic writing style, which enacts his views, for example, on the need to 'read slowly, deeply looking cautiously before and aft', he nonetheless warns us that this does not warrant the conclusion that systematic arguments are lacking in his writings.⁵ In 'Assorted Opinions and Maxims' he writes, '*Against the shortsighted.* – Do you think this work must be fragmentary because I give it to you (and have to give it to you) in fragments?'⁶ Therefore, the present study offers

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a methodical reading of Nietzsche, stressing the coherence and consistency of his arguments. The principal objective is to make sense of two of Nietzsche's principal ideas: his perspectivism and the will to power. The study appeals to a Kantian influence to these aspects of Nietzsche's thought on the basis of what he actually writes rather than by appealing to a list of his readings, demonstrating how much of what Nietzsche has to say with regard to the perspectival character of human knowledge and the will to power can be fruitfully understood as a response to Kant. The historical component of the study, then, is employed as a device to focus our attention on Nietzsche's arguments with regard to these topics. The goal is to show that Nietzsche's views on the perspectival direction of our knowledge and his metaphysics of the will to power are compatible, and that his metaphysics derives from his perspectivism. The study contends that, looked at in this way, the much maligned metaphysics of the will to power is supported by what Nietzsche thinks are good reasons, and that these reasons, although emerging in a specifically historical and Kantian context, are ones that might still be worthy of our consideration. This study examines these reasons, highlighting both the Kantian context in which they were formulated and how they may be deemed intelligible and coherent in their own right. The Kantian optic that sets the parameters of the study and provides a narrative thread as we navigate our way through Nietzsche's writings demands that we seek the intelligible structure informing his thought, speculating, in those instances where it is not entirely visible to the naked eye, where this structure might be found. Given the nature of such a project the arguments presented throughout the book are deliberately selective; I do not attempt to offer a comprehensive overview of all the themes Nietzsche addresses in his writings but rather examine Nietzsche as responding to a specific philosophical issue inherited from Kant: the epistemological and metaphysical relationship between self and world.

Bringing this philosophical issue into focus with his approval of Kant's project to reconcile 'knowledge and metaphysics',⁷ Nietzsche applauds the anthropocentric turn of Kant's Copernican revolution as a welcome methodological rejection of dogmatism, overcoming the presupposition that we can access fundamental truths about reality directly by stepping outside our specifically human point of view.⁸ However, Nietzsche's approval is less than total. He argues that Kant ultimately fails to execute his task and is responsible for inducing an epistemic gap between self and world. This gap ensues, Nietzsche contends, from both Kant's constitutive account of knowledge that reduces the object of knowledge to mind-dependent objects of our awareness and his reference to the

thing-in-itself, which although mind-independent is radically divorced from the possibility of our knowing it. By focusing on both Nietzsche's perspectivism and will to power thesis, I argue that he overcomes the epistemic division of self and world by putting forward an anthropocentric conception of knowledge that nonetheless can be objective. According to Nietzsche, objective knowledge is impossible if reality, like Kant's thing-in-itself, is external to the conditions under which we come to know. Therefore, naturalising the knowing intellect, rendering it a participator rather than a spectator, Nietzsche argues that our perspectives are always perspectives *in* rather than *on* the world, having reality in view to varying degrees. Thus reality, Nietzsche argues, is metaphysically independent of but epistemically accessible to human knowledge. According to Nietzsche, our perspectives do not divorce us from reality but rather mark the seal of our essential and unavoidable engagement with it. His claim that our knowledge is perspectival is therefore an enabling rather than a limiting thesis.⁹ Although our perspectives are sometimes simplifications of the complexity of reality, we can, Nietzsche suggests, through careful and rigorous analysis, strive towards achieving more refined accounts of the nature of things. This is because, for Nietzsche, human knowers, although part of the natural world, also have the capacity to reflect on and make intelligible sense of their experiences, to justify their claims to knowledge. This study does not address how one can make normative claims from within a naturalist setting, but rather begins on the basis that, for Nietzsche, the human world is *prima facie* characterised by reflection and the ability to give reasons. Since our knowledge is unavoidably and necessarily human, our investigation into the relationship between self and world must take place within the sphere of seeking reasons and justifications. To do anything else, Nietzsche tells us, constitutes a dogmatic attempt to 'look around our own corner'.¹⁰

The argument that our knowledge is perspectival yet objective culminates in Nietzsche's naturalisation of Kantian synthesis in his will to power metaphysics, transferring the ordering principle of reality from human minds to the world. Putting forward an account of intentionally directed reality informed by an intrinsic inner nature, Nietzsche maintains that the fundamental constituents of reality are ordered from within rather than by human minds. This interpretation differs considerably from the predominant anti-essentialist readings of Nietzsche to date,¹¹ which contend that Nietzsche rejects the idea of intrinsic natures, acceptance of which, it is claimed, would place his will to power in tension with his explicit rejection of substantialist metaphysics.¹² One of the problems with substantialist metaphysics, according to Nietzsche,

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is its view that empirical reality is grounded in a non-empirical and static substance. Nietzsche's will to power metaphysics, in contrast, puts forward the view that empirical reality is intrinsically constituted from within, requiring no external substrate, mental or otherwise, in which to subsist. Domesticating the will to power, bringing it safely within the sphere of empirical reality available to but metaphysically independent of human knowledge, the present study offers a distinctive interpretation of Nietzsche's metaphysics, viewing this metaphysics as emanating from Nietzsche's desire to overcome the dualisms that, in his view, beset Kant's efforts to reconcile self and world. Although Nietzsche contends that will to power manifests itself differently in the human and the non-human world, that the human world is demarcated from the non-human by virtue of its being a reflective world of beliefs, his claim that '*This world is the will to power – and nothing besides!* And you yourselves are also this will to power – and nothing besides'¹³ nonetheless holds that human knowers, far from being epistemically and metaphysically divorced from a static, unknowable and non-empirical thing-in-itself, in fact have the world in view from within their immersion in its intrinsically constituted but dynamic and empirical nature.

A recent attempt to formulate the role of the will to power in Nietzsche's naturalisation of Kant contends that whilst Nietzsche allows that empirical objects are independent of human minds he holds they are ultimately dependent on non-human minds or the interrelations between mentalistic forces. Arguing that Nietzsche's will to power proposes a pan-psychism of force where everything is both a perceiver and perceived, this recent interpretation maintains that Nietzsche denies that an object (microscopic powers) can have characteristics that obtain independently of all observers.¹⁴ This Berkeleian interpretation construes forces as existentially dependent on other forces, rendering them ideal rather than real. However, the present study holds that deeper penetration of Nietzsche's engagement with Kant, particularly on the concept of force and causality, shows that Nietzsche's naturalisation of Kant requires the reality rather than ideality of empirical powers and that this requirement can be met only by rejecting the idea of mind-dependency in all its forms.

Thus whilst the present study is indebted to several earlier commentaries that address the historical context of Nietzsche's writings in addition to those that emphasise epistemological and metaphysical themes in Nietzsche,¹⁵ it is nevertheless distinctive both in its effort to see Nietzsche's epistemology and metaphysics as inextricably linked and in its pushing Nietzsche's naturalisation of Kant further than any other

commentary to date. This study holds that not only is Nietzsche's perspectivism, as a thesis about the parameters of our knowledge, compatible with his metaphysics, but also that the former precedes the latter, ensuring that all metaphysical claims are non-dogmatic and informed by considered justification.¹⁶ Moreover, highlighting the distinguishing nature of Nietzsche's metaphysical conclusions and the manner in which they are not just of historical interest but feed into contemporary metaphysical debates, this study revitalises Nietzsche's philosophical arguments. Counteracting the predominant idea that his conception of the nature of things is alienating, I argue instead that Nietzsche's world in view, far from amounting to a fairytale or fairground metaphysics, is in fact informed by both historically and conceptually intelligible reasons.

OUTLINE OF THE ARGUMENT

The Kantian background to Nietzsche's reconciliation of self and world is examined in two parts addressing both his perspectival epistemology and his metaphysics of the will to power. Nietzsche's praise for the anthropocentric and perspectival direction of Kant's Copernican turn provides the thematic focus of Part I, examining Nietzsche's appropriation and modification of Kant's epistemology. However, Nietzsche's perspectivism, as a thesis about the extent and limits of human knowledge, also provides the justificatory parameters within which he formulates his metaphysics. Thus, in Part II we investigate Nietzsche's view that reality is ordered intrinsically independently of human minds in his will to power thesis. Appropriating the concept of force in his account of causal connection, Nietzsche sides with Kant against Schopenhauer in his identification of force with efficient causality, but ultimately rejects Kant's view that relational properties are grounded in a non-relational and unknowable substratum. Then, putting forward the idea of intrinsic relational properties contrary to both Kant and Schopenhauer who, according to Nietzsche, take the view that intrinsicity is instantiated at the non-empirical and non-relational level of things-in-themselves, Nietzsche brings to fruition his envisaged reconciliation of self and world through a naturalisation of Kant's account of synthesis. This naturalisation of Kantian synthesis amounts to the claim that the world is constituted independently of human minds, thus allowing for Nietzsche's view that although the human knower is immersed in the world, neither the world nor human knowers are ultimately reducible to one another.¹⁷

Chapter 1 initiates the investigation of the Kantian background to Nietzsche's epistemology, arguing that Nietzsche's project of reconciling

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self and world is intertwined with both his appraisal and reconfiguration of Kant's distinction between constitutive knowledge and regulative belief. The chapter argues that Kant's constitutive account of knowledge contains two components: a thesis about rational justification and a thesis about the nature of objects. Whilst Nietzsche praises Kant's efforts to save the rational justification of our beliefs contrary to Hume's challenge, he contends that Kant ultimately fails to demonstrate the objectivity of our beliefs due to his reduction of rational justification to a description of our psychology. Kant, according to Nietzsche, succumbs to the genetic fallacy in his efforts to demonstrate the justification of our beliefs. Nietzsche also contends that Kant's reconfiguration of what we mean by an object of knowledge reduces objects that are knowable by us to mind-dependent objects of our awareness. According to Nietzsche, the Kantian object of knowledge is narrowly anthropocentric and, when considered in opposition to things-in-themselves, dangerously sceptical. Thus Nietzsche argues that Kant is guilty of perpetuating the distinction between appearance and reality, which in its specific Kantian form holds that empirical knowledge is possible only if the objects of our knowledge conform to the *a priori* forms of human understanding. Otherwise, reality is accessible only to a God's Eye View that is beyond us.

Nietzsche's rejection of Kant's constitutive account of knowledge and his assimilation of it to the status of regulative belief overturns the appearance/reality distinction by naturalising the human knower and abandoning the Kantian oscillation between merely human knowledge, on the one hand, and a God's Eye View on the other. Nietzsche contends that the knowing self, as a physiological rather than transcendental self, is not divorced from reality but in fact participates in reality. The forms of our knowledge are not imposed on reality from without but emerge and evolve in the context of the self's immersion in reality. As such, reality is neither a mind-dependent object nor an unknowable thing-in-itself but something that is in principle available to our knowledge.

Having examined Nietzsche's arguments for the non-constitutive character of our knowledge and thus the mind-independent status of reality in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 investigates how we can have objective knowledge of mind-independent reality without violating the anthropocentric conditions of our knowledge. Taking up Nietzsche's specific arguments in favour of the objectivity of human knowledge, the chapter examines his perspectivism as a rejection of 'metaphysical realism', a term I use to describe the general Kantian view that there is a non-empirical thing-in-itself. Nietzsche underlines two specific matters for concern with regard to metaphysical realism: first, the thing-in-itself, although

mind-independent, is unknowable to human knowers; and second, as a result, it gives rise to a sceptical gap between self and world. Thus, although metaphysical realism, the thesis that reality is metaphysically independent of our knowledge, does not by definition entail scepticism, Nietzsche contends that the two ideas have been historically connected. Nietzsche's reasons for rejecting this scepticism are examined, focusing on his arguments in the later writings from *Human, All Too Human*. Fundamental to Nietzsche's disagreement with metaphysical realism in its historical guise is its dissociation of truth and justification. According to Nietzsche's metaphysical realist, our best justified beliefs may be in error because they may conceivably be divorced from how things are in themselves. Nietzsche's perspectivism plays a key role in his overcoming of this sceptical dissociation of our knowledge from how things are in themselves by demonstrating the incoherence of the thing-in-itself and the God's Eye View of knowledge that supports it. Adopting a contextualist account of justification, Nietzsche argues our truths are always justified from within a particular point of view, concluding that once the idea of extra-perspectival truth has been shown to be unintelligible there is no longer any reason to consider our perspectival truths as anything but objective. Pivotal to Nietzsche's argument from perspectivism is its rejection of the anti-empirical tendency of metaphysical realism. According to Nietzsche, the empirical world plays a role in the justification of our epistemic claims without acting as an epistemological foundation for those claims. Internal realism, the term I employ to describe Nietzsche's anti-metaphysical realist position, entails a theory-internal view of truth and justification, holding that our perspectives are rooted in the world and constrained internally from within our practices of contextually seeking out the best reasons for and against our epistemic claims.

Chapter 3 turns to Nietzsche's early writings, arguing that his later views regarding the perspectival yet objective character of our knowledge are present in an embryonic form in his early thought, but that these views struggle to emerge in the midst of his early immersion in the philosophical frameworks of both Kant and Schopenhauer. Kant's and Schopenhauer's view that empirical reality although knowable by us is mind-dependent, coupled with their reference to the unknowable but mind-independent thing-in-itself, prevents, in Nietzsche's view, a possible reconciliation of self and world. This chapter, examining Nietzsche's early arguments thematically rather than chronologically, argues that in 'On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense' (1873) Nietzsche remains trapped within the appearance/reality distinction, but in the even earlier *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872) he has at his disposal the conceptual

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resources to overcome it. In 'On Truth and Lies' Nietzsche adopts a constitutive account of knowledge, contending that our knowledge is of a mind-dependent empirical world, divorced from the, in principle, unknowable thing-in-itself. Nevertheless, by appealing to the reciprocal rather than oppositional relationship between the Apolline and the Dionysiac in his first published book, *The Birth of Tragedy*, and the notion of the instinctive intellect in the unpublished notes other than 'On Truth and Lies', Nietzsche sows the seeds for overcoming the separation of self and world. The instinctive intellect, Nietzsche argues, is a non-constitutive naturalised intellect immersed within reality rather than constituting it from without. Although he appeals to the idea of a non-human primordial intellect, which projects both the instinctive intellect and the empirical world as an appearance, Nietzsche denies he is committed to things-in-themselves or that he has transgressed the perspectival parameters of justifiable knowledge. Rather, he argues that both the instinctive and primordial intellect share the same experiences and that we arrive at this explanation of things as a regulative hypothesis drawn analogously to our own experience. In light of Nietzsche's rejection of the charge that both the primordial intellect and our experience of the empirical world constitute two worlds, this chapter charitably interprets the primordial intellect as a not wholly successful effort on Nietzsche's part to capture the inner nature of appearances, concluding that this somewhat obscure metaphysics is intended to safeguard rather than undermine the objectivity of human knowledge. Although Nietzsche later abandons this quasi-divine metaphysics, it nonetheless points to the metaphysics of the will to power and its attempt to reconcile at the level of empirical reality the relational character of things with their intrinsic natures in addition to prefiguring his later view that all metaphysical claims must derive from our perspectival epistemology if they are to be justifiable.

Nietzsche's perspectivism as a rejection of the possibility of disinterested knowledge from no particular point of view has been well documented in the secondary literature. However, understood as a rejection of absolute truth, it has long been thought incompatible with the possibility of metaphysics. That is, Nietzsche's perspectivism is generally thought to be incompatible with attempts to capture the true nature of reality. As a result, his status as a metaphysical thinker has been a matter of considerable dispute. Appealing to his many criticisms of the philosophical tradition, some commentators have gone to considerable lengths to dilute Nietzsche's will to power thesis of all metaphysical import, interpreting it predominantly as a psychological thesis.¹⁸ Martin Heidegger's claim that the will to power is a traditional metaphysical thesis about the essence

of things is a notable exception to such efforts.¹⁹ He contends on the basis of an historically sensitive examination that Nietzsche's metaphysics represents the logical conclusion of the metaphysical tradition of the West. Tracing how the will to power emerges from a synthesis of Kant's identification of Being with conditions of representation and Leibniz's notion of Being as effectiveness, Heidegger contends that Nietzsche's metaphysics perpetuates the Western tradition's humanisation of Being by construing Being as evaluative. In so doing, Nietzsche, who sets himself up as the critic of the philosophical tradition *par excellence*, according to Heidegger, in fact represents the culmination of this tradition's forgetfulness of the question of Being. Whether or not we agree with Heidegger's evaluation of the philosophical tradition, he succeeds in both taking Nietzsche's metaphysics seriously and demonstrating its rootedness in the philosophical tradition, which in turn provides the key to understanding the compatibility of Nietzsche's perspectivism with his will to power thesis. For an examination of the specifically Kantian-informed methodology that lies at the heart of Nietzsche's approach to epistemology and metaphysics enables us to reconcile these two aspects of Nietzsche's thought.

Part II begins by demonstrating that Nietzsche's proposal of the metaphysics of the will to power complies with the anthropocentrism of his perspectival view of knowledge which in Part I we see emerges out of his praise for the anti-dogmatic aims of Kant's philosophy. Unlike Heidegger, however, who interprets Nietzsche's views on truth and knowledge as grounded in the metaphysics of the will to power, Part II argues that Nietzsche's will to power emerges from his perspectival views on truth and knowledge.²⁰ Then, having examined the status of the will to power as a comprehensive perspective that has explanatory scope across both the physical and anthropological sciences, Part II demonstrates that Nietzsche's metaphysics develops in the context of his critical engagement with both Kant's constitutive-regulative distinction at the level of epistemology and his treatment of force and efficient causality at the level of metaphysics. These investigations conclude that the coherence of Nietzsche's will to power thesis resides in its espousal, contrary to both Kant and Schopenhauer, of the idea of intrinsic relational properties.

Chapter 4 commences the investigation into Nietzsche's metaphysics by addressing his justification of the will to power. Contrary to what I label the 'textual' and the 'philosophical' arguments against understanding Nietzsche as a metaphysical thinker, the chapter demonstrates that the attribution of a metaphysics to Nietzsche is both textually and

philosophically defensible. Its philosophical defence resides in the fact that the will to power derives from Nietzsche's perspectivism. Rather than constituting merely an expression of Nietzsche's own values or an extra-perspectival claim to knowledge, Nietzsche presents the will to power as a comprehensive perspective that is warranted in multiple perspectives. The will to power is thus intra-contextually warranted rather than justified outside all contexts. Incorporating the points of view of both the physical and the anthropological sciences, the will to power emerges in the context of Nietzsche's efforts to overcome the polarities of materialist atomism and subjective idealism. Contending both points of view are one-sided arguments that give priority to either physical science (the quantitative 'objective' view) or anthropological science (the qualitative 'subjective' view) Nietzsche argues that the will to power is a comprehensive perspective that unifies these opposing points of view rather than reducing all explanation to one of them. Appropriating Boscovich's concept of force and supplementing it with an inner will analogously to our own experience, Nietzsche undercuts the distinction between non-relational, 'objective' primary qualities and relational 'subjective' secondary qualities, arguing instead for the mind-independent reality of powers. Moreover, his appeal to an argument from analogy is different from his criticism of some forms of analogical reasoning in his mature thought, where he expresses disapproval of the idea that human consciousness can act as a transparent and immediately knowable foundation for our knowledge of the outer world.²¹ Nietzsche's appeal to analogy in support of the will to power thesis does not presuppose privileged knowledge of our inner selves but rather derives an account of the nature of the self from an attempt to offer a comprehensive explanation of things. Nietzsche's conclusion that the self can be understood as will to power and hence that the self is something complicated and diverse is a far cry from the transparent unity which he criticises in the appeal to introspection. Nietzsche's use of an argument from analogy constitutes, therefore, not an appeal to introspective immediacy, but rather an acknowledgement that justification of the will to power thesis, overcoming the opacity of the physicist's account of force in addition to offering a non-atomistic account of the human self, must take place from within the sphere of human perspectives. His appeal to analogy is thus an acknowledgement that we cannot step outside our own skins and not an appeal to privileged knowledge. However, as Nietzsche's attribution of an inner nature to the physicist account of force is central to the success of the will to power as a comprehensive perspective, the feasibility of combining intrinsic and relational natures forms the focus of the final two chapters.

Examining Nietzsche's mediated engagement with Kant through Schopenhauer, Chapter 5 holds that for Nietzsche the fundamental constituents of reality are powers obtaining at the level of empirical reality rather than things-in-themselves. Tracing how both Nietzsche's early and late writings engage not only with Kant's 'critical' thought but also with his 'pre-critical' writings and their response to the *vis viva* debate waged by Descartes and Leibniz, the chapter examines Nietzsche's thesis that the empirical reality of powers can be secured only by demonstrating both the intrinsicity and relationality of powers. Nietzsche's argument in support of this thesis takes us through a two-pronged engagement with Kant. First, Nietzsche praises Kant's pre-critical attempt in *Universal Natural History and Theory of the Heavens* to combine under one empirical description the mechanical relationality of powers along with their intrinsicity, arguing, however, that this attempt ultimately succumbs to failure as a result of its physico-theology, dogmatically inferring the existence of a creator from observations of empirical order. Second, Nietzsche contends that although Kant's critical philosophy overcomes the problem of dogmatism, it gives up the project of reconciling intrinsicity and relationality within the empirical sphere by reducing knowable empirical reality to mind-dependent mechanical relations constituted by us and relegating intrinsic natures to mind-independent but unknowable things-in-themselves. Sharing Kant's aim to shun dogmatism but wanting to avoid the dissociation of intrinsicity and relationality, Nietzsche abandons Kant's constitutive account of knowledge, assimilating it to the status of regulative belief. Nietzsche contends that Kant deprives regulative belief of true cognitive status by rendering it parasitic upon constitutive knowledge. According to Nietzsche, once we realise that reality is mind-independent but in principle available to our knowledge and that we are entitled to make cognitive regulative judgments about the intrinsic nature of things we can secure the metaphysical reality of empirical powers.

Nonetheless, Nietzsche's proposal that the fundamental constituents of reality are both intrinsic and relational is a contentious metaphysical thesis. Chapter 6 examines the philosophical cogency of the proposal, defending it from attacks made from within the confines of Nietzsche studies and beyond. Informing the objection is the idea that powers are bare dispositions that can be real only if they are grounded in a non-relational and non-power substrate. Furthermore, it is argued that intrinsicity and relationality are incongruous because relationality, unlike intrinsicity, is existentially committed.

Examining both Nietzsche's bundle theory of objects and the role of resistance in bringing powers into relations, the chapter argues that, for

Nietzsche, powers do not logically imply other powers on which they are existentially dependent. Rather, when placed in the context of Nietzsche's rejection of an event model of causality that contends that a relational thing is an existentially committed thing and his acceptance of a power model of causality that maintains that the proper relation of a power is the manifestation of its own nature rather than another power that seeks to interpret it and to which it is ultimately reducible, the chapter holds the intrinsic nature of relational powers resides in their existential independence from other powers. Examining two contemporary attempts to save the reality and intrinsicity of powers, the chapter argues that the first, conditional analysis is unsuitable to Nietzsche's project but that the second, a position that bears strong parallels with Nietzsche's own argument from analogy, yields more fruitful consequences. This argument, proposing that intentionality is characteristic of both the physical and the mental world in conjunction with its rejection of an event model of causality, facilitates Nietzsche's argument in favour of the reality of causal powers. Finally, rejecting the objection that powers cannot be empirically instantiated because they are not spatially located and arguing instead that spatial location is an extrinsic property of objects, the chapter demonstrates the coherence of Nietzsche's metaphysics as the culmination of his response to Kant. By demonstrating the metaphysical reality of empirical powers Nietzsche dissolves the appearance/reality distinction, arguing that empirical reality, although knowable by us, is, by virtue of the intrinsic natures informing its relational constituents, irreducible to human minds.

The arguments presented in this study see Nietzsche not only as immersed within the philosophical tradition, modifying it from the inside but also as committed to both the possibility of knowledge and adequate metaphysical accounts of the nature of reality. However, it has been strenuously argued from some quarters that Nietzsche is more concerned with the issue of value rather than with traditional epistemological issues of justification and truth or with the possibility of metaphysics.²² As a result, it has been claimed that Nietzsche is more concerned with whether a belief enhances our life rather than with its epistemic status. Whilst I concur with the claim that Nietzsche is interested in the question of value, it is mistaken to think that he formulates his views on such matters independently of epistemological or metaphysical commitments.

That Nietzsche's philosophy of value is formulated against the background of such commitments can be discerned by reflecting on his existential project of replacing life negation with affirmation. Life denial rather than affirmation, according to Nietzsche, trades on the idea of a

'true' world in comparison with which the world of our experience is deemed false or illusory. He argues on the basis of genealogical investigation that, despite their appeal to the 'true world' to justify the denigration of the status of empirical reality, previous metaphysical systems in the guise of Plato's Forms and Kant's things-in-themselves have operated with a fictional conception of things. Nietzsche's genealogical argument aims to show that such metaphysical systems and the life-denying philosophy that ensues from them can be overcome only by discrediting such metaphysics. Nietzsche claims that intellectual honesty is necessary for this discrediting to take place. Moreover, intellectual honesty, he argues, leads to a more adequate account of reality. Nietzsche thus writes that nihilism or the realisation that the notion of a 'true world' is devoid of a metaphysical grounding emerges in the context of 'truthfulness',²³ which in turn begets knowledge. Defining the nihilist as one 'who judges of the world as it is that it ought *not* to be, and of the world as it ought to be that it does not exist',²⁴ Nietzsche argues that the conflict between our desires and reality leads to our coming to know the course of reality:

it is only this desire 'thus it ought to be' that has called forth that other desire to know what *is*. For the knowledge of what is, is a consequence of that question: 'How? Is it possible? Why precisely so?' Wonder at the disagreement between our desires and the course of the world has led to our learning to know the course of the world.²⁵

According to Nietzsche, our existentialist concerns are intertwined with epistemological and metaphysical ones. Therefore, just as the diagnosis of nihilism presupposes truthfulness and knowledge, so too does its overcoming; we must have knowledge of the nature of reality, Nietzsche suggests, if we are to properly affirm it:

It is at this point and nowhere else that one must make a start if one is to understand what Zarathustra's intentions are: the species of man that he delineates delineates reality *as it is*, he is strong enough for it – he is not estranged from or entranced by it, he is *reality itself*, he still has all that is fearful and questionable in reality in him, *only thus can man possess greatness*.²⁶

Nietzsche is of course aware that considerably more than this is required for a successful overcoming of nihilist metaphysics. To discredit it and formulate a more adequate account of reality is not enough. We must also investigate why such a world-view and its promise of a metaphysical other-world has been so attractive to us and how, confronted with its demise, we can motivate ourselves to act. Nietzsche engages in this type of investigation in both his psychological examination of the ascetic ideal and *ressentiment* in addition to his ultimately uncompleted project

of a revaluation of values.²⁷ Although Nietzsche does not suggest that our transvalued human values and ideals are read off from reality, he argues that they are nonetheless expressions of our fundamental nature as will to power such that good becomes identified with strength, bad with weakness and happiness with 'The feeling that power *increases* – that a resistance is overcome'.²⁸ Thus whilst Gilles Deleuze's postmodernist interpretation, for example, is correct in its claim that Nietzsche is concerned with questions of value, Nietzsche construes value estimations as expressions of a metaphysical principle that presupposes, despite Deleuze's suggestions to the contrary, the possibility of adequate knowledge of reality. According to Deleuze, questions of adequacy, and so on, are inextricably linked to the dogmatic quest for transcendent truth, which, he correctly contends, Nietzsche abandons. Thus, whilst interpreting him as responding to the modern philosophical tradition of Kant and Hegel, Deleuze sees Nietzsche as abandoning the tradition outright. Writing, for example, that Nietzsche rejects the very notion of truth espoused by the philosophical tradition, Deleuze claims that Nietzsche replaces the disinterested quest for transcendent truth with a typology and symptomology of activity/nobility and reactivity/baseness. Deleuze writes:

A new image of thought means primarily that truth is not the element of thought. The element of thought is sense and value. The categories of thought are not truth and falsity but the *noble* and the *base*, the *high* and the *low*, depending on the nature of the forces that take hold of thought itself.²⁹

Deleuze's claim that Nietzsche reduces truth to an expression of value falters, however, with his further contention that value is an expression of the will to power.³⁰ This is because his appeal to the formative role of the will to power to questions of value arguably presupposes the veracity of the thesis, suggesting that, for Nietzsche, rejection of transcendent truth does not entail a denial of the possibility of knowledge altogether. Rather, according to Nietzsche, questions of value, such as that of life affirmation, rely on the possibility of knowledge. Nietzsche writes that 'this ultimate, joyfullest, boundlessly exuberant Yes to life is not only the highest insight, it is also the *profoundest*, the insight most strictly confirmed and maintained by truth and knowledge'.³¹ A study of Nietzsche's epistemology and metaphysics, an account of how he arrives at and justifies the will to power thesis, is, therefore, a necessary prerequisite to a study of his philosophy of value. An examination of Nietzsche's epistemology and metaphysics, articulating the reasons informing his proposal

of the will to power, can stand alone, whereas a study of his philosophy of value based on the will to power always presupposes that Nietzsche has intelligible reasons for putting forward the thesis in the first place.

Finally, there are two further possible objections to the project that must be addressed. The first relates to my decision to employ the term 'metaphysics' rather than 'ontology'. In *Nietzsche: Naturalism and Interpretation*, Christoph Cox has opted to employ the term 'ontology' rather than 'metaphysics'.³² Cox argues that 'ontology' does not carry the other-worldly implications that Nietzsche vehemently rejects and associates with traditional metaphysics. However, my decision to employ the term 'metaphysics' rather than 'ontology' is motivated by the desire to capture the speculative and regulative character of Nietzsche's claims about the nature of reality.³³ These claims are speculative, not because they are unjustified, but rather because they are explanations with comprehensive scope and not merely empirical descriptions of reality. Rather, as I shall show, metaphysics constitutes, for Nietzsche, a research project guided by our interests and ultimately justified according to a strict methodology.³⁴ Thus, the use of the term 'metaphysics' is not intended to suggest that Nietzsche engages in any way in the other-worldly flights of fancy he castigates in Plato and Christianity.

The final issue that must be addressed before we proceed in earnest involves the status of those writings not published in Nietzsche's lifetime. There is a line of thought in contemporary Nietzsche studies that advocates restricting all analysis to Nietzsche's published writings.³⁵ Bernd Magnus, for example, has gone to considerable lengths to convince us that the collection of notes posthumously published as *The Will to Power* is not a book Nietzsche had intended for publication. Magnus provides evidence for his claim that whilst Nietzsche had seriously considered publishing a book with this title, he had by September 1888 abandoned the project altogether.³⁶ Magnus thus argues that we are not justified in formulating an understanding of Nietzsche's thought on the basis of the posthumously published notes. Magnus's argument obviously proves problematic for any study of Nietzsche's epistemological and metaphysical views. For Nietzsche's thoughts on these issues are given greater attention in the posthumous material. As Richard Schacht notes, the 'unpublished writings . . . contain much more of [Nietzsche's] expressed thinking on certain important matters than do his finished works'.³⁷ However, Schacht contends that Nietzsche's case is unusual and presents considerations that warrant a rethinking of the status of the unpublished notes. He argues that Nietzsche's illness was sudden and struck at a time when he had begun to publish with increasing frequency. Arguing that

the notebooks were the workshop for Nietzsche's published writings, Schacht suggests the notes provide some clue to what would have been Nietzsche's future compositions.³⁸

There is, however, a more philosophical reason that warrants the use of the posthumous material in formulating an interpretation of Nietzsche. This study, whilst acknowledging the concerns of Magnus and others, takes the view that any issue-led reading of Nietzsche is obliged to consider the posthumous writings in a serious and detailed way. The reasons for this centre on my contention that Nietzsche is primarily a philosopher who is concerned to address philosophical issues. In so doing, he attempts to get inside a philosophical problem, so to speak, addressing this particular problem by embodying multiple perspectives with regard to it. He writes:

I am trying to be useful to those who are worthy of being seriously and opportunely introduced to philosophy. This attempt may or may not succeed. I am only too well aware that it can be surpassed and I wish nothing more than that I might be imitated and surpassed to the benefit of this philosophy.³⁹

Nietzsche's writings are, by his own admission, very much the writings of a working philosopher. However, Nietzsche not only puts himself to work, he also makes his readers work through his unsystematic and aphoristic writing style, encouraging them to engage with philosophy by forcing them to occupy the various perspectives that he himself has occupied. Moreover, he forces his readers to organise these perspectival thoughts into a coherent structure. Thus Nietzsche's writings as a whole are a workshop for his interpreters, which, as Karl Jaspers points out, engage his readers in a creative and constructive fashion by encouraging them to philosophise themselves.⁴⁰ This being the case, it is difficult to formulate a convincing argument to demote the philosophical status of the posthumous material, which were arguably the contents of his own workshop. Furthermore, although questions of style are not insignificant in Nietzsche's writings, the style he adopts in the posthumous material is often more direct than that adopted in the published writings, making the unpublished notes a valuable source of possible clarification on issues that are sometimes deliberately obtusely formulated in the published writings.⁴¹ Thus, even though Nietzsche had abandoned his plan to publish a book called *The Will to Power*, the unpublished notes, if treated with care and as a supplement to the published writings, provide a valuable insight into Nietzsche's epistemological and metaphysical arguments. For these reasons I shall use Nietzsche's unpublished notes as

a source of clarification and supplementation of his published arguments regarding his response to Kant on the issue of the epistemological and metaphysical relation between self and world.

NOTES

1. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, translated by Marion Faber (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998 [1886]), 20. Henceforth cited as *BGE*.
2. Letter to Mushacke, November 1866. See *Friedrich Nietzsche. Sämtliche Briefe. Kritische Studienausgabe*, edited by Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari, 8 volumes (Munich: dtv; Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 1986), 2, p. 184. I shall not address Nietzsche's relationship with Lange, which has already been given detailed consideration in the literature. Although Lange introduces Nietzsche to some points of contention in both the Kantian and Schopenhauerian systems, in addition to educating him in the natural sciences, Nietzsche remains true to his claim that 'One repays a teacher badly if one remains only a pupil' (Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, translated by R. J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin, 1969 [1883–92]), Part One, 'Of the Bestowing Virtue', 3), ultimately using what he learns from Lange to undermine the latter's idealism and scepticism, positions that Nietzsche argues originate in Kant. For discussions of Lange and Nietzsche see, for example, George J. Stack, *Lange and Nietzsche* (New York: de Gruyter, 1983); Claudia Crawford, *Nietzsche's Theory of Language* (New York: de Gruyter, 1988), chapter 6.
3. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo*, translated by R. J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin, 1992 [1908]), 'Why I am So Wise', 7. Henceforth cited as *EH*.
4. Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, translated by Maudemarie Clark and Alan J. Swensen (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1998 [1887]), Preface, 2. Henceforth cited as *GM*.
5. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Daybreak*, translated by R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993 [1881, new Preface 1886]), Preface, 5.
6. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Human, All Too Human*, translated by R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996 [1878–86, 'Assorted Opinions and Maxims' is the first sequel, 1879]), Volume II, Part One, 128). Henceforth cited as *HAH*.
7. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, edited by R. J. Hollingdale, translated by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1968 [1901]), 458. Henceforth cited as *WP*. Here Nietzsche criticises Kant for treating this issue as a purely theoretical one. However, that Nietzsche aims to reconcile knowledge and metaphysics can be seen from his praise of Schopenhauer's desire to reconcile 'knowledge and being'. Friedrich Nietzsche, 'Schopenhauer as Educator', 3 (1874) in *Untimely Meditations*, translated by R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994 [1873–76]).
8. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*, translated by Ronald Speirs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999 [1872]), pp. 87–8 section 18. See also Nietzsche, *BGE*, Preface.
9. Bernd Magnus and Arthur Danto, for example, interpret Nietzsche's perspectivism as a limiting thesis. See Bernd Magnus, 'The Deification of the Commonplace', in Robert C. Solomon and Kathleen M. Higgins (eds), *Reading Nietzsche* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 152ff.; Arthur Danto, *Nietzsche as Philosopher* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980 [1965]). For a critical discussion of the interpretation of perspectivism as a limiting

- thesis, see Maudemarie Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), chapter 5. See also Steven D. Hales and Rex Welshon, *Nietzsche's Perspectivism* (Urbana and Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2000), chapter 5; Bernard Reginster, *The Affirmation of Life: Nietzsche on Overcoming Nihilism* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006), pp. 81–5.
10. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, translated by Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1974 [1882/1887]), 374; section 374 is from Book V, the second edition, dated 1887. Henceforth cited as *GS*. Michael Steven Green interprets Nietzsche's naturalism as a response to Afrikan Spir, arguing that Nietzsche's commitment to naturalism disallows the possibility of objectively valid judgement. Michael Steven Green, *Nietzsche and the Transcendental Tradition* (Urbana and Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2002). Maudemarie Clark and David Dudrick, in contrast, have recently argued that what Nietzsche learns from Spir is the importance of the distinction between causes and reasons, allowing Nietzsche to combine naturalism with the possibility of objectively valid belief. Maudemarie Clark and David Dudrick, 'The Naturalisms of *Beyond Good and Evil*', in Keith Ansell Pearson, *A Companion to Nietzsche* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006). In *GS*, 374 from Book V, written immediately after *BGE*, Nietzsche entertains the possibility that normativity is characteristic of both the human and the non-human worlds, writing that we are not permitted to assume that interpretations are possible only within the human world. Although Nietzsche is reluctant to draw out the implications of this suggestion, commitment to it would lead to the idea that the natural world of causes is fraught with reasons. This conclusion arguably follows from Nietzsche's ascription of intrinsic natures to powers in his will to power thesis. However, since at times Nietzsche seems intent on clearly demarcating causes and reasons (Nietzsche, *GM*, III, 25), it is not necessary for us to pursue the issue any further. Suffice to say that for Nietzsche the human world is one that is characterised by reflection.
 11. The most notable discussions of the issue of intrinsic natures in the context of Nietzsche's views on essentialism are Peter Poellner, *Nietzsche and Metaphysics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); and Hales and Welshon, *Nietzsche's Perspectivism*. John Richardson attributes essentialism to Nietzsche. See his *Nietzsche's System* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996).
 12. See, for example, Nietzsche, *BGE*, 12. See also Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols*, included in *Twilight of the Idols/The Anti-Christ*, translated by R. J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin, 1990 [1889]), "Reason" in Philosophy', 3, 5. Henceforth cited as *TI*.
 13. Nietzsche, *WP*, 1067.
 14. R. Kevin Hill, *Nietzsche's Critiques: The Kantian Foundations of His Thought* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003), pp. 136ff.
 15. Studies that focus on the historical context of Nietzsche's writings include Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, translated by David Farrell Krell (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1991 [1961]); Robin Small, *Nietzsche in Context* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001); Green, *Nietzsche and the Transcendental Tradition*; Hill, *Nietzsche's Critiques: The Kantian Foundations of His Thought*. Writers who emphasise epistemological and metaphysical themes in Nietzsche's writings include Richard Schacht, *Nietzsche* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995 [1983]); Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*; Poellner, *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*; Hales and Welshon, *Nietzsche's Perspectivism*; Richardson, *Nietzsche's System*.
 16. Mark T. Conard, 'Nietzsche's Kantianism', *International Studies in Philosophy*, Vol. 33, No. 3, 2001, and Peter Poellner, 'Perspectival Truth', in John

- Richardson and Brian Leiter (eds), *Nietzsche* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) address the compatibility of Nietzsche's epistemology and metaphysics, arguing, however, that Nietzsche's epistemology derives from his metaphysics. See also Richardson's *Nietzsche's System*, p. 11. By emphasising the Kantian background to Nietzsche's thought, I argue, in contrast, that his epistemology is prioritised over the metaphysics.
17. See, for example, Nietzsche's description of the human as both natural and anti-natural in Nietzsche, *GS*, 354 and Nietzsche *GM*, III, 25.
 18. Commentators who argue that Nietzsche's perspectivism does not entitle him to make metaphysical claims include Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*, and Danto, *Nietzsche as Philosopher*. Walter Kaufmann argues that the will to power is compatible with Nietzsche's perspectivism by reducing the status of the will to power to that of an empirical theory in psychology, which he maintains is compatible with perspectivism in a similar manner to other empirical theories. Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974), p. 206.
 19. Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Volume 3.
 20. According to Heidegger, Nietzsche accepts Kant's notion of truth as correctness but contends that correctness is a value estimation, in particular an expression of the conditions of preservation and growth as conditions of life. The biologism entailed in the appeal to conditions of life, Heidegger argues, is grounded in the metaphysics of the will to power. See Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, Volume 3, pp. 32–7.
 21. Nietzsche, *GS*, 333, 355. See also Nietzsche, *TI*, 'The Four Great Errors', 3.
 22. See, for example, Bernd Magnus, *Nietzsche's Existential Imperative* (London: Indiana University Press, 1978); Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, translated by Hugh Tomlinson (London: Athlone Press, 1992 [1962]); Ken Gemes, 'Nietzsche's Critique of Truth', in Richardson and Leiter (eds), *Nietzsche*; Reginster, *The Affirmation of Life: Nietzsche on Overcoming Nihilism*.
 23. Nietzsche, *WP*, 3. Elsewhere he writes of the 'self-overcoming of morality through truthfulness' (Nietzsche, *EH*, 'Why I am a Destiny', 3). For further passages where Nietzsche argues for the importance of knowledge, see, for example, Nietzsche, *HAH*, Volume I, 'Tokens of Higher and Lower Culture', 252, 288, 292, and Nietzsche, *GS*, 14, 242, 249, 324, 343.
 24. Nietzsche, *WP*, 585.
 25. *Ibid.*, 333.
 26. Nietzsche, *EH*, 'Why I am a Destiny', 5.
 27. Nietzsche's unpublished notes contain several outlines for a planned but never completed reevaluation of values. *The Anti-Christ* is the first book of this reevaluation.
 28. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Anti-Christ*, included in *Twilight of the Idols/The Anti-Christ*, translated by R. J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin, 1990 [1895]), 2. Henceforth cited as *AC*.
 29. *Ibid.*, p. 104. Deleuze argues that Nietzsche replaces Kant's transcendental critique with genealogy, fully realising the project of immanent critique attempted but ultimately unexecuted by Kant. According to Deleuze, Kant fails to realise this project because he 'lacked a method which permitted reason to be judged from the inside without giving it the task of being its own judge'. Deleuze maintains that Kant's conception of critique 'saw critique as a force which should be brought to bear on all claims to knowledge and truth, but not on knowledge and truth themselves'. Therefore, Kant's critique 'begins by believing in what it criticises'. Nietzsche's will to power, however, as a genetic and genealogical principle realises the project of immanent critique because it requires a genesis of reason

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- itself and the forces of reason. Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, pp. 89–94. Although Deleuze's immanentist interpretation is compelling, his juxtaposition of truth and value, reducing non-transcendent truths to expressions of value, is nevertheless guilty of committing Nietzsche to the very oppositional thinking that he aims to avoid.
30. *Ibid.*, pp. 62–3.
 31. Nietzsche, *EH*, 'The Birth of Tragedy', 2. At times Nietzsche argues that we need to create self-conscious fictions that are capable of motivating us to act. However, writing in *The Gay Science* that we choose fictions 'out of profundity' (Nietzsche, *GS*, Preface, 4), Nietzsche argues that their self-conscious character presupposes truth and knowledge (see also Nietzsche, *BGE*, 39).
 32. Christoph Cox, *Nietzsche: Naturalism and Interpretation* (London: University of California Press, 1999), pp. 6–7.
 33. See John Wilcox, *Truth and Value in Nietzsche* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 1974). Wilcox appropriately terms Nietzsche's metaphysics a 'speculative cosmology' or 'metaphysics in the empirical sense' (*ibid.*, p. 120).
 34. In *BGE*, 210 Nietzsche describes philosophy as an 'experiment' that incorporates both a strict methodology and high standards.
 35. See Bernd Magnus, 'The Use and Abuse of *The Will to Power*', in Solomon and Higgins (eds), *Reading Nietzsche*, pp. 218–35. See also Wayne Klein, *Nietzsche and the Promise of Philosophy* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1997), pp. 181–99; and Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth and Philosophy*, pp. 25–7.
 36. Magnus, 'The Use and Abuse of *The Will to Power*', p. 225.
 37. Schacht, *Nietzsche*, p. xii.
 38. Richard Schacht, *Making Sense of Nietzsche: Reflections Timely and Untimely* (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1995), pp. 118–19.
 39. Friedrich Nietzsche, 'The Philosopher: Reflections on the Struggle between Art and Knowledge', paragraph 159 (1872), in *Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's*, edited and translated by Daniel Breazeale (London: Humanities Press, 1993).
 40. Karl Jaspers, *Nietzsche: An Introduction to the Understanding of his Philosophical Activity* (Baltimore, MD and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1997 [1936]), especially Introduction.
 41. For Nietzsche's description of his style as 'esoteric', see Nietzsche, *BGE*, 30, 39, 43.