

Is Nietzsche a Naturalist?

Or How to Become a Responsible Plant

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ABSTRACT: In his recent discussion of Nietzsche's naturalism, Brian Leiter invokes examples from the world of plants to demonstrate that human behavior and values are causally determined by "heritable psychological and physiological traits," or what he also refers to as "type-facts." The objective of this essay is to present a fuller picture of what Nietzsche actually has to say about plants by providing an overview of his textual references to the world of plants. Such an overview suggests that, in contrast to Leiter's naturalistic interpretation of Nietzsche, the examples of the life of plants found in Nietzsche's texts reveal the secret of human freedom and creativity. What we can learn from plants is not how and in what way we are determined by our cultural and biological inheritance and environment but, on the contrary, how and in what way we can be free and creative as plants and become the future value creators Nietzsche envisages.

KEYWORDS: naturalism, plants, value creation, normativity, Nietzsche

Introduction

In his recent discussion of Nietzsche's naturalism, Brian Leiter invokes examples from the world of plants to demonstrate that human behavior and values are causally determined by "heritable psychological and physiological traits," or what he also refers to as "type-facts."¹ On this view, Nietzsche's naturalistic project is concerned with explaining how and why a certain type of person comes to bear certain values and ideas just as "one might come to understand things about a certain type of *tree* by knowing its fruits."² Leiter holds that "just as natural facts about the tree explain the fruit it bears, so too type-facts about a person will explain the ideas and values he comes to bear."³ Nietzsche views the person like a plant, and this view is at the heart of his fatalism revealing the idea of human freedom and creativity to be an illusion. Nietzsche's own trajectory as outlined in *Ecce homo* best illustrates this idea. Leiter compares the production of Nietzsche's own books to the growth of tomatoes: "Nietzsche wrote such wise

and clever books for the same reason the tomato plant grows tomatoes: *because it must*, because it could not have done otherwise.”⁴ Moreover Leiter argues that a comparison of Nietzsche’s own life to the growth of an apple tree even allows us to provide an answer to the book’s subtitle “how one becomes what one is.” “The Answer: by making no special effort *directed toward that end*, because one becomes what one is *necessarily*.”⁵

The objective of this essay is to present a fuller picture of what Nietzsche actually has to say about plants by providing an overview of his textual references to the world of plants.⁶ Such an overview suggests that, in contrast to Leiter’s naturalistic interpretation of Nietzsche, the examples of the life of plants found in Nietzsche’s texts reveal the secret of human freedom and creativity. Ironically, what we can learn from plants is not how and in what way we are determined by our cultural and biological inheritance and environment but, on the contrary, how and in what way we can be free and creative as plants and become the future value creators Nietzsche envisages.

In Nietzsche’s texts, philosophers and their trajectories are not compared to the growth of apples and tomatoes. Instead in a note from the *Nachlass* Nietzsche identifies the philosopher as a “rare plant” (*KSA* 11:26[452]): adding that philosophy is not for everyone and that the philosopher should neither be confused with the “scientific human being [wissenschaftliche Mensch]” nor with the teacher of virtue (*KSA* 11:26[452]). In *Schopenhauer as Educator*, Nietzsche portrays the philosopher as the one who attains a “new degree of culture” and revolutionizes the “entire system of human pursuits” thus distinguishing him from the “academic thinker” and “university professor” in whom—here Leiter has a point—“thoughts grow as peacefully out of tradition as any tree ever bore its apples: they cause no alarm, they remove nothing from its hinges” (*SE* 8).⁷ Instead, the philosopher that Nietzsche envisages seeks to transform humanity into a tree “that overshadows the whole earth bearing millions of blossoms that shall become fruits one besides the other, and the earth itself shall be prepared for the nourishment of this tree” (*WS* 189). His task is to test and experiment new methods that would promote “a great human collective and finally a great collective fruit-tree of humanity” (*WS* 189). The task of the philosopher is to prepare “the earth for the production of the greatest and most joyful fruitfulness” (*WS* 189). The philosopher is charged with the cultivation of a type of plant where “the tree cannot be guessed by its fruits [weil man den Baum aus seinen Früchten nicht zu errathen weiß]” (*KSA* 9:15[18]), that is, a “new plant [neue Gewächs]” that is inherently incomparable to the already “known ones [bekannten Gewächsen]” (*KSA* 9:15[18]). Perhaps, the kind of plant Nietzsche has in mind is like the one cultivated by the Chinese: it grows roses on one side and pears on the other (*KSA* 9:11[276]). In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche summarizes the philosopher’s project of culture under the task of the creation of new values and the revaluation of all values.

For Leiter, Nietzsche's project of value creation, and with it the revaluation of all values, is not part of the naturalistic project of explaining how certain type of human beings came to bear certain types of values (although it may be informed by it).⁸ Interestingly, however, it is precisely in this context that Nietzsche most frequently refers to the human being as a "human plant [die Pflanze Mensch]" (*BGE* 44; *KSA* 11:27[40]; *KSA* 11:27[59]; *KSA* 11:34[74]; *KSA* 11:34[146]; *KSA* 11:34[176]). For Nietzsche, the project of the creation of new values culminates in the revaluation of all values guided by the overarching objective to (re)produce the conditions under which the human being has so far grown furthest and highest. This task of culture falls to the philosopher as the one who at least since Plato has been experimenting with the question of how far the human being could elevate itself and under what conditions (*BGE* 211). Value creation designates the "over-all experiment of discipline and cultivation [Gesamtversuch von Zucht und Züchtung]" (*BGE* 203) directed toward the bringing forth of a higher type of human being. For Nietzsche, this is the great question of philosophy, namely, to investigate "where the plant human being has so far grown most splendidly" (*KSA* 11:34[74]). Nietzsche regrets that so far philosophers have not been able to fully grasp what these conditions are. Given that this is the context in which Nietzsche most frequently refers to the human being as a plant, this essay pursues the question of what we can learn from plants about the creation of values and the cultivation of a higher type of human being.

According to Patrick Wotling, Nietzsche's references to the vegetal world are purely metaphorical.⁹ Wotling argues that the selection of the higher type of human being is like the process of selection involved in the cultivation of different plants and hence he distinguishes in Nietzsche a plurality of cultural types—the artist, the philosopher, the scientist, the anti-Semite, and so forth—which are compared to different types of plants—flowers, rare plants, tropical plants, marsh flowers as well as their conditions of growth. In contrast to Wotling, I argue that Nietzsche's references to the vegetal world are not simply metaphorical. I am here following Marder who in his recent book on plant-thinking argues that Nietzsche is at the forefront of those thinkers who seek to overcome the "barriers that humans have erected between themselves and plants."¹⁰ Marder understands his own reflections on the wisdom of plants as a footnote to "Nietzsche's provocative suggestions that, on the 'quest for a new evaluation' (title of the book III of *The Will to Power*), 'one should start with the 'sagacity of the plant.'"¹¹ In accordance with Marder's overall project on plant-thinking, this essay discusses the various features of plant life in Nietzsche: the plant as a measuring being (part I), the plant as an incorporating being (part II), the plant as a value-creating being (part III), and the plant as a procreating being (part IV) in order to gain insight into the question of value creation and the cultivation of a higher type of human being.

In the reception of Nietzsche's philosophy, the practice of value creation has typically been identified as a human practice. In fact, Nietzsche underlines that human beings understand themselves as the measuring animals par excellence ("the esteeming animal as such" *GM* II:8), and hence value creation insofar as it is an act of measuring, esteeming, and evaluating ("To esteem is to create" and "Through esteeming alone is there value") (*Z I*: "On the Thousand and One Goals"), seems to be the distinguishing feature of the human being. In his recent book, *Nietzsche's Justice: Naturalism in Search for an Ethics*, Peter R. Sedgwick convincingly argues that "[t]he essence of human creativity is revealed in esteeming and valuing" and is expressed in the "self-description implicit in the name by which our kind refers to itself" for "human [Mensch] means the esteemer [Schätzende]," and measurer (*Z I*: "On the Thousand and One Goals").¹²

However, from the perspective of plant life, the view that value creation circumscribes the realm of the human needs to be challenged. This essay argues that values are created by life insofar as life is defined as the act of measuring, valuing and judging: to live means to judge, measure and evaluate (*HH* 32). Life is a normative force that manifests itself in and through human value creation but can also be found in the "moral character of plants and animals" (*KSA* 11:40[54]). Accordingly, this essay argues that from the perspective of the totality of life human value creation is continuous with value creation in animals and plants. Hence, if we want to learn more about what it means for human beings to create values, we need to begin with a consideration of value creation in the life of animals and plants.

Furthermore, in the literature on the question of value creation in Nietzsche, we find the predominant view that value creation and, in particular, the task of the "revaluation of all values" belongs to the "philosopher of the future" (*BGE*), that is, the noble individual and/or an elite of philosopher-aristocrats. This position has been advanced by Maudemarie Clarke among others and is cited approvingly by Robert Gooding-Williams as "the standard view" of *Beyond Good and Evil*.¹³ Although it is widely acknowledged in Nietzsche scholarship that the creation of values is before all the creation of values by a people: "First, peoples were creators; and only in later times, individuals (Einzelne). Verily, the individual himself is still the most recent creation" (*Z I*: "On the Thousand and One Goals"), the emphasis remains on the "noble" and "sovereign individual" (*GM*, *BGE*) as the main source and origin of value creation.¹⁴

From the perspective of Nietzsche's consideration of plant life, this essay contests the view that value creation is an activity that exclusively pertains to the realm of the higher individual. Instead, I argue that for Nietzsche values as they are advanced by for example the sovereign individual or the genius of culture, are in fact the creation of a people or culture and as such irreducible to the acts or values of one singular human being. What we can learn from the life of plants is that the higher individual is not the origin but the fruit of value

creation in the human species and should constitute humanity's goal. It is through the production of the higher exemplar that humanity as a whole seeks to elevate and ennoble itself. Plants teach us that the cultivation of the higher individual is a means to the elevation of the whole of humanity rather than the other way round. Higher individuals are the "milliards of blossoms that shall become fruits one besides the other" on the "great collective fruit-tree of humanity" (*WS* 189).

1. The Plant, a Measuring Being

In his early reflections on the perspectival nature of human knowledge (*Erkenntnis*), Nietzsche extends the capacity of evaluating and measuring to other living beings, in particular to plants: "The plant is also a *measuring being*" (*KSA* 7:19[156]). Nietzsche asks himself how could such a thing as a measuring being emerge (*entstehen*) and draws the conclusion that in terms of our capacity for sense perception we are no different from plants and animals. He emphasizes the "complete equality [*volle Gleichartigkeit*]" of our "apparatus of perception [*Perceptionsapparates*]" (*KSA* 7:19[157]): how humans feel and perceive the world is not different from the way in which plants relate to the world. "For the plant the world is so and so—and for us so and so" and "[f]or the plant the whole world is plant, and for us human" (*KSA* 7:19[158]). He notes, however, that whereas humans come to the illusory presupposition of an outside world due to vision and hearing (which Nietzsche understands as internal perceptions, images and sounds we form within ourselves), plants do not perceive an outside world because they live without the illusory distinction between outside and inside (*KSA* 7:19[217]).¹⁵ They are an inseparable part of their environment, and, vice versa, their environment is an inseparable part of them. Hence, plants do not suffer like the human beings from the illusion of their higher distinction and separation from nature and their environment (*A* 14).

Nietzsche claims that what we call memory can also be found in plants. Accordingly, plants are also temporal beings.¹⁶ Nietzsche cites the example of the *Mimosa*, a plant that "has memory but no consciousness. Memory naturally without *image*, in the plant" (*KSA* 7:19[61]). Nietzsche's references to plants as measuring and historical beings in these early texts must be understood as an attempt to overcome the human being's anthropomorphic vision of the world. We need to overcome the tendency to project ourselves onto the world and see everything as human. However, this does not mean that by decentering the *anthropos*, we will ever be able to gain something like a true and objective picture of the world.

Throughout his writing career, Nietzsche holds on to the view that our way of relating to the world by means of measuring and evaluating is inherently perspectival. But this perspectivism belongs to the optic of life, that is, to life as

something which is grounded in “perspectival estimates and appearances” and as such does not belong in any particular way exclusively to the human (*BGE* 34). Nietzsche thus advocates adopting an increasing multiplicity of perspectives, or what he also refers to as “our objectivity” (*GM* III:12)¹⁷, a perspective that he typically associates with the figure of the philosopher. Achieving a more complete, fuller, and truer vision of the world is important for the philosopher, not because it extends the horizon of human knowledge as if the pursuit of knowledge were an end in itself, but because it constitutes a “precondition” for the creation of new values (*BGE* 211). Only from such an “objective” perspective is the philosopher in a position to determine the “Whither and For What of the human kind” (*BGE* 211).

What distinguishes the philosopher’s “objective” post-anthropocentric perspective is a “cardinal point of view” according to which the human being is part and parcel of the totality of life: “The totality of animal and plant life does not develop from lower to higher [. . .] but everything, at the same time and on top of each other and mixed up with each other and against each other [übereinander und durcheinander und gegeneinander]” (*KSA* 13:14[133]). For the philosopher, the vegetal and the animal live on in the human. In other words, we cannot understand the human without considering its relation to the animal and plant life the human being carries within itself and with which it is inseparably entangled: “[t]he human being is not just an individual, but the continuation of the life of the whole organic world in a specific direction” (*KSA* 12:7[2]). Nietzsche concludes that the whole history of the organic world is active in the human being’s way of relating to the world, and hence also in “its” acts of measuring, evaluating and esteeming. Nietzsche offers himself as an example when he claims to have discovered that “the whole pre-history and past of all sentient being, continues within me to fabulate, to love, to hate, and to infer” (*GS* 54).

But Nietzsche goes even further and claims that, in fact, it is life, the totality of life, which is the source and origin of so-called “human” values and “human” value creation: “When we speak of values we do so under the inspiration and under the optic of life: life itself forces [zwingt] us to establish values [Werthe anzusetzen], life itself evaluates through us *when* we establish values” (*TI* “Morality as Anti-Nature” 5). Accordingly, if we wish to pursue the question of what we can learn from plants about value creation and the cultivation of a higher type of human being, we need to follow Nietzsche in his search for a better understanding of “what life is, what kind of drive and tension life is” (*KSA* 13:11[111]). Nietzsche insists that whatever formula we come up with, it must be applicable to trees and plants as much as to animals (*KSA* 13:11[111]). In another passage, Nietzsche asks himself what are the powers that *determine* the history of the organic phenomenon, and claims that answering this question would again require overcoming human projections onto the world: “eliminating all moral and religious teleology” (*KSA* 12:7[9]). He gives us a hint by indicating

that the “clearest answer [deutlichsten Aussagen]” to this question would be found in the “world of plants [Pflanzenreich]” (*KSA* 12:7[9]).

2. The Plant, an Incorporating Being

In the history of Western philosophy since at least Aristotle, the world of plants has typically been characterized by three key attributes: the acts of generation, growth, and nutrition. Interestingly, Nietzsche takes up these three key attributes of plant life in his own definition of life as “a multiplicity of forces, linked to each other by a common mode of nutrition, we call ‘life’” (*KSA* 10:24[14]). Nietzsche adds that “[t]o this mode of nutrition, as a means of making it possible, belong all so-called feelings, ideas, thoughts.”¹⁸ Marder convincingly argues that for Nietzsche, all higher organisms and psychic processes have never really superseded this “basic modus operandi of the plant-soul”:

[T]he vegetal capacity of nourishment, or more generally speaking for the assimilation of alterity to the other, is gradually sublimated into ideas and thoughts that finesse and spiritualize the strategies of incorporating the other, of feeding themselves on difference and of harnessing desire for dematerialized ends. . . . Philosophy itself becomes but the most refined and sublimated version of the *threptikon* [vegetative soul], where the act of thinking embodies the living legacy of vegetal soul’s signature capacity. Even in our highest endeavours we remain sublimated plants.¹⁹

Nutrition in the plant is based on its capacity to see things as equal (*gleich*): “To the plants all things are usually in repose, eternal, every thing identical with itself (*sich selbst gleich*)” (*HH* 18). Nietzsche speculates that the same applies for humans: “[h]e, for instance, who did not know how to find ‘identity’ often enough, both with regard to nourishment and to hostile animals [. . .] had a slighter probability of survival than he who in all cases of similarity immediately guesses that they were identical” (*GS* 111). According to Nietzsche, grasping identity was the first task the human being had to accomplish in view of preserving its species, a task that had probably been mastered already by the plant before him (*KSA* 8:23[26]). Only much later did the human being develop a sense for movement and becoming thus revealing “identity” as a mere belief inherited from the period of lower organisms (*HH* 18). According to Nietzsche the belief in the “subject” as something fixed and self-same can also be traced back to this primordial error in the process of assimilation of organic life (*KSA* 9:11[268]).²⁰

However, for Nietzsche, nutrition, whether in the human being or in the plant, is ultimately not oriented toward the constitution and preservation of identity:

“What does a plant strive for?”—but here we have already invented a false unity which does not exist; the fact of a million fold growth with

individual and semi-individual initiatives is concealed and denied if we begin by positing a crude unity “plant.” (KSA 13:11[111])²¹

Marder approvingly cites the above passage and argues that Nietzsche

... de-idealizes the plant and thereby liberates the difference imprisoned in this conceptual unity, just as roughly a century after him Jacques Derrida would release packs of heterogeneous animals from the constraints of “the animal” and multiple things from the identitarian stricture of the “thing itself.”²²

For Marder plant-thinking starts with such an explosion of identity. I would add that “plant-thinking” also begins with an explosion of the idea of nutrition (life) as self-preservation: “A living thing seeks above all to *discharge* its strength—life itself is *will to power*; self-preservation is only one of its indirect most frequent *results*” (BGE 13). For Nietzsche, life as nourishment and incorporation, whether in the plant or in the human being, is not a means of self-preservation but rather an expression of growth and power (KSA 13:16[12]; KSA 12:9[12]). This is why Marder correctly points out that for Nietzsche the desire to incorporate is not derived from absence or lack: “Nietzschean nutritive desire is an expression of the overflowing will to power, the pure positivity of growth and expansion where nothing is missing.”²³ Nietzsche thus contests the Darwinian idea of a “struggle for life” and instead defends the view that “life is not *hunger* and distress [Nothlage], but rather wealth, luxury, even absurd prodigality” (TI “Skirmishes” 14).

Nietzsche continues the above-cited passage on the question of “What plants strive for?” by saying that every striving toward growth reflects a continuous struggle of forces of life for and against each other which he subsumes under the concept of “power” (KSA 13:11[111]). Marder interprets Nietzsche’s subsumption as a falling back into a thinking of identity and cites two passages from *The Will to Power* where nourishment is first identified with incorporation: “‘Nourishment’—is only derivative,” the original phenomenon is: to desire to incorporate everything (KSA 13:14[174])²⁴; and, then with appropriation and will to power: “‘Nourishment’ only a consequence of insatiable appropriation, of the will to power” (KSA 13:14[174]).²⁵ For Marder nourishment and incorporation in Nietzsche stand for an assimilation of the other to the self that destroys this otherness and therefore amounts to nothing but the affirmation of self-identity over and above the other. Accordingly, he claims that Nietzsche’s conception of life as will to power is inherently reductive, an example of the kind of metaphysical thinking which commits violence to plants. Marder concludes that Nietzsche cannot think the common, that is, what humans share with the life of animals and plants, without the interference of identity, that is, the idea of will to power as a unifying principle of organic life.²⁶

Marder's interpretation fails to distinguish between two different and opposing conceptions of nourishment or incorporation found in Nietzsche's thought: on the one hand, we have assimilation as a strategy of self-preservation which proceeds by means of the constitution of identity; on the other, we have assimilation as a strategy of growth which proceeds by means of pluralization and difference.²⁷ When Nietzsche describes processes of embodiment that are oriented toward life- or species-preservation, he recurs to a semantics of appropriation (Aneignung) (*AOM* 317), as for example in *BGE* 259 where Nietzsche defines life itself as "essentially appropriation, injury, overpowering," and so forth. Instead, when he speaks of embodiment as a strategy of growth, then he refers to processes of creative transformation and elevation (*HL* 1; *KSA* 8:11[182]). Whereas the former are associated with the exploitation (Ausbeutung), subjugation (Unterdrückung) and domination (Herrschaft) of the other, the latter are associated with the ennobling inoculation (*HH* 224), differentiation and pluralization of life stemming from the encounter with the other as precisely that force which cannot be incorporated because it resists an annihilating incorporation (Einverleibung) (*KSA* 11:36[22]).²⁸ This second type of incorporation ultimately reflects Marder's own view, namely, that "the paradox is that the insatiability of nutritive desire coincides in the plant [and I would add also in the human being/VL] with the non-existence of an autonomous self to which the other would be appropriated."²⁹

Nietzsche rejects the idea of a total or absolute domination of the other by means of incorporation when he defines life as a

[...] continuous process of sizing one's strength [Kraftstellungen], where the antagonists grow in unequal measure. Even in obedience a resistance [Widerstreben] subsists; one's power [Eigenmacht] is not given up. Similarly, in commanding there exists a concession that the absolute power of the rival is not defeated, not incorporated, not dissolved. "To obey" and "to command" are forms of competitive play [Kampfspiel]. (*KSA* 11:36 [22])

The idea of resistance is central to Nietzsche's conception of life as will to power: "will to power can manifest itself only against resistances; it seeks that which resists it" (*KSA* 12:9 [151]). Maintaining a high level of resistance and thus acknowledging the value of all drives of life, of otherness and difference, becomes the distinguishing feature of the higher type of human plant: "The highest human being would be the one who bears the greatest plurality of drives, and also at their greatest relative strength. Certainly, where the plant human being proves itself strong, one always finds powerful drives striving *against* each other (for example Shakespeare), but contained" (*KSA* 11:27[59]). Assimilation as a strategy of self-preservation reflects a process of life through which ever more powerful wholes (Ganzheiten) are constituted and preserved by the annihilating and excluding incorporation of the other. Nietzsche finds this type of incorporation in the example of the state as

well as moral and religious institutions: “The will to accumulate force is special to the phenomenon of life, to nourishment, procreation, inheritance—to society, state, custom, authority” (*KSA* 13:14[81]).³⁰ By contrast, assimilation as a strategy of growth and elevation is driven by a receiving and hospitable force, an openness to the other which furthers the pluralization and diversification of life and is typically found in the example of the higher individual (*HH* 224) or genius of culture (*TI* “Skirmishes” 44). Only in the latter is nutrition an expression of fullness of life and overflowing power oriented toward expenditure, whereas in the former it is based on the need to accumulate strength, to economize one’s life forces. In aphorism *HH* 224 *Inoculation through degeneration*, Nietzsche insists that whereas the strongest natures preserve the human type, the weaker natures help it to evolve. Weaker natures such as the higher individual are tender and more refined for they promote new drives that are by definition precariously weak and may cause damage. These new drives are often falsely interpreted as a “sickness” and Nietzsche immediately adds this is because new drives in the higher individual are the type of plant where one cannot guess the tree by its fruits (weil man den Baum aus seinen Früchten nicht zu errathen weiß) (*KSA* 9:15[18]).

Finally, it is important to point out that for Nietzsche both types of processes of assimilation are not unrelated to each other. Indeed, they depend and build up on each other insofar as assimilation qua accumulation is a precondition for assimilation qua growth and elevation. In other words, in order to be able to afford what Marder refers to as a vegetal ethics of gift-giving, Nietzsche is of the view that life needs to accumulate enormous reservoirs of strength over long periods of time (*TI* “Skirmishes” 44). I will return to this point below under the section “The plant, a procreating being” where I treat the analogy Nietzsche draws between the organization of plants and the organization of the state. The question of what we can learn from plants about the purpose (*Zweck*) of the state is an aspect of Nietzsche’s philosophy of plants that remains unaddressed by Marder. But, first, I need to return to the question of value creation, that is, the relation between incorporation and value creation.

3. The Plant, a Value Creating Being

What Marder misses in his reading of will to power in Nietzsche’s plant thinking is probably the most important aspect of his conception of life as nutrition and incorporation, namely, that the latter reflects the creative, form-giving force of life found in plants, animals, and humans. Surprisingly, Marder does not include this point in his consideration of plant life in Nietzsche. For Nietzsche, incorporation/nutrition is before all creativity and productivity:

Conquering—is the natural consequence of a *surplus of power*: it is the same as **creating** and **procreating**, that is, the *incorporation of one’s*

own image in foreign matter [fremden Stoff]. This is why the higher human being must *create*, i.e. imprint its *being higher* on others, be it in their role as teacher or **artists**. (KSA 10:7[107])

Nietzsche distinguishes not only between two types of incorporation/nutrition as domination and as creative transformation but also between two types of creativity: one exemplified by Dionysian art as the expression of a suffering from an overfullness of life, and the other by “romanticism in art” as the expression of a suffering from an impoverishment of life (GS 370). Only Dionysian art constitutes an “overflow in procreating, fertilizing forces capable of turning any desert into bountiful farmland” (GS 370). What stands in the foreground is not “a desire for fixing, for immortalizing, for *being*” but rather “for change, for novelty, for future, for *becoming*” (GS 370).

What plants, animals, and humans share is the freedom to creatively form and transform their form of life. What stands in the foreground is not reductive domination and violence toward the other, as Marder argues, but the creative transfiguration of forms of life. As such, plants as much as animals and humans are value-creating beings and what we find at the heart of Nietzsche’s conception of life is precisely the power to change our forms of life by means of value creation.

Nietzsche repeatedly insists on the difference between Darwin’s idea of adaptation as a movement that proceeds from the outside toward the inside (KSA 12:7[9]) and will to power as the expression of the creative, form-giving power of life (KSA 12:9[151]) through which an organism actively creates and re-creates its way of life:

Thus the essence of life is ignored [verkannt], its *will to power*, is ignored; one overlooks the essential priority of the spontaneous, aggressive, expansive, form-giving forces [spontanen, angreifenden, übergreifenden, neu-auslegenden, neu-richtenden und gestaltendend Kräfte] that give new interpretations and directions, and “adaption” follows only after; the dominant role of the highest functionaries within the organism itself in which the will to life appears active and form-giving is denied. (GMII:12)

Despite the emphasis on the freedom and creativity of interpretation and evaluation, Nietzsche acknowledges that our forms of life, plant, animal, and human, are entirely conditioned by external circumstances: “The inorganic *conditions* us through and through: water air earth soil electricity and so forth. We are plants under those conditions” (KSA 9: 11[210]). For Marder, this acknowledgment is part of Nietzsche’s attempt to re-embed thought and culture in their material condition (climate, soil, food) and must be understood as “a nod of acknowledgement to vegetal life, heteronomously regulated by elements in its own milieu.”³¹

However, what Nietzsche admires about plants is not the way in which they are “conditioned” by their environment, but, on the contrary, the way in which

they succeed in growing and expanding even under difficult and inhospitable circumstances. In a reflection on the life of the thinker, Nietzsche claims that the thinker's sense for invention (*Erfindsamkeit*) is of the same kind as the one that we admire in plants "as they curve and climb upwards to finally conquer [erzwingt] some light and a little bit of dirt thus creating for themselves a little bit of cheerfulness in an inhospitable soil" (*KSA* 8:6[48]). The growth of the plant makes the thinker wonder "how can the plant maintain itself alive and face this challenge with such unshakable courage" (*KSA* 8:6[48]). Nietzsche compares the growth of the plant to that of the thinker torn between a drive toward knowledge and a drive toward life: like the plant, the thinker needs to evaluate when to leave his soil for the unknown and uncertain; and when to stand still in a secure place (*KSA* 8:6[48]).³²

The above example illustrates that the plant's relation to the world is a forming and transforming one: rather than being simply subject to its environment, the plant is gifted with the power to create and re-create its own conditions of life. As such the plant needs to be understood as a value-creating being who reveals its "moral character" in the way in which it creatively responds to its conditions of life thereby altering and transforming them: "Animals and plants display their moral character, pending on the conditions of life under which they live [gestellt sind]." Nietzsche immediately adds that: "One shall never isolate the individual. Here what needs to be said is that there is a plant with a specific history [Vorgeschichte]" (*KSA* 11:40[54]). Accordingly, in the life of plants, animals, and humans moral values need to be understood as creative responses to conditions of life and growth as they pertain to the entire species and not simply to the individual. What we learn from plants is that values are not created for and by the isolated individual but instead are the fruit of the creativity of a whole people or culture (humanity) and are employed in view of the future generation of a whole people and culture (humanity).

As such, the moral character of the life of animals and plants life is antithetical to Christian morality, a morality that is "no longer the expression of the conditions under which a people lives and grows, no longer a people's deepest instinct of life but has become abstract, become the anti-thesis of life" (*A* 25). The plant teaches the human being that one can cultivate a moral character without having to deny the instincts of life and nature, or in other words, "[t]hat one can live without moral judgments, as proven by plants and animals" (*KSA* 10:7[73]). The kind of values that Nietzsche's future philosophers are looking for are not values imposed on life but values that arise out of life, that is, values that reflect the normative character of life itself rather than values that are forms of domination over life.³³ The creation of values in plants and animals is not estranged from the needs and necessities of life. This does not mean that the life forms of plants and animals are determined and fixed: affirming one's needs and necessities is liberating and enhances the form-giving power of life to continuously create and re-create one's conditions of existence.

In his reflection on the origin of knowledge, Nietzsche advances the thesis that what we call truth reflects nothing but the degree to which a certain belief has been incorporated and become a condition of life (*Lebensbedingung*) (*GS* 110). Accordingly, conditions of life are not given, predetermined and fixed, but instead have a history and reflect the ways in which a form of life has become over time in relation to its environment. This is why Nietzsche claims that if we wish to gain deeper insight into the conditions of life that would favor the becoming of a higher type of human being, “we need to study history comparatively” (*KSA* 11:34[74]). In a similar vein, Nietzsche holds that all drives of life have in fact “been cultivated [angezüchtet] as temporary conditions of life. They are then passed on for a long time even when they are not anymore conditions of life” (*KSA* 11:26[72]). In an aphorism titled “What we are free for [Was uns frei steht],” Nietzsche invokes the example of the growth of the plant to show that the human being is not a “complete and outgrown fact [vollendete ausgewachsene Thatsachen]” but rather that we are free to “handle our drives like the gardener treats his plants” (*D* 560, see also *GS* 9). The same idea can also be found in a note from the *Nachlass*, where Nietzsche writes:

I can treat myself like the gardener treats his plants: I can eliminate certain motives, by distancing myself from certain social environments; I can place certain motives in my vicinity. I can cultivate my tendencies [Hang; which also means “hillside”] by following the procedures of the gardener and cherish them artificially or simply let them dry up. (*KSA* 9:7[30])

Nietzsche’s comparison of the cultivation of moral character in plants and humans culminates in his critique of the traditional Christian conception of responsibility based on the fiction of the freedom of the will and oriented toward praise and blame. Nietzsche contests the view that there exists such a thing as freedom of the will: “The act of free will would be a miracle, a break within the chain of life” (*KSA* 8:42[3]). Instead, from the perspective of the chain of nature, including plant, animal, and human life, everything is innocence, everything is necessity. Nietzsche invites us to consider human actions in the same way as we consider the creativity of plants: “As he loves a fine work of art but does not praise it since it can do nothing for itself, as he stands before the plant, so must he stand before the actions of the human being and of his own” (*HH* 107). Adopting this perspective on moral action is difficult for the human being because it not only requires giving up the belief in “responsibility and duty as the noble distinction of humanity” (*HH* 107). Leiter interprets Nietzsche’s return to the plant as a giving up of the idea of human freedom as responsibility in favor of the fatalistic embracing of necessity. By contrast, I hold that Nietzsche’s return to the plant reflects a new post-Christian and moral perspective from which he invites us to reevaluate the meaning of responsibility. Becoming truly responsible requires recovering the innocence of the child and of the plant: “The child shows all its qualities shamelessly like the plant shows its sexual organs. Both know nothing

of praise and blame” (*KSA* 9:11[105]). Only on the basis of this recovery can the human being become again a creator of new values. Zarathustra’s doctrine of the three metamorphosis illustrates this idea: “The child is innocence and forgetting, a new beginning, a game, a self-propelled wheel, a first movement, a sacred ‘Yes’” (*ZI*: “On the three Metamorphosis”).

But the task of reevaluating the value of responsibility is also at the heart of the project of cultivation of the higher human being by means of new values and as such falls to the philosopher of the future (*BGE* 203). The latter is not concerned with questions of individual responsibility (especially when they come down to a project of normalization and disciplining of the human individual). Instead, from the philosopher’s new post-Christian and moral perspective, the question of responsibility concerns before all humanity as a whole and is contained in the key question of the revaluation of all values and the creation of new values, namely, where and how the plant “human being” has so far grown most vigorously to a height (*BGE* 44). Nietzsche puts forth the hypothesis that

[. . .] this has happened every time under the opposite [umgekehrten] conditions, that to this end the dangerousness of its situation must first grow to the point of enormity, its power of invention and simulation (its “spirit”) had to develop under prolonged pressure and constraint into refinement and audacity, its life-will had to be enhanced into an unconditional power-will. (*BGE* 44)

The revaluation of all values and the creation of new values require subverting the human plant’s current conditions of life. This is another way of saying that our conditions of life are not determined and fixed, on the contrary, they can be formed and transformed. Only by actively transforming our conditions of life can we achieve our goal and become the higher, freer, and more creative human beings Nietzsche envisages.

However, Nietzsche acknowledges that this is a dangerous undertaking which confronts us with the dilemma that although “uncertain circumstances” may be highly productive, they also are highly dangerous and may be destructive: “The plant human being grows highest under difficult circumstances and subject to many dangers: however, most plants decay and perish under such circumstances” (*KSA* 11:27[40]). According to Nietzsche, this dilemma of culture reflects an economical problem, and Nietzsche again invites us to contemplate the life of the plant who has masterfully resolved this problem of procreation.

4. The Plant, a Procreating Being

Although Nietzsche departs from the standpoint that “nature is just as extravagant in the domain of culture as it is in that of planting and sowing” (*SE* 7), he acknowledges that even nature can fall short of resources. Nietzsche alerts us to the fact in

particular the creation of new forms of life is costly: “nothing is more costly than a new beginning” (*KSA* 12:10[15]). Moreover, Nietzsche claims that “the greater the advantages of existence are, the greater are also the costs of their preservation and creation (nutrition and procreation); the greater are also the dangers and the probability that this higher form of life cannot be maintained and must decay [vor der erreichten Höhe des Lebens zu Grunde zu gehen]” (*KSA* 12:10[15]). Nietzsche understands the increasing complexity of the organism as a response to this economical problem: “more complex organism are capable of accomplishing tasks more efficiently, and the advantages of their labor are so great that they exceed the higher costs of preservation and procreation” (*KSA* 12:10[16]).³⁴

This problem of organization is complicated by the fact that the procreation of the human being “toward the similar, ordinary, average, herd-like—*common*” is much more economical than that of the generation of “the more select, subtle, strange and difficult to understand” (*BGE* 268). The “scholar” for example grows pretty much everywhere as “the type of plant that does not require any specific kind of soil” (*GS* 348), in contrast to the higher individual who easily becomes subject to isolation, succumbs to accidents and only rarely propagates (*BGE* 268). In the hope of drawing an economical advantage from the production of the common, Nietzsche sees modern society drifting toward the procreation of the average human being and calls for the need to counter-act this seemingly “all too natural *progressus in simile*” (*BGE* 268).

Against the modern idea of so-called natural progress, Nietzsche upholds the view that nature always only propagates the higher exemplars (*KSA* 7:7[24]). It does not have an eye for the average type propagated for example by Christianity (*KSA* 7:3[91]). A consideration of this feature of vegetal life is instructive when it comes to the question of the ends of society and the state:

How much one would like to apply to society and its goals something that can be learned from observation of any species of the animal or plant world: that its only concern is the individual higher exemplar, the more uncommon, more powerful, more complex, more fruitful—how much one would like to do this if inculcated fancies as to the goal of society did not suffer such tough resistance. (*SE* 6)

What human kind lacks in comparison to plants is a sense of their “Whither and For What of the human kind” (*BGE* 211) or what Nietzsche also refers to as their striving toward a goal (*Zweckthätigkeit*): “The goal: of the human being a great unconscious striving towards a goal, just as the nature of the plant” (*KSA* 8:41[15]). Nietzsche regrets that “[s]ofar the human being does not have a goal” (*ZI*: “On a Thousand and One Goals”) and insists that setting goals is part and parcel of the task of value creation: to create values means to give humanity a goal, to give the world (*Erde*) a meaning (*Sinn*) and future direction (*Zukunft*) (*ZIII*: “On Old and New Tablets”).

On Nietzsche's view, plants strive for the production of the higher exemplar, the beautiful flower, not as an end in itself, but because they see in the latter a more promising carrier of the future life: "Nature procreates by means of beauty: the latter is a lure in the service of generation" (*KSA* 7:7[24]). Here, the individual plant sees itself as means for the procreation of the higher exemplar: "The individual should work in the service of the goal of all of humanity [Gesamtzweck]: without knowing it. That is what every animal, every plant does" (*KSA* 7:7[24]). Although the human individual believes that through its actions it "achieves something for itself," for Nietzsche, this is just an illusion, an "appearance [Scheinzweck]" and "pleaded frenzy [vorgeschobener Wahn]" (*KSA* 7:5[36]). In the end, everything is directed toward the generation of life through the higher exemplar: "Procreation often *without* any particular preference [individuelle Neigung]" (*KSA* 9:11[218]). Nietzsche interprets the emergence of beauty in the plant, that is, the production of the flower, as a sign that the plant has overcome the struggle for existence, or, in economic terms, that it can afford the costs of preservation and creation by means of a "most artificial mechanism between the world of animals and plants" (*KSA* 7:7[121]). As such, beauty becomes the expression of overfullness of life: "a surplus of power and pleasure in life [Überschuss von Kraft und Lustgefühl des Daseins]: one may think of the plant" (*KSA* 7:7[27]).

Nietzsche invites us to take the plant as our example and employ state and society as means for the production of higher exemplars. Now, the state is not only charged with resolving the problem of the struggle of existence, but also and more importantly, Nietzsche envisages the ultimate goal (letzten Zweck) of the state to be an "institution for the protection and care of the individual, for the genius" (*KSA* 7:7[121]). In contrast to the "absolute state (Rome)," a "plant without flower" (*KSA* 7:7[72]), under the rule of the state as a means of culture humans could learn again what it means to flourish, that is, how to generate a future promising and fruitful form of human life: "We have to learn from the animal and the plant what it means to *blossom*: and thereafter rethink what this means for the human being" (*KSA* 9:7[49]).

To sum it up, we can say that there are three things we can learn from plants as a procreating being that are crucial for our understanding of the question of value creation: First of all, plants teach us that when it comes to the question of future life and growth, the life of the higher individual is always only a means for the elevation of the whole of humanity. Accordingly, values as they are seemingly brought forth by the "noble" and "sovereign individual" in fact are nothing but the reflection of the creativity and productivity of humanity, of an entire people or culture. Second, plants teach us that the creation of new values, the bearing of fruits, is an economical problem that cannot be resolved by the isolated individual. Rather, it requires the concerted effort of the whole of humanity to bring a higher form of human life to blossom. Third, plants teach

us that the creation of new values is future oriented. We learn from the plants how to adopt the perspective of the long *durée* according to which “all growth is slow” (*KSA* 9:4[64]), a perspective foreclosed to that type of individual whose vision of life is tied to the span of a life time (*HH* 22). As such plants teach us that the cultivation of a higher and freer form of human life requires hardship and sacrifice and is always only for the advantage of a future generation.

Conclusion

I wish to conclude with some remarks on where Nietzsche’s reflections on plant life leave us with respect to the question of naturalism. When it comes to the question of whether Nietzsche is a naturalist, and if so what kind of naturalism he stands for, the most frequently cited passage is no doubt aphorism 230 of *Beyond Good and Evil*, where Nietzsche defines his own philosophical project as a retranslation of the human being back to nature. According to Leiter, Nietzsche’s naturalist project aims to offer theories that explain various important human phenomena, in particular, the phenomenon of morality, and that do so in ways that both draw on actual scientific results as well as are modeled on the natural science culminating in what Leiter terms as Nietzsche’s “Doctrine of Type” briefly introduced at the beginning of this essay. As mentioned above, for Leiter, Nietzsche’s project of value creation, and with it the revaluation of all values, is not part of the naturalistic project of explaining how certain type of human beings came to bear certain types of values (although it may be informed by it).³⁵ But, as I have shown in this essay, insofar as Nietzsche’s consideration of the human being as a plant provides important clues on the question of value creation and the revaluation of all values, value creation must be considered as part and parcel of Nietzsche’s naturalism. When Nietzsche calls for a reevaluation of all values, he is calling for a radical reinterpretation of the “eternal basic text *homo natura*” (*BGE* 230).

In conclusion we can say that, first of all, what we learn from the consideration of the life of plants is that human, animal and plant life are part of the totality of life and that their forms of life are inseparably entangled with each other. On this view, our so-called higher distinction is an illusion that we need to overcome in view of a more “objective” perspective on the world. And, hence, retranslating the human being back to nature requires affirming the perspectival nature of all life and adopting a post-anthropocentric perspective. Second, what we learn from the consideration of the life of plants is that the ways of evaluating of animals and plants continue within the human being. And, hence, retranslating the human being into nature requires affirming the animal and plant life within the human. Third, from the consideration of plant life we learn that life is nutrition (incorporation) and growth (will to power). Life preserves itself by

means of constituting “identity” and life grows by means of pluralization and diversification. And, hence, retranslating the human being into nature requires acknowledging preservation as a first step toward the elevation of life. Fourth, from the consideration of plant life we learn that life as a value-creating and normative force is creative and artistic. The life of plants reveal to us that our conditions of life are not given, predetermined, and fixed but are subject to continuous transfiguring revaluations. The growth of plants indicates to us that our conditions of life are contingent and confront us with the task of transforming contingency into necessity, or, in other words, transforming an “it was” into a “thus shall it be.” Herein lies our responsibility, herein lies our freedom. By affirming our responsibility and assuming our freedom, our life form takes on moral character where the latter reflects an affirmation of life. Retranslating the human being into nature thus requires a return to the innocence of life as the rebeginning of creativity and genuine responsibility. Only those who assume the task of genuine responsibility can say what Nietzsche says of himself, namely, that their values grow out of them “with the necessity with which a tree bears fruits” (*GMP*:2). Fifth, a consideration of the life of plants shows that values must be understood as a response to external circumstances and that these responses have a history and must be studied historically. A consideration of the life of plants also shows that (singular) values cannot be understood in isolation but must be considered within the context of a particular form of life or generation. Retranslating the human being into nature is therefore a task that requires “historical sense” and the art of interpretation. Finally, a consideration of the life of plants gives humanity a goal, namely, the production of the higher exemplar as the carrier for a more future promising “great collective fruit-tree of humanity” (*WS* 189). As such the retranslation of the human being into nature is inseparable from the cultivation of a higher, more fruitful, and future promising form of (human) life. Or, in other words, the project of the retranslation of the human being into nature is an integral part of Nietzsche’s philosophy of culture.

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NOTES

1. Joshua Knobe and Brian Leiter, “The Case for Nietzschean Moral Psychology,” in *Nietzsche and Morality*, ed. Brian Leiter and Neil Shinhababu (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 83–109, esp. 89–90.

2. Brian Leiter, *Nietzsche: On Morality* (London: Routledge, 2002), 10.

3. Leiter, *Nietzsche*.

4. Leiter, *Nietzsche*, 85.

5. Leiter, *Nietzsche*, 86. For a discussion of Leiter’s naturalism, see in particular Richard Schacht, “Nietzsche’s Naturalism and Normativity,” in *Nietzsche, Naturalism and Normativity*,

ed. Christopher Janaway and Simon Robertson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 236–57; but also Robert Pippin, *Nietzsche, moraliste français* (Paris: Odile Jacob, 2006), 151ff., and Christopher Janaway, *Beyond Selflessness: Reading Nietzsche's Genealogy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

6. For an earlier version of my treatment of Nietzsche's philosophy of plants and the question of value creation, see Vanessa Lemm, "What We Can Learn from Plants about the Creation of Values," *Nietzsche-Studien* 44 (2015): 78–87.

7. The following translations of Nietzsche's work are used (with modifications as required): *The Antichrist*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin, 1968); *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1989); *Daybreak*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); *The Gay Science*, trans. J. Nauckoff (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); *Human, All Too Human*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Carol Diethe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); *Twilight of the Idols*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (London: Penguin, 1968); *Untimely Meditations*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Modern Library, 1995).

8. Leiter, *Nietzsche*, 11.

9. Patrick Wotling, *Nietzsche et le problème de la civilisation* (Paris: P.U.F., 1995), 273–96.

10. Michael Marder, *Plant-Thinking: A Philosophy of Vegetal Life* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013), 5.

11. Marder, *Plant-Thinking*, 151. The citation within the citation is from *KSA* 12:2[76]. Note that Nietzsche puts "sagacity of the plant" in quotations. This could be an indication that he is citing from Darwin, who in his series of botanical books, culminating in *The Power of Movement in Plants* (1880), describes *Drosera*, an insectivorous plant, as "a most sagacious animal" (Oliver Sacks, "Darwin and the Meaning of Flowers," *New York Review of Books*, November 20, 2008, http://www.nybg.org/files/highlights_pdf/Oliver_Sacks_on_Darwin_NY%20RevuBks11.20.08.pdf).

12. Peter R. Sedgwick, *Nietzsche's Justice: Naturalism in Search for an Ethics* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2013), 165–66.

13. Maudemarie Clarke, "Nietzsche's Antidemocratic Rhetoric," *Southern Journal of Philosophy* 37, suppl. (1999): 119–41. Robert Gooding-Williams, *Zarathustra's Dionysian Modernism* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2001), 387.

14. See Sedgwick, *Nietzsche's Justice*, and John Richardson, *Nietzsche's New Darwinism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 67–132.

15. For a different reading of this passage, see Marder, *Plant-Thinking*. Marder reads this passage as an attempt on Nietzsche's part to deny and reduce the sensitivity of the plant.

16. On the time of plants, see Marder, *Plant-Thinking*, 93–117.

17. See also *TL* on perspectivism, animals, and plants. On Nietzsche's "generalized perspectivism," see also Marder, who claims that "[o]nly a non-totalizable multiplicity of perspectives, only anarchic radical pluralism comprised of the all-too human and the other-than human existences and 'worlds' is capable of countering original metaphysical violence opposing the human to the plant" (Marder, *Plant-Thinking*, 57).

18. Marder, *Plant-Thinking*, 40.

19. Marder, *Plant-Thinking*.

20. See also *KSA* 9:11[293], where Nietzsche questions the idea of identity claiming that, for example, the "tree is in every moment something different [Der Baum ist in jedem Augenblick etwas Neues]": the assumption that things are identical to themselves is based on the error of the intellect who projects mathematical averages onto the world.

21. Nietzsche makes a similar point with respect to the anthropomorphic setting of the unity "tree." Nietzsche contests that there exists such a thing as a "circumscribed unity [abgegrenzte Einheit]" "tree," instead there is a plurality of attributes and relations (*KSA* 7:19[236]).

22. Marder, *Plant-Thinking*, 43.

23. Marder, *Plant-Thinking*, 39.

24. This passage is translated as *The Will to Power* §657.

25. This passage is translated as *The Will to Power* §660.

26. Marder, *Plant-Thinking*, 51.

27. For an extended analysis of these two different conceptions of embodiment in Nietzsche, see Vanessa Lemm, “Nietzsche, *Einverleibung* and the Politics of Immunity,” *International Journal of Philosophical Studies* 21.1 (2013): 3–19.

28. For an interesting comparison of inoculation in Nietzsche to inoculation through synthesis in Darwin, see Michael Skowron, “Nietzsches ‘Anti-Darwinismus,’” *Nietzsche-Studien* 37 (2008): 160–94.

29. Marder, *Plant-Thinking*, 40–41.

30. This passage is translated as *The Will to Power* §689.

31. Marder, *Plant-Thinking*, 170.

32. For Marder, plants lack self-identity due to their immobility and fusion with the environment: they are entirely given over to the other (Marder, *Plant-Thinking*). Nietzsche instead acknowledges their nomadic nature: plants can change location. Nietzsche distinguishes between two types of transplantation (*Verpflanzung*): a “thoughtless change of location [gedankenlose *Verpflanzung*]” where a plant is alienated (*entfremdet*) from its soil and then deteriorates into weed (*HL* 2) and a change of location (*Verpflanzung*) that functions as a “spiritual and physical cure [geistige und leibliche *Verpflanzung* als Heilmittel]” and even envisages transforming the entire earth (*Erde*) into a sum of “places to recover health [Gesundheitsstationen]” (*WS* 188).

33. On life, normativity, and becoming in Nietzsche, see also the contributions in Vanessa Lemm, ed., *Nietzsche and the Becoming of Life* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2015).

34. On the problem of culture and economy, see Vanessa Lemm, *Nietzsche’s Animal Philosophy: Culture, Politics and the Animality of the Human Being* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2009), chap. 3.

35. Leiter, *Nietzsche*, 11.