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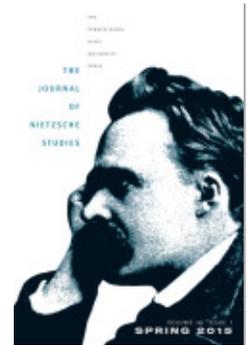
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Open Letter to Bret Davis: Letter on Egoism: Will to Power  
as Interpretation

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## Discussion

### Open Letter to Bret Davis

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#### Letter on Egoism: Will to Power as Interpretation

GRAHAM PARKES

Vienna, February 15, 2014

Dear Bret,

Some thought it shouldn't be done this way, that it wouldn't work, but I'm going ahead anyway. It wasn't feeling right, to be writing about someone I've known for so long things like "Davis misunderstands the role of the ego. . . ." So here goes, with my response to your lengthy essay "Zen after Zarathustra: The Problem of the Will in the Confrontation between Nietzsche and Buddhism," which appeared in these pages almost ten years ago.<sup>1</sup>

As I've said already in public, I think the essay is a landmark in comparative studies of Nietzsche and Zen, with an appropriate focus on Keiji Nishitani's insightful reading of Nietzsche on the topic of nihilism and its self-overcoming. The treatment of the relevant Buddhist and Zen ideas is, not surprisingly, exemplary and richly instructive. But it's also a questionable essay: you begin with a series of five questions, end with a series of six, and drop in another seventy question marks along the way (some of them in quotations), which often make it difficult to determine what you really want to say about the relations between Zen and Zarathustra. Your decision to enact a *confrontation* between Nietzsche and Buddhism leads to a confrontational reading of Nietzsche as advocating "the egoism of the will to power" (113), which of course distances him from Buddhism and Zen.<sup>2</sup> This procedure highlights the contrasts between the two sides, which are only to be expected in view of Nietzsche's quite different historical, cultural, philosophical, and personal situation from that of, say, Dōgen or Nishitani. An investigation of parallels or consonances, by contrast, often reveals the unexpected, and prompts the question of how on earth Nietzsche keeps coming up with ideas about how to live that are so like the Buddhists'.

But before I get down to my response, let me say something general about readings of Nietzsche. In view of the size of the corpus, Nietzsche must be regarded as one of the larger elephants in philosophy, and we blind men consequently give many differing accounts of how he really is. There's the Nietzsche

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according to analytic philosophers, the postmodern/deconstructionist Nietzsche, Nietzsche as interpreted by the Chinese, and so forth. But there are two that are of particular interest here: let's call them Nietzsche A (short for Nietzsche as the Antibuddha) and Nietzsche B (Nietzsche as advocate of the Bodhisattva ideal). I've published a fair amount advocating Nietzsche B, not claiming that's the whole or only Nietzsche, but presenting a coherent view of Nietzsche that's in the spirit of what we know of the man's life as well as his work.<sup>3</sup> The multiple pairs of questions your essay keeps posing—Is Nietzsche A? or is he B?—tend to come down on the side of A, dismissing the B-like aspects as peripheral or insignificant. Although your interpretation is based on a comprehensive reading of his texts, you consistently overlook or ignore key aspects of his thinking that are consonant with Buddhist ideas, and on occasion misread his writings.

Not being sure that readers of *JNS* are ready for many more pages on this topic before they even get to your response, I'll focus on two key issues that I think you misrepresent: the status of the "I" (*das Ich*), or ego, and the nature of will, willing, and will to power. At the end I'll discuss a few consonances between Nietzsche and Zen that I think deserve further thought.

### The Status of the Ego

Toward the end of your section "Buddhism Contra Nietzsche as Will-full Nihilism," you say, "we need to ask whether a decisive gap remains between Nishitani's standpoint of Zen and Nietzsche's philosophy of the will to power over the question of egoism" (111). Good question. You begin to answer it by remarking, correctly, that "the 'ego' as a given substantial entity, to be sure, exists for Nietzsche no more than it does for Buddhism," and that Nietzsche regards the subject as a "multiplicity" that needs to be organized somehow (112). So far, so good. But then, with respect to *Beyond Good and Evil* aphorism 19, you write,

While "our body is but a social structure composed of many souls," the ego is constructed by subjecting weaker "under-souls" or "under-wills" to a stronger ruling will. . . . In short, while for Nietzsche there is no ego *as a given*, there is *the task of constructing an ego*, of organizing the plurality of disparate impulses by submitting them to the rule of a commanding will to power. / Buddhism, on the other hand, speaks directly against the willful construction of an ego.

Here's a confrontation, then: while Nietzsche is intensely concerned with "*the task of constructing an ego*," Buddhism is dead against such a project. But where do you get this idea about Nietzsche? He never talks about the task of constructing an ego, and the passages you cite in support of this idea instead portray the ego as a philosophically unhelpful fiction.

For example, in *BGE* 17 Nietzsche writes that "the honest old I" has evaporated into the little "it" that we are misled into positing when confronted with some kind of action: seduced by grammar, we think there must be some subject doing

the acting, when in fact there isn't any such thing. In *KSA* 12:9[98], Nietzsche demonstrates the vacuity of the idea of the "ego as substance." And the "I" is mentioned only once in *BGE* 19, in connection with "what is most strange about willing." Insofar as "a human being who wills commands something in him that obeys, or that he thinks obeys [. . .] we are always both the commanders and the obeyers"; and yet we tend to dismiss and deceive ourselves over this duality "by means of the synthetic concept of the 'I.'" This little word I is what misleads us into regarding the *complexity* of the will "as a unity," rather than a more or less organized interaction among multiple members of the society of souls that each of us is. There's no need to worry that a strong will in this context will harm others, since all the commanding and obeying are going on *within* the individual.

You go on to argue that for Nietzsche—in contrast to Buddhism, which aims at a "disintegration of the willful ego"—this would be "a decadent 'disintegration of the instincts,' and decadence paves the road to nihilism." You're surely right to say that Nietzsche is concerned that the "disintegration of the ego" may lead to decadence: he often warns against the chaos, weakness, and mediocrity that can result—what I have called, adapting Hegel, "bad multiplicity."<sup>4</sup> And the way to avoid bad multiplicity is indeed to "organize the plurality of disparate impulses"—but it's misleading to say this is done by "submitting them to the rule of a commanding will to power," which also misses the interesting question of who's doing the submitting. To overcome nihilism, according to your Nietzsche, there is a need for "the willing of a new organization for the ego and its world," as well as an "affirmation of the egoism of the will to power" as "an egoistic force that expands the domain of the ego by subjugating others to its rule" (112–13). I usually try to be a Yes-sayer, but in this case I have to say: No, no, and no.

Unfortunately you were laboring here under the immense disadvantage of not having consulted the comprehensive discussion of this topic in a book called *Composing the Soul*, which devotes over a hundred pages to this issue.<sup>5</sup> Nietzsche does in a sense take the *I* "as a given": but it's something we acquire willy-nilly through being socialized, and which helps us cope with life in society. But for Nietzsche this "pale fiction" (as he calls it in an aphorism titled "Sham-Egoism") is a mere "phantom of ego formed in the heads of those around us and then communicated back to us." And in "The So-Called 'I'" he characterizes the *I* as a fallacious "opinion about ourselves" (*D* 105, 115). Throughout his career Nietzsche regards the *I* as something that stands in the way of one's "becoming what one is." Let me cite just three examples, from early, middle, and late periods.

In *The Birth of Tragedy* he writes of the "I-ness" of the "waking, empirically real human being" as a defense against the influence of Dionysus, and as something that prevents one from living creatively (*BT* 5). In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, "On the Despisers of the Body," Zarathustra aims to reduce his audience's pride in the "I" by characterizing its subjection to the body, as "the Self": the body is "ruler of the I"; it mocks the *I* for its "proud leaping . . . of thought"; it is "the

leading-reins of the I and the prompter of its conceptions” (Z I: “Despisers”). And in *Twilight of the Idols* he gives a distinctly Buddhist-sounding account of the parallel development of the concepts of the “I” and of things: “[Human reason] believes in the ‘I,’ in the I as Being, in the I as substance, and projects its belief in the I-substance onto all things—thereby *creating* the concept of ‘thing.’ [. . .] These days we know that [will] is only a word” (TI “Reason in Philosophy” 5).<sup>6</sup> When this belief in the I-substance is undermined, the concept of the “thing” is correspondingly weakened, and what comes to the fore as substance recedes is (as in Buddhism) *relationships*. As we free ourselves from “the error of the I,” we come to appreciate “the affinities and antagonisms among things, *multiplicities* therefore and their laws.”<sup>7</sup> All this corresponds to the idea of “no-self” (*anatman*) that is central to Buddhism and which, on the basis of a radically relational ontology, applies equally to the *I* and to things.

In the average case, Nietzsche would admit, the organization is effected well enough by the sham or phantom ego that we get from the process of socialization. But this pale fiction cramps one’s style and stifles creativity, and “one becomes what one is” by seeing through it, *deconstructing* the controlling ego in favor of a richer psychical regime that does justice to the soul’s multiplicity. This is why it’s not a matter of “subjecting weaker ‘under-souls’ or ‘under-wills’ to a stronger ruling will”—or at least not to any kind of ego-will. A notebook entry from the time when Nietzsche was first deconstructing the ego as ruler reads: “The I is not the attitude of one being to several (drives, thoughts, etc.) but the ego is a *plurality of personlike forces*, of which now this one now that one stands in the foreground as ego and looks at the others.”<sup>8</sup> Plurality, or multiplicity, rules. Within the “mortal soul” understood as a “subject-multiplicity” or “social structure of the drives and the affects,” where the intellect is “only a certain disposition of the drives toward each other,” various groups of drives acting as “regents at the head of a community” (an idea found in Herder) can order the rest of the drives under a regime of what I’ve called “serial tyranny by committee” (because the composition of the ruling group changes over time). In the final phase, which Nietzsche styles “Dionysian,” the regime can be relaxed and the will unharnessed, so that protracted self-discipline gives way to a “natural” spontaneity.<sup>9</sup>

You end your section on “Will-full Nihilism” by citing this notorious passage from *Beyond Good and Evil*: “Life itself is *essentially* appropriation, injury, overpowering what is alien and weaker, suppression, hardness, imposition of one’s own forms, incorporation and at least, at its mildest, exploitation. . . . Life simply is will to power” (113).<sup>10</sup> I hope it’s becoming clear by now that your gloss on this—“the will to power [is] an egoistic force that expands the domain of the ego by subjugating others to its rule”—while it has some support in the text, is misleading in its introduction of the ego. Yes, it’s a jungle out there, some of it, and life as will to power does involve appropriation and so forth—but this doesn’t mean that Nietzsche is advocating a human life, especially a

philosophical one, dedicated to mugging, raping, and pillaging. The interesting question, which I'll address shortly, concerns the way to a creative and fulfilling life in the context of life as will to power; and Nietzsche's answer is certainly not that we expand the domain of the ego.

In a note from 1881 he recommends understanding ourselves not as individuals but as "life-systems" [*Lebenssysteme*], radically multiple beings with a whole lot going on beneath the level of consciousness. The note ends in an uncharacteristic explosion of emphases and exclamation marks. "*One must stop feeling oneself as a phantastical ego! Learn step by step to get rid of the supposed individual! To detect the errors of the ego! To see through egoism as an error! Not to understand its opposite as altruism! That would just be love of other supposed individuals! No! Get over 'me' and 'you'! Feel cosmically!*"<sup>11</sup> *Kosmisch empfinden!* Phew.

Some have dismissed this fragment as an aberration, but Nietzsche's insistence on the fantasy of the ego and the error of the individual persists to the end. In *Twilight of the Idols* he emphasizes that "[t]he individual [. . .] is after all an error: it is not anything in itself [. . . but] is rather the entire line of humanity all the way up to itself" (*TI* "Forays of an Untimely One" 33). And as the entire line of humanity it will be inextricably related to all other humans and others.

In your next section, "Elevated Egoism and the Ambivalent Self-Overcoming of the Will to Power," you turn for a while to a kinder, gentler aspect of Nietzsche, and discuss some affinities between this side of his thinking and Buddhism. You acknowledge a "whole and holy" selfishness in Nietzsche, which Zarathustra calls "the bestowing virtue" (*ZI*: "On the Gift-Giving Virtue"), and ask whether this virtue doesn't "remind us of the first of the 'perfections' of the Bodhisattva, the 'perfection of giving' without return" (114). It certainly does (and I'll say something about this later). You go on to acknowledge that there are various forms of egoism for Nietzsche, some of which "depict only degenerative forms of the will to power," and then you quote these passages from "On Those Who Are Sublime" (*Z II*), emphasizing all the right parts:

[The sublime one] *must still unlearn even his heroic will*; he shall be elevated for me, not merely sublime: the ether itself should elevate him, the will-less one! . . .

To stand with relaxed muscles and *unharnessed* will: that is most difficult for all of you sublime ones. . . .

And there is no one from whom I want beauty as much as from you who are powerful: let your kindness be your final self-conquest [or, better, "your ultimate self-overpowering"]. . . .

For this is this soul's secret: only when the hero has abandoned her is she approached, in a dream, by—the over-hero. (116–17)

You remark, aptly, that this is "surely one of the high points of Zarathustra's teaching"—but then a few pages later you wonder whether it might not be just another "fable song of madness" after all (117, 122). You wonder this

because you misconstrue the passage as characterizing “the ‘elevated egoism’ of Nietzsche’s overhero” (118)—but why the quote marks around “elevated egoism,” when the German equivalent (*gehobener Egoismus?*) doesn’t appear anywhere, as far as I can tell, in Nietzsche’s texts?

This high point of Zarathustra’s teaching invalidates your reading of will to power as ego-driven. What Zarathustra is saying is that the “heroic will”—associated with the ego—has to be unlearned, that the sublime one has to get over his sublimity and become “will-less,” which he can do by relaxing his hero’s muscles and unharnessing the will from the reins of (and the reign of) the ego.<sup>12</sup> When will to power no longer needs to overpower others physically, it becomes beautiful and—through having overpowered itself—even *kind*. Zarathustra as Bodhisattva. An unpublished note from the period reveals that the soul is Ariadne, who has to be abandoned by Theseus, the hero, before Dionysus, “the Loosener,” can arrive.<sup>13</sup> When Dionysus takes possession of the soul, the heroic ego is gone.

You appreciate that Nietzsche is aiming at letting “a plurality of perspectives” prevail, but because of your attachment to the “elevated egoism” of the overhero you can’t imagine that he could be willing to “let them be” (118). The question arises only if you assume that Theseus doesn’t leave, and that the ego can survive the arrival of Dionysus—but of course he does leave, and the I must disappear in the face of the God of radical multiplicity. When the overhero takes over, the vanished ego isn’t there to “throw its ring around” anything, nor to “subjugate other perspectives,” however subtly.

You go on to worry about “an ambivalence [that] infects the doctrine of ‘perspectivism’ itself,” insofar as “Nietzsche’s perspectivism is explicitly aligned with egoism.” Whoa—wait a minute: the aphorism you cite in support of that last remark (*GS* 162) doesn’t support it at all. It says simply that egoism is a perspectival law of human perception, whereby things close to us appear “large and heavy,” and smaller and lighter with increasing distance. Perhaps you imagine this alignment with egoism because you only see one aspect of Nietzsche’s perspectivism, regarding the validity of the manifold perspectives of other people and creatures (118–19). But if we understand perspectivism in connection with his “experimentalism,” which concerns the way the multiple drives that comprise us interpret the world, and can be best imagined and engaged as persons, another aspect emerges regarding the validity of the perspectives of the manifold persons and creatures *within* each individual. “I have *discovered* for myself that ancient humanity and animality, indeed the entire primal age and past of all sentient being continues in me to create, to love, to hate, to infer [. . .]” (*GS* 54).

This idea is developed in a number of passages from the middle period works, of which this one is representative:

We must deal with things experimentally, now angry with them and now kind to them, being just, passionate, and cold toward them in succession. One [person/drive] addresses things as a policeman, another as a father confessor, a third

as an inquisitive wanderer. Something can be wrested from them now through sympathy, now through force; one person progresses to insight through reverence for their secrets, another through indiscretion and roguishness in explaining their mysteries. (*D* 432; see also 539, 569)<sup>14</sup>

As I've pointed out elsewhere, this dimension of Nietzsche's perspectivism is remarkably reminiscent of Zhuangzi's Daoism, and of the distinctly Zhuangzian perspectivism that Dōgen develops in the *Shōbōgenzō*.<sup>15</sup> For none of these do we ultimately need an ego to orchestrate the various approaches; once the self-discipline is complete, the appropriate persons and perspectives play themselves out on their own.

You write many good things about the killing of the ego and the Great Death in the Zen tradition, citing wonderful passages from the literature to demonstrate the power and reach of that process (121–22). But here you overlook a corresponding theme in Nietzsche: there isn't space to go into here, but I've engaged it at some length elsewhere, through topics such as "The Thought of Death" (*GS* 278), the switch from the "life" to the "death perspective," "a death with open eyes," and the "festival of crossing over to the 'dead' world."<sup>16</sup>

### Will to Power as Interpretation

Toward the end of your section on "Elevated Egoism" you remark on the openness inherent in Nietzsche's perspectivism, and cite with approval the aphorism in *The Joyful Science* 374, where he invites us to entertain the possibility that the world "*may include infinite interpretations*" (119). Indeed: if each individual is capable of interpreting from innumerable perspectives, and we multiply those by the number of individuals. . . . But then you qualify your approval straight away by saying, "Yet, once again, we are told that '*interpretation is itself a means of becoming master of something*' (*The Will to Power* 643) and that the 'organic process' of the will to power demands that other perspectives be brought under the command of a ruling will." This brings us back to the same old "ruling will" refrain—which is a pity because you were almost on to a better alternative just there.

You apparently overlooked the beginning of the passage, which reads, "The will to power *interprets*" (*KSA*:2[148] emphasis in original). And at the beginning of *The Joyful Science* aphorism you quoted about "infinite interpretations," Nietzsche wonders whether "existence without interpretation doesn't become 'meaningless,' or 'nonsense,'" and so "whether all existence isn't essentially *interpreting* existence [ob nicht alles Dasein essentiell ein *auslegendes* Dasein ist]." There we have it: "the world as will to power" (*BGE* 36)—and it's all interpreting.

Nietzsche emphasizes that will to power as self-overcoming is essentially a matter of interpretation and reinterpretation in his last extended discussion of the notion, in *On the Genealogy of Morality*. There he proposes

that things are again and again interpreted by a power superior to them according to new estimations, requisitioned anew, re-formed and converted for new uses; that all goings-on in the organic world are an *overcoming*, a *conquering*, and that in turn all overcoming and conquering is a re-interpreting. [. . .] All purposes, all cases of being useful, are evidence that a will to power has become master of something less powerful and has imposed on it the meaning of a function [. . . which gives rise to] a continuous sign-chain of ever new interpretations. (*GM* II:12)

And then, against Herbert Spencer and his emphasis on reaction and adaptation in evolution, “This misunderstands what is essential to life, its *will to power*; and it overlooks the primacy of the spontaneous forces that seize, encroach, interpret anew, order and shape anew.” These spontaneous forces are evident in all the physical overpowering that goes on in the biosphere, where creatures live by consuming others below them in the food pyramid. But this can also be construed as “*interpreting* existence.” A plant that through its roots absorbs and incorporates minerals from the soil is basically asserting its interpretation of them: “This is now what it means for these to be, or become.” And the pyramidal rock on the shore of Lake Silvaplana where Nietzsche was struck by the thought of eternal return is similarly an interpretation, or laying out (*Auslegung*), of the molecules of which it is composed. It’s this fundamental aspect of will to power as interpretation—all conquering is a reinterpreting—that you continue studiously to ignore, even after I assure you of its centrality.

I note that your citations of ego in connection with will to power are from the unpublished notes, so let’s look at how Nietzsche treats the idea of will to power in his published writings. The term first appears in a speech of Zarathustra’s, “On the Thousand Goals and One,” which begins with his announcing that he has traveled to many lands, and seen what different peoples regard as “good and evil.” “A tablet of things held to be good hangs over every people. Behold, it is the tablet of its overcomings; behold, it is the voice of its will to power” (Z I: “On the Thousand Goals and One”). A people’s will to power grounds its self-understanding, its interpretation of the world as good and evil, and this has to do with its self-overcomings: what is good is “what is indispensable and hard” for the people. Will isn’t individual but collective; not a people’s domination of others but its mastery of itself.

Will to power comes up next in Zarathustra’s speech addressed to the great philosophers, “you who are wisest” (Z II: “On Self-overcoming”). What the wisest call their will to truth, Zarathustra calls their will to power, because they interpret the world in terms of good and evil, creating a world before which they can then kneel. He tells them what he has learned about life, from Life herself: that life is will to power, and as such is willing to *sacrifice itself* for

the sake of power. You acknowledge that in *Zarathustra* “the idea of the will to power is developed in connection with the idea of ‘self-overcoming’” (116), but this key connection gets lost in your enthusiasm for Nietzsche’s “elevated egoism.” There’s nothing ego-driven about will to power, which sacrifices and overcomes itself rather than striving for self-preservation: “The authentic basic life-drive [. . .] aims at *expansion of power*, and in this will it often enough calls self-preservation into question and sacrifices it” (*GS* 349).

Zarathustra claimed earlier to have found “no greater power on earth” than will to power as “praising and blaming” (*Z* I: “On the Thousand Goals and One”). Now we hear him say to the wisest, “Good and evil that are not transitory—there is no such thing! From out of themselves they must overcome themselves again and again.” Although powerful interpretations of the world may hold for a while, they are always superseded.

The last time Zarathustra speaks of will to power is in his pivotal speech “On Redemption” (*Z* II). You’re right to say that Nietzsche calls the traditional revenge against the temporal world as comprising suffering and punishment, which takes the form of “not-willing,” a “fable song of madness” (122). What he is dismissing here is a Schopenhauerian program of denial of the will, or the early Buddhist project of extinction of desire: willing doesn’t need to be annihilated but rather to be *liberated* from such vengeful behavior and expanded beyond the egoistic. This happens through the creative will’s saying to the past, “But thus do I will it”—an absurdity for “the will” as normally understood, which can be exercised only in the present with regard to the future. Such a transformation of willing brings joy, by achieving even more than a reconciliation with impermanence and the unalterable nature of the past: “Something higher than any reconciliation the will that is will to power must will—yet how shall this happen? Who has yet taught it even *das Zurückwollen*?” Zarathustra will later show how the will can learn to “will backward,” by “wanting back” as well.

You read this speech of Zarathustra’s in connection with a note from 1888 that advocates a philosophy that’s “a *Dionysian Yes-saying* to the world as it is, without subtraction, exception, or selection,” and which “wills eternal circulation,” the formula for which is “amor fati” (*KSA* 13:16[32]). But then you return to the eternal worrying: “The question is whether this ‘love of fate’ twists free of the will to interpretive power over the play of multiple perspectives, or whether it is the triumph of the will to power that has learned even to ‘will backwards,’ to say to everything: you are thus only because thus I will you to be” (123). Quite a provocation there—the allusion to Riefenstahl and Hitler—but never mind. As for the dismal alternative: willing backward is creative not in a megalomaniacal way (everything is only because I will it to be) but rather in an artistic or poetical mode. The past need no longer be understood as “fragment and riddle and cruel coincidence” because as a human being Zarathustra can

become “a composer-poet and riddle-guesser and the redeemer of coincidence.” As a *Dichter* he can compose and condense the fragmentary chaos of the past into something that makes sense, insofar as he understands how “all things are knotted together” (Z III: “On the Vision and the Riddle” 2).

It’s the parts in this context that don’t fit, what we reject, that need to be willed in retrospect—those aspects of life, and the self, to which one has to say “Thus do I will it.” Nishitani explains this well in his discussion of *amor fati* in *The Self-Overcoming of Nihilism*. “Even that which negates and obstructs life is affirmed as useful for life. . . . To call this innermost nature wherein one becomes oneself *amor fati* means that what is not oneself—what has prevented one from being oneself—is appropriated into the self and transformed into something uniquely one’s own (*eigen*).”<sup>17</sup> Those people and events that prevented us from becoming ourselves, blocked us, stood in the way, and which we therefore rejected, dismissed as not ourselves, as absolutely other rather than own—they all need to be acknowledged as belonging, as indispensable to our having become who we are; they need to be loved, as our fate.

As for the less dismal alternative, you present it as “whether this ‘love of fate’ twists free of the will to interpretive power over the play of multiple perspectives.” No, not quite—since nothing can twist free from the world “as will to power and nothing besides” and still be. It’s rather a transformation of the interpreting will to power that opens the personal out into the impersonal: once I realize that everything that has brought me to this point, everything that has led up to this moment (and that’s the entire past), is now poised to further interpret itself, I can allow the full range of appropriate perspectives to play itself out spontaneously. Again, Nishitani expresses this well: “Every action of the self in this context is influenced by all things and in turn influences all things. All things become the fate of the self, and the self becomes the fate of all things. At such a fundamental level the world moves at one with the self, and the self moves at one with the world.”<sup>18</sup> As Nietzsche himself puts it in *Twilight of the Idols*, “The fatality of one’s being cannot be separated from the fatality of all that was and will be. [. . .] One is necessary, one is a piece of fate, one belongs to the whole, one is in the whole” (TI “The Four Great Errors” 8).

You pose another double question about love of fate: “Is this love the shattering transformation of the will to power or is it its consummation?” As expected,

It would appear to be the latter insofar as: “To impose upon becoming the character of being—that is the supreme will to power. . . . That everything recurs is the most extreme *approximation of a world of becoming to a world of being*” (*The Will to Power* 617, trans. modified). Why does Nietzsche, the philosopher of becoming, feel compelled to once again approximate a world of being? It is not without reason that Heidegger suggests that what is revealed here is Nietzsche’s own “form of ill will against sheer transiency and thereby a highly spiritualized spirit of revenge.” (123–24)

But this is Heidegger at his most perverse! While writing this note Nietzsche surely felt no compulsion “to once again approximate a world of being.” When he says that the highest will to power “imprints” the character of Being upon Becoming, he’s referring to the way philosophers interpret the eternal flux as “being this way,” in treatises that affirm “this is how it is.” But when a philosopher like Nietzsche in a world of Becoming affirms eternal recurrence, he is bringing this world as close as it gets (“*die extremste Annäherung*”) to a world of Being—and certainly not because he’s unhappy with Becoming and yearns for something enduring. Of this kind of thinking on Nietzsche’s part, Heidegger asks, “Does such thinking overcome prior reflection, overcome the spirit of revenge? Or does there not lie concealed in this very *stamping* [of the character of Being upon Becoming . . .] a form of ill will *against* sheer transiency, and thereby a highly spiritualized spirit of revenge?”<sup>19</sup> (That “Does it A? Or does it B?” form of double question seems strangely familiar somehow!) Heidegger denies that he is “imputing something as most proper to [Nietzsche] which is precisely what he wants to overcome”; but in the light of the rest of that unpublished note (and Nietzsche’s published works) to suggest that he remains possessed by the spirit of revenge against impermanence is insane, and Heidegger’s denial lame. Zarathustra is after all the great advocate of impermanence, and throughout his subsequent oeuvre Nietzsche never wavers in his celebration of “the innocence of Becoming.”<sup>20</sup>

Indeed, Nishitani quotes with approval these words from four sentences later in Nietzsche’s note, which reinforce what I was saying earlier about willing without ego: “Becoming as inventing, willing, *negating the self* as self-overcoming: *no subject*, but a doing, positive, creative.”<sup>21</sup> And in another note from the period he associates this kind of subjectless creativity with Dionysus and impermanence: “Impermanence could be interpreted as enjoyment of the procreative and destructive energies, as constant creation” (KSA 12:2[106]).

But let’s return to will to power. That mention in “On Redemption” was the last in *Zarathustra*—the focus then shifts to the thought of eternal recurrence—but the idea comes back at the beginning of *Beyond Good and Evil*, the book Nietzsche wrote to explain the ideas of *Zarathustra* (though in the mode of No-saying, as you say, rather than Yes-saying). As soon as a philosophy takes itself too seriously and begins to believe itself: “It always creates the world in its own image, it cannot do otherwise; philosophy is itself this tyrannical drive, the most spiritual [*geistigste*] will to power, to ‘creation of the world,’ to the *causa prima*” (BGE 9). Philosophy, which purports to offer the profoundest and most comprehensive interpretations of the world, is the most spiritual will to power; whereas the least spiritual will to power exercises “appropriation, injury, suppression, hardness, imposition, incorporation and exploitation” physically, in the material world. (Roughly speaking, since the idea of will to power undermines the traditional opposition between spirit and matter.) Given a continuum of forms

of power, from brute force at one end to philosophy at the other, we see that Nietzsche deprecates the former and advocates the latter—which is ultimately the power of *interpretation*. For example, the kind of power exercised by Hitler and Stalin and Mao Zedong, which ended abruptly with their own deaths, is paltry in comparison with the power of Socrates and Jesus (and perhaps even Nietzsche), whose interpretations of the world continue to be powerful, holding sway long after their personal demise.

In *BGE* 13, Nietzsche turns to biology and a less spiritual form of will to power. He denies that “the drive for self-preservation is the cardinal drive of an organism,” claiming that what the living wants to do is rather “*discharge* its strength” or “*let out* its force [seine Kraft *auslassen*]”—insofar as “life itself is will to power.” He writes of will to power again in aphorism 22, this time to characterize the whole of nature. Dismissing as a bad interpretation the idea from physics that the natural world is governed by “laws” before which all things are equal, he suggests a better interpretation, still couched in political metaphor, in terms of the “tyranny” of “claims of power.” Like the scientific interpretation, this one also regards the world as having “a ‘necessary’ and ‘calculable’ course”—not because it is governed by laws but rather insofar as “every power at every moment draws its ultimate consequence.” Granted, of course, Nietzsche adds at the end, that this too is merely an interpretation. And *BGE* 23 considers will to power, this time in the realm of the human soul (that “social structure of the drives and affects”) by understanding psychology as “morphology and *evolution-teaching of will to power*.” The idea that every power at every moment draws its ultimate consequence is reminiscent of Dōgen, especially when read in conjunction with a note from a year later: “Becoming must appear justified in every moment: what is present must absolutely not be justified because of something future” (*KSA* 13, p. 34).

Nietzsche’s ultimate presentation of the teaching of will to power in *BGE* 36 is prefigured in a well-known note from 1885. Parts of this sketch are worth looking at here, since they’re reminiscent of the Daoist idea of the field of *dao* and *de* (the Way and Potencies), and Nishitani’s characterization of the field of emptiness as “a field of force.”<sup>22</sup>

This world: a monster of forces, without beginning, without end [. . .] forces everywhere, and as a play of forces one and “many” at the same time, accumulating here and at the same time decreasing there, an ocean of forces storming and streaming into themselves, eternally self-transforming, eternally rushing back [. . .] flowing out from the simplest forms into the most manifold, from the stillest, most rigid, and coldest into the most incandescent, wildest, and most self-contradictory, and then again returning home from abundance to the simple, from the play of contradictions to the pleasure of harmony [. . .] this *Dionysian* world of mine, eternally creating itself anew, eternally destroying itself [. . .] — *This world is the will to power—and nothing besides!* And you yourselves are also this will to power—and nothing besides! (*KSA* 11:38[12])<sup>23</sup>

There's no point in asking, as you do, whether there's "a movement in Nietzsche's thought that leads to a self-overcoming of the will to power" (115). Life as will to power is self-overcoming, but there's no such thing in Nietzsche as "Zarathustra's self-overcoming of the will to power" (90) because will to power is the whole world, and "*there is nothing outside the whole!*"—just as there is nothing in Daoism like "the self-overcoming of *qi*," because the world is already understood as a field of *qi*, or *dao* and *de*.<sup>24</sup>

Whereas the note from 1885 is a lyrical expatiation on Nietzsche's experiences of "this Dionysian world" of his, the treatment of will to power in *BGE* 36 (which builds on the establishment of will to power as the energy behind philosophy, biology, physics, and psychology) is tightly structured and succinctly argued.<sup>25</sup>

Granted that nothing else is "given" as real other than the world of our desires and passions, that we can get down or up to no other "reality" than just the reality of our drives—for thinking is only one way these drives behave toward one another—is it not permitted to perform the experiment and ask the question: whether this "given" is not *sufficient* for understanding on the basis of something like in kind [Seines-Gleichen] the so-called mechanistic (or "material") world as well?

Nietzsche envisages the whole world, including what we call the inorganic realm, as being "of the same rank of reality" as our drives and the drives of all that lives—as will to power, a world of ceaseless affecting and effecting, "will working on will" and every power "drawing its ultimate consequence at every moment." All drives interpreting other drives. Granted that one can begin to explain the world this way, then "one would thereby have gained the right to determine all effective force univocally as: *will to power*. The world seen from within, the world determined and described according to its 'intelligible character'—it would be precisely 'will to power' and nothing besides. —" The core of the experiment [*Versuch*] Nietzsche has performed here is a hypothesis, something set down as a basis on which to think about the nature of the world, that would unify the fields of philosophy, biology, physics, psychology—and even religion, as the next little aphorism suggests.<sup>26</sup> Furthermore, the *Nachlass* note suggests that Nietzsche has seen "this Dionysian world" of his, "a play of forces one and 'many' at the same time," from within. He has discovered for himself that our drive-life is possible only because it interprets and is continuous with the interpreting drives of everything else. But of course this isn't something one can reach through philosophical argument: like the "field of emptiness" discussed by Nishitani, it has to be experienced.

### A Final Note, on Resonances

There are some more questions of Nietzsche interpretation I'd like to raise, but I think it's better to pull back for a wider focus before concluding, and leave room for a few remarks about the point of comparisons of Nietzsche and Zen.

It has always seemed to me that the great benefit of such comparisons and contrasts is a clearer and fuller understanding of what both sides are saying, and this is surely forthcoming in the present case.<sup>27</sup> To approach Nietzsche from a Buddhist perspective—while one must beware of the dangers of projection, of reading ideas into the text that aren't there—can bring to light hitherto unnoticed aspects of his thought. A paradigmatic case (prior to Nishitani's work) is Tetsurō Watsuji's monumental *Study of Nietzsche* from 1913, which, in spite of its overly vitalistic and anti-intellectualist reading, sees the importance for Nietzsche of the ideas of the ego as fiction and of will to power as connecting the individual self's activity with that of the cosmos. Watsuji was sensitized to these issues in Nietzsche, the significance of which he highlighted decades before any other commentator, thanks to his acquaintance with Buddhist philosophy.<sup>28</sup>

The significant parallels between Nietzsche and Zen on the topics of non-ego prompt one to ask, as you did, about the correspondence between the Bodhisattva's compassionate "giving without return" and Zarathustra's "bestowing virtue." You cited a few appropriate lines from Zarathustra's Prologue in this context, which is certainly the right place to begin. I've written on this elsewhere, so I'll say just a few words about it here.<sup>29</sup> As "the cup that wants to overflow," Zarathustra realizes that he himself is not the source of the golden "delight" that he will pour out into the world, which emanates from the "Great Star" (no God) that is the sun. He wants to "become empty" and go down from the mountain-top and "become human again" because of his love for human beings. His first words of teaching, addressed to the people in the market place—"I teach to you the Overhuman: the human is something that shall be overcome"—intimate an overcoming of not only egocentric but also anthropocentric perspectives that is comparable to Mahayana Buddhist practices (*Z* Prologue, 1–3).

There are admittedly only a few instances in Zarathustra where it's appropriate to translate *Mitleid* literally, as "compassion," but what corresponds to the compassion of the Bodhisattva are the many loves of Zarathustra. His speeches overflow with declarations of his love—for humankind, the forest, the Overhuman, the earth, his disciples, his enemies, his children's land, freedom, his work, the sea, a solitary tree, himself, blood, Eternity. . . . The list goes on and on.<sup>30</sup>

In your discussion of "The Activity of Life Reaffirmed: The Doing of Non-doing and the Samadhi of Play" (99–101), you cite Zen and Daoism and Nishitani but make no mention of Nietzsche. Yet he belongs right in there, as I've shown elsewhere: let me say a little more, with reference to the end of the Third Part of *Zarathustra*.<sup>31</sup>

Zarathustra's boundless love of humankind and heaven and earth grants him the widest possible perspective as a basis for activity in keeping with the world as will to power. In order to appreciate "will to power, which is the will of life," one has to be a student of nature, a *Naturforscher*, who is capable of "getting out of one's human nook" (*GS* 349). Zarathustra himself manages this, as evidenced by the conversation he has with his soul right after the

culminating presentation of the thought of eternal return. This conversation “On the Great Yearning” (Z III) was originally called “Ariadne,” to highlight the Dionysian dimensions Zarathustra has finally attained through dissolving all boundaries between self and world, and among the horizons of present, future, and past. Zarathustra had already praised “the most comprehensive soul” as “the soul that loves itself the most, in which all things have their streaming and counter-streaming and ebb and flood” (Z III: “On Old and New Tablets” 19). Now he says to his own soul,

O my soul, I taught you to say “Today” as well as “Someday” and “Formerly” and to dance your round-dance over every here and there and yonder.

O my soul, I redeemed you from all little nooks, I swept dust, spiders, and twilight away from you. [. . .]

O my soul, now there is nowhere a soul that would be more loving and more comprehensive and encompassing! Where would future and past be closer together than in you? (Z III: “On the Great Yearning”)

Having rid himself of the “I with its proud leapings,” Zarathustra has been able to realize himself as “the most comprehensive soul,” whose activities are now coextensive with those of the world and time. The equivalent for him of “(the doing of) non-doing” would be not only to ebb and flow with all things but also to stream, *strömen*, with their “streaming and counter-streaming”—an energetic but relaxed and attentive “flow,” which requires practice.

A major difference between the circumstances of Nietzsche and of thinkers in the Zen tradition is that Nietzsche never belonged to a school or other intellectual community (much though he longed to find, or found, one) but spent his most productive years in relative solitude. Realizing the limitations of purely theoretical speculation for discovering how to live, the East Asian philosophical traditions have tended to form communities engaged in physical *practice*—something that isn’t considered necessary for doing philosophy in the Western traditions.<sup>32</sup> But Nietzsche is an exception in this respect, not only because he thought and wrote about the body but also insofar as bodily practice was essential to his thinking.

In a discussion late in his career of the practice of self-cultivation (a concern that brings him close to the Confucian and Daoist, as well as the Buddhist, thinkers) Nietzsche emphasizes how the process is above all a matter of training the body.

One must be careful not to misunderstand the methods: a mere disciplining of feelings and thoughts amounts to almost nothing [. . .] one must first persuade *the body*. [. . .] A strict maintaining of significant and refined behavior [. . .] eventually becomes *internalized*. It is decisive for the fate of peoples and humanity that one begin inculcating culture in the proper place—not in the “soul” [. . .] the *proper* place is the body, gestures, diet, physiology; the rest will follow. (TI “Forays” 47)

Two aphorisms later he praises Goethe for having “disciplined himself into a totality” and for his ability to live his ideal “of a strong, highly cultured human being, adept in a range of bodily skills [*Leiblichkeiten*], self-controlled and with reverence for himself, who can dare to grant himself the full range and richness of naturalness, and who is strong enough for this freedom” (*TI* “Forays” 49). Here is a paragon of the “renaturalized human being” who has accomplished the “return to nature” understood as “a coming up—into a high, free and even terrible nature and naturalness,” in whom prolonged self-discipline issues in a free spontaneity, where the mighty drives and affects naturally go “like good servants [. . .] where our best inclines.”<sup>33</sup>

The core practice of Zen is *zazen*, sitting meditation, which Nietzsche may seem to repudiate when he advises: “Sit as little as possible; and don’t give credence to any thought that wasn’t conceived outside in the open air when the body is moving freely—and the muscles too are celebrating a feast and festival” (*EH* “Clever” 1). But here Nietzsche is contradicting Flaubert, who claimed that one can think and write only while seated: “Only thoughts gained through walking have any value” (*TI* “Aphorisms and Arrows” 34). Zen sitting doesn’t involve thinking or writing, and though the musculature is relaxed and not moving, the stillness maintains a continuity with the free movement that follows the session.

To sit *zazen* is to establish oneself at the less active end of the continuum between doing nothing except breathing, and attending to the breath, and dynamic activity in everyday life—which becomes just as much an opportunity for enlightenment as sitting *zazen*. (In the Zen tradition *kinhin*, walking meditation, is an intermediary practice.) The point of Nietzsche’s physical regimen was to help him establish himself at the more active end of the continuum, by dint of hiking “seven or eight hours” a day. About the experience of writing the third part of *Zarathustra* while walking in the hills along the Mediterranean coast near Nice, he writes, “My muscular agility has always been at its best when the richest creative energies were flowing through me. The body is inspired: let us leave the ‘soul’ out of it. [. . .] I could often be seen dancing; at that time, I could hike in the mountains for seven or eight hours at a time without any thought of tiredness. I slept well, I laughed a lot—I had the most perfect sprightliness and patience” (*EH* “Z” 4). With the muscles working at their most supple pitch, the body is experienced not as recalcitrant matter but as energetic flow—streaming with the streaming.

By keeping to ways that were safe and secure—whether around Sils-Maria, or in the lanes of Venice or the streets of Genoa—Nietzsche was able to practice a vigorous form of walking meditation that allowed him to hear the “inner voices” of his deepest thoughts rather than the superficial chatter of his ego. As he writes in a letter from 1883, “I am up in the Engadin again, for the *third* time, and again I feel that here and nowhere else is my proper home and place of incubation. Ah, how much everything lies hidden in me still, and wants to become word and form! Only here is it quiet and high and lonely enough for me to be able to

perceive my innermost voices!”<sup>34</sup> And whatever thoughts may come when the chatter of consciousness has quieted down will be issues from his famous *Es denkt* (BGE 17) rather than opinions of the egocentric self.

The “incubation” he mentions here is a form of “still” practice for Nietzsche, one that more closely corresponds to the sitting meditation of Zen. As in the religious practice of sleeping in a sacred place in order to receive a special dream or vision, Nietzsche was accustomed—and during his frequent migraine attacks obliged—to lie still for long periods of time.<sup>35</sup> As he writes in *Ecce Homo*, “Sickness gradually liberated me [. . . and] likewise gave me the right to a complete change in my habits. [. . .] It bestowed on me the *compulsion* to lie still, to be idle, to wait and be patient. . . . But all that means, to think!” (EH “HH” 4). Nietzsche shares this practice with Zarathustra, who is apt to lie down before receiving a major insight or vision.<sup>36</sup> The riddle that follows the initial vision of eternal return is emblematic: Zarathustra first sees “in the most desolate moonlight” that “*a man was lying there!*” This doppelgänger, “the shepherd,” bites off the head of the serpent of nihilism and springs up: “No longer shepherd, no longer human—one transformed, illumined, who *laughed!*” (Z III: “On the Vision and the Riddle”)

And yes, I’ve neglected the contrastive aspects of the comparison, since you have outlined them well and in exhaustive detail. Of course there are differences, most of them deriving from the differences in historical and cultural situation I mentioned earlier. But I think it’s significant that the main ones have to do with politics, which isn’t much of a topic for Zen thinkers, rather than how best to live one’s life, which is a concern that both sides share. Nor do I want to say that the resonances are perfect: you mention my having written that “I still believe that Nishitani’s mature thought . . . may indeed comprehend and in some respects go beyond what Nietzsche has wrought.”<sup>37</sup> I still believe that.

Overall, perhaps the main benefit of the Zen and Zarathustra comparison is that it highlights the more compassionate aspects of Nietzsche’s thought, which have traditionally been overshadowed by his reputation as a brutal precursor of Nazism. In particular, when we appreciate the crucial role played by interconnectedness in his discussions of the moment and eternal recurrence (“all things are knotted together so tightly”), we realize there’s a kinder, gentler complement to his idea of life as exploitation. The locus classicus is near the end of *Zarathustra*, where in “The Drunken Song” Zarathustra asks the superior humans, “Did you ever say Yes to a single joy?”

Oh, my friends, then you said Yes to *all* woe as well. All things are chained together, entwined, in love —

— if you ever wanted one time a second time, if you ever said, “You please me, happiness! Quick! Moment!” then you wanted *it all* back!

— All anew, all eternally, all chained together, entwined, in love, oh then you *loved* the world —. (Z IV: “The Drunken Song” 10)

One can love the world if, like Zarathustra, one has experienced it as all entwined and “perfect”—when as a streaming of will to power one streams with the “streaming and counter-streaming, and ebb and flood” of the ocean of energies that is the world as will to power; when like the Confucian thinker Mencius one has “cultivated one’s flood-like energies” so that they “fill the space between heaven and earth” and harmonize with “the Way” of the world; when like the Daoist sage one has accumulated one’s powers (*de*) and emptied one’s mind so that one’s activity flows from the Way of heaven and earth and the myriad processes; or when one reaches that “fundamental level,” as Nishitani puts it, “where the world moves at one with the self, and the self moves at one with the world.”<sup>38</sup>

These are by no means superficial similarities, but rather congruences that run deep, and that are obscured if one emphasizes, as you do, “the egoism of the will to power” as “a fundamental drive to overpower, subdue, and appropriate others” (113, 114). I believe we stand to learn more about Nietzsche and Buddhism, not to mention ourselves, if we refrain from confrontation and follow instead the way of comparison as far as it takes us—at which point we’ll be in a position to discern the genuine differences between the two sides.

I hope this more comprehensive laying out of my reading of Nietzsche clarifies things, and look forward to reading your response.

All my very best to you,

Graham

## NOTES

1. Bret W. Davis, “Zen after Zarathustra: The Problem of the Will in the Confrontation between Nietzsche and Buddhism,” *Journal of Nietzsche Studies* 28 (2004): 89–138.

2. Page numbers in parentheses refer to Davis, “Zen after Zarathustra.” I provide my own translations of Nietzsche’s texts, in the case of *Zarathustra* from my translation for Oxford World’s Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

3. In addition to the introduction to Nishitani’s *The Self-Overcoming of Nihilism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990) and “Nietzsche and East Asian Thought: Influences, Impacts, and Resonances,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Nietzsche*, ed. Kathleen Higgins and Bernd Magnus (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 356–83, which you cite, there is, for example, “Nietzsche and Nishitani on the Self through Time,” *Eastern Buddhist* 17.2 (1984): 55–74; “The Orientation of the Nietzschean Text” and “The Early Reception of Nietzsche’s Philosophy in Japan,” in *Nietzsche and Asian Thought*, ed. Graham Parkes (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 3–19 and 177–99; “Nietzsche and Zen Master Hakuin on the Roles of Emotion and Passion,” in *Emotions in Asian Thought: A Dialogue in Comparative Philosophy*, ed. Joel Marks and Roger T. Ames (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994), 213–33; “Facing the Self with Masks: Perspectives on the Personal from Nietzsche and the Japanese,” in *The Self and Deception: Comparative Approaches*, ed. Wimal Dissanayake and Roger Ames (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996), 287–313; “Nietzsche and Nishitani on Nihilism and Tradition,” in *Culture and Self: Philosophical and Religious*

*Perspectives, East and West*, ed. Douglas Allen (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1997), 131–44; “Death and Detachment: Montaigne, Zen, Heidegger, and the Rest,” in *Death and Philosophy*, ed. Jeff Malpas and Robert C. Solomon (London: Routledge, 1998), 164–80; “Nietzsche and Early Buddhism” and “Reply to Robert Morrison,” *Philosophy East and West* 50.2 (2000): 254–67 and 279–84; “Nature and the Human ‘Redivivized’: Mahāyāna Buddhist Themes in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*,” in *Nietzsche and the Divine*, ed. John Lippitt and James Urpeth (Manchester: Clinamen Press, 2000), 181–99; “Nietzsche, Panpsychism and Pure Experience: An East-Asian Contemplative Perspective,” in *Nietzsche and Phenomenology*, ed. Andrea Rehberg (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2011), 87–102.

4. See the discussions in my *Composing the Soul: Reaches of Nietzsche’s Psychology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), by consulting the index entries for “multiplicity, ‘bad.’”

5. Parkes, *Composing the Soul*, esp. chaps. 8 and 9 and the epilogue. You cite Robert Morrison’s *Nietzsche and Buddhism* several times, but it’s a pity you hadn’t read my critical review of it and the subsequent exchange with Morrison (see note 3, above), since they contain discussions of Nietzsche’s ideas about the ego that might have been helpful to you.

6. In *Ecce Homo*, after reminding the reader that he is “a psychologist without equal,” Nietzsche writes that the ego is merely a “higher swindle,” an “ideal” (*EH*, “Why I write such good books” 5).

7. *KSA* 9:11[21]. Compare the following notes, which make similar points:

The I contains a number of different beings. (*KSA* 10:4[189])

Within the human being reside spirits as numerous as the creatures of the sea: they fight with each other for the spirit “I.” (*KSA* 10:4[207])

the cleverness of my whole organism, of which my conscious I is merely a tool. (*KSA* 11:34[46])

I regard the I itself as a thought-construct, like “matter,” “thing,” “substance,” “individual,” “purpose,” “number”: merely as a regulative fiction, then, with the help of which some kind of constancy, and therefore “knowability,” is *invented* and injected into a world of becoming. (*KSA* 11:35[35])

8. *KSA* 9:6[70]. See also *D* 109.

9. *BGE* 12; *GS* 333; *KSA* 11:40[21]. See the discussion in chap. 9 of *Composing the Soul*, “Archaic Casts and Psychical Regimes.”

10. *BGE* 259, your translation modified.

11. *KSA* 9:11[7]. See also 10:15[55]: “Every individual collaborates with the entire being of the cosmos—whether we know it or not—whether we will it or not!”

12. For the traditional association of the ego’s (apparent) control over the musculature with the mytheme of the hero, see James Hillman, *Revisioning Psychology* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977).

13. The note reads, “Dionysus on a tiger: the skull of a goat: a panther. Ariadne dreaming: ‘Abandoned by the hero, I dream of the overhero.’ Not to mention Dionysus!” (*KSA* 10:13[1]).

14. For the run-up, see *AOM* 26; *WS* 171; *D* 104, 105, 109, 115, 119; and the discussion in *Composing the Soul*, 282–99.

15. Parkes, “Zhuangzi and Nietzsche on the Human and Nature,” *Environmental Philosophy* 10.1 (2013): 1–24; and “Body-Mind and Buddha-Nature: Dōgen’s Deeper Ecology,” in *Frontiers of Japanese Philosophy 7: Classical Japanese Philosophy*, ed. James W. Heisig and Rein Raud (Nagoya: Nanzan Institute, 2010), 122–47.

16. Parkes, “Death and Detachment,” 86, 88–91, 94–97; “Nietzsche, Panpsychism and Pure Experience,” 90–93, 96–98. Compare what Nietzsche says about crossing over to the dead world (*KSA* 9:11[70]) with what Nishitani says in an essay you refer to at one point, “Science and Zen”: Keiji Nishitani, “Science and Zen,” in *The Buddha Eye*, ed. Frederick Franck (Bloomington: World Wisdom, 2004), 117–20.

17. Nishitani, *Self-Overcoming of Nihilism*, 51.
18. Nishitani, *Self-Overcoming of Nihilism*, 50.
19. Heidegger, *Nietzsche, Volume II: The Eternal Recurrence of the Same*, trans. David Farrell Krell (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), 228.
20. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* II “Upon the Isles of the Blest”:  
 All permanence—that is mere allegory! . . .  
 But of time and becoming shall the finest allegories tell: a praising shall they be and a justification of all impermanence! . . .  
 Yes, much bitter dying must there be in your lives, you creators! Thus are you advocates and justifiers of all impermanence.
21. *KSA* 12, p. 312, cited by Nishitani, *Self-Overcoming of Nihilism*, 47–48.
22. Nishitani, *Religion and Nothingness*, trans. Jan Van Bragt (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 150, 159.
23. Translated as *The Will to Power* 1067.
24. “*Es gibt Nichts ausser dem Ganzen!*” *TI* “The Four Great Errors,” 8. See Roger T. Ames, “Nietzsche’s Will to Power and Chinese Virtuality (*De*): A Comparative Study,” in Parkes, *Nietzsche and Asian Thought*, 130–50. This is a pioneering essay, but the parallels can be taken a lot further.
25. I am drawing from the insightful treatment of this key aphorism by Laurence Lampert, *Nietzsche’s Task: An Interpretation of “Beyond Good and Evil”* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 84–91.
26. *BGE* 37. See Lampert, *Nietzsche’s Task*, 88. This chapter shows the importance of the little joke in *BGE* 37, which implies the Dionysian divinity of the world understood as will to power, which is the basis for the new religion that accompanies Nietzsche’s philosophy of the future.
27. See the first section of my introduction to *Heidegger and Asian Thought* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1987), 1–5.
28. See the discussions in my “Nietzsche and East Asian Thought,” 360–72.
29. See “Nature and the Human ‘Redivinized,’” 182–86.
30. See the entries for “love” in my index to *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.
31. See “Nature and the Human ‘Redivinized,’” 189–96.
32. See my “Awe and Humility in the Face of Things: Somatic Practice in East-Asian Philosophies,” *European Journal for Philosophy of Religion* 4.3 (2012): 69–88.
33. *KSA* 9:11[211]; *TI* “Forays” 48; *KSA* 12:1[122]. See the discussion of this process in the section “Ordering the Psyche Polytic” in *Composing the Soul*, 346–62.
34. Nietzsche, letter from June 1883, in *KSB* 6, p. 386.
35. For a discussion of this topic, see Rainer J. Hanshe, “Zarathustra’s Stillness: Dreaming and the Art of Incubation,” in *Nietzsche’s Therapeutic Teaching: For Individuals and Culture*, ed. Eli Friedlander and Horst Hutter (London: Bloomsbury/Continuum, 2013), 141–55.
36. See, for example, *Z*, Prologue 9, II: “The Stillest Hour,” III: “On the Vision and the Riddle,” III: “On Blissfulness Against One’s Will,” III: “The Convalescent” 2, IV: “At Midday.”
37. “Nishitani after Nietzsche: From the Death of God to the Great Death of the Will,” in *Japanese and Continental Philosophy: Conversations with the Kyoto School*, ed. Bret W. Davis, Brian Schroeder, and Jason M. Wirth (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 98.
38. *Z* IV: “The Drunken Song,” IV: “At Midday,” III: “On Old and New Tablets” 19; *Mencius* 2A2, trans. D. C. Lau (London: Penguin, 2004), 32–33; *Zhuangzi*, chap. 4; Nishitani, *The Self-Overcoming of Nihilism*, trans. Graham Parkes and Setsuko Aihara (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990), 50.