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ARTICLE

Nietzsche as panpsychist

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ABSTRACT

This paper argues that Nietzsche is a panpsychist. Panpsychism holds that mental features are ubiquitous and fundamental in reality. I first argue that Nietzsche's rejection of Cartesian dualism leads him to substance monism. To better understand his monism, I then examine Nietzsche's rejection of Newtonian atomism. Nietzsche holds that bundles of forces, or will to power, are more fundamental than hard, extended atoms. So, will to power is fundamental. I then investigate Nietzsche's remarks on organic and inorganic nature to show that he believes both are will to power. So, will to power is ubiquitous. The final step to panpsychism is to show that Nietzsche believes will to power exhibits mental qualities. As a result, Nietzsche thinks mental features are fundamental and ubiquitous in reality.

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It is standard to distance Nietzsche from the panpsychist view that mental properties (or noetic properties, I use them interchangeably) are fundamental and ubiquitous in reality. For example, many readers deny that Nietzsche has any positive metaphysical commitments whatsoever (Remhof, *Nietzsche as Metaphysician*, Chapter 1.1), while an even greater number deny the metaphysical reading of will to power, which, commentators correctly believe, plays an important role in deciding whether Nietzsche embraces panpsychism.

There are also no direct and sustained arguments for interpreting Nietzsche as a panpsychist in the literature. Those who support the position dedicate only a few pages to the idea (Hill, *Nietzsche's Critiques*, 138; *Nietzsche*, 86, 103–4), others just a footnote (Dries, "Becoming and Nihilism", 131). Some panpsychist readers attempt to explicate the position itself, without any focused argument for *why* Nietzsche endorses the view (Poellner, "Nietzsche's Metaphysical Sketches", 688–94; Ulfers and Cohen, "Nietzsche's Panpsychism", 145–62). And still others are apologetic about attributing such a view to Nietzsche. Doyle for instance, holds that Nietzsche is a panpsychist,

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but does her best to "save Nietzsche from the charge of panpsychism" (Doyle, *Nietzsche's Metaphysics*, 22, see also 217).

I agree at the outset that we might be reluctant to think Nietzsche is a panpsychist. Panpsychism is without a doubt intuitively strange. Do some people really think mental qualities are inherent in everything that exists – from the particles that constitute guinea pigs, to Saturn's rings, to quarks – and why do they believe that basic reality is somehow mental? Yes, panpsychism seems unorthodox. But the truth, I argue, is that Nietzsche is a panpsychist, metaphysical orthodoxy or not. As we know, Nietzsche is not afraid of advancing views which might initially appear strikingly counterintuitive.

In this paper, I develop an argument for interpreting Nietzsche as a panpsychist. I begin by addressing some initial worries about the project. These include the 'incredulous state' that panpsychism often receives, the tricky role of *BGE* 36, and the concern that panpsychism is problematically anthropocentric. After presenting my method and explaining how I use Nietzsche's notebooks, I introduce my chief argument. The bulk of the paper then goes on to defend the premises of that argument (if you would like to see the formal argument ahead of time, please skip to the end of the paper). If all goes well, it should emerge that Nietzsche embraces panpsychism.

1. The incredulous stare

Let's start by addressing the most intuitive response to panpsychism: the dismissive, incredulous stare. It just seems too fantastic, too improbable to believe that all particles of the universe have *minds*. Panpsychism has thus been judged "absurd" (Searle, "Information Theory") and "ludicrous" (McGinn, *The Mysterious Flame*, 97).

None of this hurts my reading. First, if one holds a *strange* view, then one holds a *view*, and my aim is merely to demonstrate that Nietzsche holds a particular view. For this reason, I will not be discussing whether I believe Nietzsche's version of panpsychism is an independently strong metaphysical position to hold, or whether the position faces serious difficulties. The argument I present simply aims at showing *that* Nietzsche is a panpsychist.

Would panpsychism have seemed strange to Nietzsche? This is an important question, and the answer seems to be 'no'. Not only has panpsychism enjoyed a long and venerable history in Eastern and Western philosophical traditions, but the interest in panpsychism reached its zenith in the nineteenth century. The largest panpsychist influence for Nietzsche was clearly Schopenhauer (Hill, *Nietzsche's Critiques*, 209–12). Understanding Schopenhauer with the closeness Nietzsche did should be reason enough to think Nietzsche understood the basic elements of the position.

Schopenhauer was not alone. Panpsychism was a serious philosophical position in Nietzsche's historical and intellectual context (Skrbina, "Panpsychism in the 19th Century", Chapter 5). Exponents included Gustav Fechner (1801–1887), Wilhelm Wundt (1832–1920), Eduard von Hartmann (1842–1906), Rudolf Hermann Lotze (1817–1881), William James (1842–1910), Ernst Häckel (1834–1919), Josiah Royce (1855–1916) and William Clifford (1845–1879) (see Goff, Seager, and Allen-Hermanson, "Panpsychism", Section 1). Nietzsche was directly familiar with the panpsychist views offered by some of these thinkers, such as Hartmann and Lotze, and he was indirectly familiar with panpsychism through those like F.A. Lange (1828–1875), who launched clear challenges to panpsychism.

Finally, the strangeness of panpsychism seems be wearing off. Panpsychism has been recently revived in analytic philosophy (see Seager, *Routledge Handbook*; Skrbina, *Panpsychism in the West*). It now has a substantial line of supporters which include influential folks such as Chalmers (*Panpsychism*) and Strawson ("Mind and Being"). We should then set aside the incredulous stare worry and continue with our assessment of Nietzsche.

2. Reading *Beyond Good and Evil* 36

Arguably, my reading seems to turn on how we understand *Beyond Good and Evil* 36, specifically whether we accept or reject the position that Nietzsche understands reality as will to power. I do not rest my panpsychist case entirely on this passage. But it certainly seems to present a panpsychist view of the world.

Nietzsche arguably claims that, given certain assumptions, all causal events can be most basically understood as events of will to power. Broadly, will to power consists in dynamic bundles of forces that attempt to actively expand influence over their environment. Nietzsche identifies the activity of force with mental activities such as *willing* (see also *GM* I: 13). The natural conclusion of BGE 36 then seems to be a commitment to panpsychism.

Yet readers have been against taking BGE 36 as evidence of Nietzsche's metaphysics since Kaufmann. In particular, it has been argued that the passage is boobytrapped against any straightforward interpretation (Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth*; Clark and Dudrick, *Nietzsche's Soul*; Loeb, "Will to Power"). Nietzsche's discussion hinges on several assumptions, for instance, which, some have contended, are not meant to hold. In the end, the literature has sided against taking the apparent panpsychist conclusion of BGE 36 seriously.

On my view, this interpretation is mistaken. Others, such as Schacht ("Nietzsche's Will to Power"), Welshon (*The Philosophy of Nietzsche*), and Doyle (*Nietzsche's Metaphysics*), have offered strong challenges to the anti-

metaphysical reading of *BGE* 36, and Hill (*Nietzsche*, 86–8) has used the passage to defend a panpsychist view of Nietzsche. I have developed my own metaphysical reading of BGE 36 (see Remhof, *Nietzsche's Constructivism*, Chapter 3.2). I think Hill is generally right to suggest that what appear to be assumptions in BGE 36 actually function as antecedents of conditional statements which become true once we see that Nietzsche endorses those antecedents (Hill, *Nietzsche*, 78). On this view, then, BGE 36 generally boils down to increasingly complex *modus ponens* arguments.

Here is an overview of my reading of *BGE* 36. The passage proposes that if a willed drive event can be understood as an instance of an efficient causal event conceived as will to power, then, after successfully generalizing into other domains, all efficient causal events might be justifiably modelled as will to power. A willed drive event might then be taken as an instance of a causal event conceived as will to power because they enjoy isomorphic structures (Welshon, *The Philosophy of Nietzsche*, 172–6). The antecedent of the *modus ponens* argument just stated holds, and the metaphysical conclusion follows. According to Nietzsche we should eventually be permitted to claim that all efficient causal events are most basically due to the operation of interacting bundles of forces. This concludes *BGE* 36.

My understanding of the passage is supported by Welshon (*The Philosophy of Nietzsche*), consistent with Schacht ("Will to Power"); differs in premises, but ultimately aligns with Doyle (*Nietzsche's Metaphysics*); disagrees with Poellner ("Nietzsche's Metaphysical Sketches") and Riccardi ("Nietzsche's Monism"); and opposes all non-metaphysical readings, such as those offered by Clark (*Nietzsche on Truth*), Leiter (*Nietzsche on Morality*); Clark and Dudrick (*Nietzsche's Soul*), and Loeb ("Will to Power").

My explanation of *BGE* 36 makes no reference to panpsychism. Yet Riccardi ("Nietzsche's Monism") has argued – perhaps correctly – that the kind of reading I offer leads to panpsychism. Riccardi thinks this route is problematic. He claims that Nietzsche's apparent panpsychism is "internally incoherent" ("Nietzsche's Monism", 120).

To say that will to power leads to panpsychism, Riccardi argues, we must grant that "reality is essentially constituted by fundamental forces whose 'internal quality' is the same sort of will to power that we grasp in volitional experience" (Riccardi, "Nietzsche's Monism", 120). According to Riccardi, we cannot grant this assumption because Nietzsche thinks we have no sensory acquaintance with the properties of force and extremely limited cognitive access to the properties of first-personal volitional experience (Riccardi, "Nietzsche's Monism", 119–21). Riccardi's argument leads him to say Nietzsche endorses pandispositionalism about force, which, according to Riccardi, runs counter to panpsychism.

In response, first, I point out below that Nietzsche comes to his understanding of force through Boscovich, who, importantly, offers a mathematical argument against Newton for understanding the central properties of force,

rather than an argument based on sensory experience (Poellner, *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*, 48–50). Nietzsche actually *praises* Boscovich for going beyond sensory evidence (see *BGE* 12). Second, although Nietzsche seems sceptical about our introspective awareness of volitional states, the antecedent of the overall conditional in BGE 36 simply posits the reality of drives, and Nietzsche has informative things to say about the reality and features of drives. My reading, which relies on showing structural isomorphisms between drive events and will to power events, rests merely on the assumption that we can become acquainted with the basic *structure* of drive-governed events – no more. I therefore see no reason think the panpsychist view Nietzsche seems to advance in *BGE* 36 is "internally incoherent" (Riccardi, "Nietzsche's Monism", 120).

3. Method and the *Nachlass*

To show that Nietzsche is a panpsychist I will not be relying on my previous reading of *BGE* 36. I instead employ two different, complementary strategies. I first present evidence of panpsychism in Nietzsche's other published work, specifically *BGE* and *GM*. There is a good deal more than what is often suggested. I then present what I take to be overwhelming evidence that Nietzsche embraces the conclusion of *BGE* 36 in the recently translated Spring 1885-Spring 1886 *Nachlass*, where Nietzsche works out the panpsychism introduced in *Beyond Good and Evil*. The evidence of panpsychism in the *Nachlass* passages that lead to *BGE* 36, I suggest, are too strong to be brushed off as passages that do not reflect Nietzsche's preferred view.

As mentioned, *BGE* 36 is often dismissed because it develops from certain assumptions. I have offered a way to understand these assumptions, but let's take a closer look at how we should approach them with the *Nachlass* open. Say Nietzsche advances X as true in the *Nachlass* in a number of substantive passages, while in published work he shies away from asserting that X is true. The passage might read "*Suppose* X … " or "*If* X … " or "*On the condition that* X *is met* … ". Nietzsche opens *BGE* 36 with this "*Suppose* X" move. He writes "Suppose nothing else were 'given' as real … " The question is: how do we treat X – the apparent assumption? As I see things, due diligence requires us to identify X, identify passages that contain content substantively relevant to X, prima facie grant Nietzsche the truth of X, and then examine and assess what follows if we grant Nietzsche the truth of X, including possible deductive implications and inductive consequences of X.

For these tasks the *Nachlass* becomes immensely helpful. For instance, the notes present the beginning of BGE 36 with no supposition whatsoever. He states, "Ultimately nothing is given as 'real' except thinking and sensing and drives" (*KSA* 11:40[37]). The terminology between published and unpublished passages is slightly different, but the point should be clear: Nietzsche

grants the supposition and openly *states what is real*. In fact, there is no mention of *any* supposition, unlike many *Nachlass* passages that unfold in conditional form. Nietzsche's note strikes me as reflecting his personal view. There is no audience to play with here, just him writing to himself, stating his immediate thoughts on what he believes "ultimately" exists before going on to examine possible consequences. One of those consequences, I suggest, is panpsychism.

Some readers, such as Clark (*Nietzsche on Truth*) and Leiter (*Nietzsche on Morality*), push to set the *Nachlass* aside. And those who are adamantly against opening the *Nachlass* would likely not find what I have to say convincing. Yet in the literature it is standard operating procedure to examine the *Nachlass* when investigating Nietzsche's metaphysics (see, e.g. Poellner, *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*; Richardson, *Nietzsche's System*; Hales and Welshon, *Nietzsche's Perspectivism*; Doyle, *Nietzsche's Metaphysics*). My project follows this standard. I have defended such a methodological position elsewhere (Remhof, *Nietzsche's Constructivism*, Chapter 2.1). On my view, a *Nachlass* passage should be fair game to readers, first, if it is largely consistent with published discussions, but, more importantly, if the passage functions to bolster support or further explain published content in helpful detail. This seems like the best way to understand Nietzsche overall.

4. Anthropomorphism

The final preliminary issue concerns anthropomorphism. Nietzsche appears to reject anthropomorphism. Yet it seems anthropomorphic to think human mental qualities, such as *willing*, exist in all existents. Presumably, then, Nietzsche is no panpsychist.

Let's look at the most famous passage that allegedly presents Nietzsche's rejection of anthropomorphism. He writes:

> The total character of the world, by contrast, is for all eternity chaos, not in the sense of a lack of necessity but a lack of order, organization, form, beauty, wisdom, and whatever else our aesthetic anthropomorphisms are called
>
> (*GS* 109).

What "aesthetic anthropomorphisms" should we reject? In particular, which conceptions of "order, organization, form, beauty, [and] wisdom", as Nietzsche mentions, should we discard? Nietzsche makes his target of the passage explicit at the close:

> When will all these shadows of god no longer darken us? When will we have completely de-deified nature? When may we begin to *naturalize* humanity with a pure, newly discovered, newly redeemed nature?
>
> (*GS* 109)

Nietzsche is calling for us to naturalize our projects. As one commentator aptly remarks, Nietzsche "calls for a 'de-*deification*' rather than a 'de-*humanization*' of nature" (Cox, *Nietzsche,* 102). The "aesthetic anthropomorphisms" that Nietzsche rejects are not properties associated with human beings that we attribute to the world, but instead properties associated with erroneous belief in God that human beings attribute to the universe. These include, Nietzsche says, conceiving the world as perfectly ordered, organized, formed, and beautiful. Nietzsche thinks that conceiving the world as perfectly ordered, for example, ultimately derives from beliefs essentially associated with belief in God, who has been said to author a world without fault. Since God is dead (*GS* 108), or since God – including any non-empirical, transcendent entities or worlds – has become unbelievable, we de-deify nature by ousting interpretations ultimately derived from theistic beliefs.

Nietzsche does not reject anthropomorphism across the board. For Nietzsche we inevitably and naturally 'humanize' the world to render it intelligible. Our empirical valuations and interpretations order, shape, arrange, and construct reality (see *HH* I: 2, 11, 16; *GS* 57, 58, 112, 301; for an extended explanation, see *Nietzsche's Constructivism*). Interpretation itself, for instance, consists in a variety of organizational activities. "The *essence* of interpreting", Nietzsche says, involves "pressing into orderly form, abbreviating, omitting, padding, fabricating, [and] falsifying" (*GM* III: 24, my translation). In fact, Nietzsche believes there would *be* no reality if we were to attempt to subtract our valuations and interpretations from reality (see *GS* 57).

Nietzsche suggests that we should openly recognize our constructive role in making the world (see also Goodman, *Ways of Worldmaking*). The revelation can lead to positive outcomes. He claims that "*we are neither as proud nor happy* as we could be", for instance, because we fail to acknowledge that "It is we, the thinking-sensing ones, who really and continually *make* something that is not yet there: the whole perpetually growing world of valuations, colors, weights, perspectives, scales, affirmations, and negations" (*GS* 301). Indeed, for Nietzsche we play a constitutive role in constructing the world. It is even the case that "whatever has *value* in the present world […] [has] been given value, granted value, and *we* were the givers and granters!" (*GS* 301). Unfortunately, we "lack" this "knowledge" (*GS* 301). According to Nietzsche we should openly accept that we 'humanize' the world.

Importantly, Nietzsche's attack on anthropomorphism in *GS* 109 does not block a panpsychist reading of *BGE* 36. There is no indication in *GS* 109 that Nietzsche believes mental properties cannot be fundamental and ubiquitous in reality. Nietzsche's claim is that our interpretations must be *naturalized*, that is, broadly continuous with the sciences. Insofar as panpsychism does not violate naturalistic constraints on inquiry, then, Nietzsche can embrace panpsychism. On my view, panpsychism derives from will to power, which provides the basis for Nietzsche's 'de-deified' conception of nature.

My reading is opposed to Loeb's non-panpsychist, epistemic interpretation of BGE 36 (Loeb, "Will to Power", 76). Loeb's reading turns on the mistaken view that Nietzsche rejects anthropomorphism *tout court*, which he gets from *GS* 109. Loeb holds that "Nietzsche's naturalistic methodology commits him to rejecting panpsychism [in *BGE* 36] as an anthropomorphic falsification of nature and reality" (Loeb, "Will to Power", 76; see also Riccardi, "Nietzsche's Monism", 119).

Here is my reply. I have argued that Nietzsche's naturalism supports the "humanist" view that we largely construct reality (Remhof, *Nietzsche's Constructivism*, Chapter 5.2, 5.1), and the view that mental properties are fundamental and ubiquitous is perfectly consistent with Nietzsche's naturalistic project in *GS* 109. That passage most basically undermines the justification of any beliefs that require non-empirical, transcendent truthmakers, such as God or the world in itself, including any beliefs derived from such beliefs, like the belief that the world is perfectly beautiful. The point I am trying to make is that for Nietzsche anthropomorphisms can be countenanced if naturalized.

5. The argument for panpsychism from Cartesian dualism and Newtonian atomism

Let me summarize my argument for Nietzsche's panpsychism before defending it. My interpretation turns on the idea that panpsychism is a natural consequence of Nietzsche's rejection of both Cartesian dualism, which postulates an ontological-causal divide between the self and the external world, and the Newtonian atomistic view of nature, which supposes that matter in motion provides the fundamental basis for explaining and predicting all physical phenomena in the world. In short, I contend that Nietzsche's rejection of Cartesian dualism and Newtonian atomism leads him to embrace panpsychism.

More specifically, I suggest, Nietzsche's rejection of Cartesian dualism leads him to endorse some form of monism. He denies the view that reality is ubiquitously material. He believes reality fundamentally consists in bundles of forces. But he does not deny the intelligibility or existence of the material world, like Berkeley. He instead follows Boscovich in holding that interacting forces are ultimately responsible for constituting the properties of the material world. In fact, Nietzsche believes forces are ubiquitous throughout the material world, dissolving the Cartesian causal interaction problem. Since Nietzsche thinks forces exhibit noetic qualities, we can conclude that he embraces panpsychism.

6. Against Cartesian dualism

Let me lay out textual evidence to support this argument. First, commentators such as Hill (*Nietzsche*, 86–7) have recognized that Nietzsche's rejection

of Cartesian dualism motivates panpsychism. However, Hill believes the failures of dualism lead to panpsychism because dualism cannot adequately account for the presence of phenomenological properties, such as qualia (Hill, *Nietzsche*, 86–7). Qualia does sometimes motivate panpsychism (see, e.g. Brüntrup and Jaskolla, *Panpsychism*). But Nietzsche is not very concerned with qualia (though see *KSA* 11:[76] and 2[157]). He is much more interested in offering a unique kind of monism in response to Cartesian dualism.

So, let's start with his rejection of dualism. Broadly, we know Nietzsche rejects Cartesian dualism because he believes we are entirely material entities. The clearest indication of this might come from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*: "But the awakened one, the one who knows, says: Body am I entirely, and nothing besides; and soul is merely a word for something about the body" (*Z* I: 4, see also *A* 14). We appear to be ubiquitously material. As a result, Nietzsche thinks that what philosophers have long regarded as the soul, namely, some entity ontologically independent of the body, must be reinterpreted as being ontologically continuous with our material nature.

Indeed, Nietzsche most often attacks Cartesian dualism on the grounds that the Cartesian subject, I, self, soul or ego is supposed to exist ontologically independent of its activities, such as thinking (*BGE* 54) and acting (*GM* I: 13), and yet the subject appears causally responsible for those activities. This ontological error then motivates a problematic view of causation. In a note from 1885, Nietzsche writes: "The belief in causality goes back to the belief that it is I who effects, to the division of the 'soul' from its *activity*. Therefore an ancient superstition!" (*KSA* 11:1[38], see also 1[39], 1[43], 2[83]; *BGE* 17; TI "Errors" 3).

For Nietzsche the division between cause and effect – and he does think we are, in some sense, legitimately allowed to use this distinction (*GS* 112; *BGE* 21) – cannot be an ontological division between two *kinds* of things, or two different *substances*. As I detail below, Nietzsche's ontology consists in only one kind of substance (that is, one kind of stuff): will to power. He is what I call a *type* or *kind monist* (for those who advance this view, see Remhof, "Nietzsche on Monism", 470 fn. 2). Nietzsche says the "essence" of "the world" consists in one kind of stuff (or substance): "will to power" (*BGE* 186).

Will to power describes Nietzsche's particular understanding of force. To say that the world is will to power is to say that "the world" is "force" (*KSA* 10:11[345], see also 11:1[105]). Forces exist in bundles and attempt to expand their influence over opposing bundles. Nietzsche calls success in such activity "growth" (*BGE* 230, see also 259) or the "growth of power" (*KSA* 12:2[08]). Growth emerges from what Nietzsche calls "quanta of will" (*KSA* 12:14[82]). Bundles of forces are effectively "wills" that attempt to increasingly expand influence.

Positing the world as will to power enables Nietzsche to understand causation in such a way that avoids the Cartesian substance causal interaction

worry. For Nietzsche "there is no other causality at all than that of *wills* to *wills*" (*KSA* 11:35[15], my emphasis). Causation only involves a single substance: *will*. He notes, " – movements are not '*effected*' by a '*cause*': that would be the old soul-concept once more! – they are the *will itself*, not entirely and completely!" (*KSA* 11:1[37], my second emphasis). Cause and effect are not ontologically distinct, as Cartesians postulate. Causation is instead entirely the activity of interacting bundles of forces. If all events that unfolded in the world could be described causally, for Nietzsche, then all events would be described as will to power.

Why does Nietzsche mention that events are "will" but not will "*entirely and completely*" (*KSA* 11:1[37], my emphasis)? In short, the world is not *merely* force, but material as well. To reach this conclusion we need to examine Nietzsche's rejection of Newtonian atomism.

7. Against Newtonian atomism

We have seen that Nietzsche's rejection of Cartesian dualism leads him to embrace kind monism. But his version of monism is not like traditional versions. Traditionally, kind monism holds that reality is ubiquitously mind (e.g. Berkeley), spiritual (e.g. Spinoza), or material (e.g. Hobbes). Nietzsche's rejection of Berkeleyan idealism in *BGE* 36 shows that he denies mind monism. The world is not wholly mental. And passages like *GS* 109 and *BGE* 230 suggest that he would never identify nature with God, so spiritual monism is out too. The world is also not entirely some supernatural substance.

What about material monism? Here we should pause. We know Nietzsche was both familiar and impressed with the German Materialist movement in the nineteenth century, especially Lange's *History of Materialism* (see Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*, 63–71). Plus, his sympathies for the philosophical naturalist view that philosophy should be, in some sense, continuous with the sciences, seems to align nicely with material monism. Science is often understood as examining an entirely material world – or at least, within Newtonian physics, a fundamentally material world. And the *Zarathustra* passage quoted above appears to present material monism as true. Nietzsche says that "the one who knows" believes "Body I am entirely" (*Z* I: 4). Assuming that the only non-bodily substances that might exist are *souls*, then conceiving the soul as body cleanses the world of mind–body dualism. Reality seems ubiquitously material.

However, Nietzsche's attacks on Newtonian atomism (*GM* I: 13; *BGE* 17; TI "Errors" 3), coupled with is praise for Boscovich's attacks on Newton (*BGE* 12), show that he rejects dominant forms of material monism. Nietzsche holds that "material 'atoms' can no longer be maintained" (*KSA* 11:40[39]). He comes to this conclusion in a few different ways. For example, he thinks we posit atoms as a consequence of our belief in souls. He writes:

> the assumption of atoms is *only* a consequence of the concept of subject and substance: somewhere there must be 'a thing' from which the activity proceeds. The atom is the last descendent of the concept of the soul.
> (*KSA* 11:1[43], see also *BGE* 17; *GM* I: 13; *TI* "Reason" 5, "Errors" 3)

What is going on here? Nietzsche rejects the subject, I, self, soul or ego as something ontologically independent of its activities. If there is any doubt about this characterization being *ontological*, notice that in his argument against material atomism Nietzsche says that our mistaken belief about the subject leads to positing the "Kantian 'thing-in-itself'" (*GM* I: 13; see also *TI* "Errors" 3, see also "Reason" 3). Things in themselves exist ontologically independent of our activities.

Back to the passage. Nietzsche claims that we posit "atoms" (*KSA* 12:1[43]; GM I: 13) on the erroneous Cartesian model of the subject. We falsely believe that hard, solid entities, which exist ontologically independent of their effects, comprise basic reality – just as the soul might exist as the fundamental constituent of a person.

Nietzsche is then specifically concerned with rejecting Newtonian materialist atomism, which forms the basis of mechanistic explanation in the nineteenth century. Materialist atomism holds that, at the ground level, reality consists in hard, extended atoms. In Newtonian physics, Nietzsche tells us, we erroneously posit, "besides the operating 'power', that *lump of matter* in which it resides and out of which it operates – the atom" (*BGE* 17, emphasis mine). "Power", or *force*, is fundamental. Forces, rather than Newtonian atoms, comprise fundamental reality. Nietzsche thus continues: "More rigorous minds […] learned at last to get along without this 'earth-residuum'" (*BGE* 17), by which Nietzsche means hard, impenetrable, extended atoms at the basic level of reality.

On Nietzsche's account, forces are physical, active powers (see, e.g. *KSA* 12: 14[122]) – in a word, they are *dynamic*. The active quality of bundles of forces makes them physical. Their interactions also have concrete, tangible consequences. In a very broad sense, then, we can say that Nietzsche is sympathetic to material monism, insofar as the physical is included in the material. The dynamic nature of forces together with their effective causal powers renders force physical within a material world.

But Nietzsche can only embrace materialism if the view allows for mental properties to be instantiated by physical properties. If these conditions are met, then, given his panpsychism, we can say that he combines material monism with mental monism. On my view, Nietzsche's panpsychism derives from the position that forces, which are physical and ungrounded, exhibit mental properties.

Nietzsche's view that force is fundamental is largely adopted from Boscovich. He takes Boscovich to have sufficiently "refuted" "materialistic atomism" (*BGE* 12), which posits hard, extended atoms as fundamental. Boscovich provides a mathematical argument which concludes that within Newtonian

physics matter is intrinsically comprised of materially ungrounded forces (Remhof, *Nietzsche's Constructivism*, 31; Poellner, *Nietzsche and Metaphysics*: 48–9; "Nietzsche's Metaphysical Sketches", 680). For Boscovich the relative positions and velocities of force-points, together with a complex law of force, can account for all properties of matter (Boscovich, *A Theory of Natural Philosophy*, 6).

Nietzsche shares Boscovich's basic position that force is ultimately ungrounded. On Nietzsche's account, interacting bundles of forces – on his view, will to power – form reality at its core. In a striking note, Nietzsche proclaims that "The will to power is the last factum to which we are able to get down" (*KSA* 11:40[61]).

Nietzsche supplements Boscovich's dynamic ontology by arguing that the Newtonian conception of force fails sufficiently to explain matter in motion. This is clearest in the *Nachlass*. He says, "I need the starting point '*will to power*' as the origin of motion" (*KSA* 12:14[98]). "The triumphant concept 'force'", he remarks, "requires one more enhancement: an internal world must be attributed to it, to which I refer as 'will to power'" (*KSA* 11:36[31]).

Nietzsche offers his own view of force – will to power – to describe how forces are ultimately required to set material atoms in motion (see also Moles, *Nietzsche's Philosophy*, 168ff.). He explains that "One must grasp all motion, all 'appearances', all 'laws' only as symptoms of an internal event" (*KSA* 11:36[31], see also 1[30], 1[59]). By "appearances" he means phenomena in the empirical world – the only world (see, e.g. *TI "*Reason" 2, 6; "World"). "*Appearance* as I understand it", he writes, "is the actual and single reality of things" (*KSA* 11:40[53]). "Appearances", which comprise the entirety of the empirical world, are "symptoms" of some "internal event" which sets them into motion. This "internal event" is the activity of will to power. He continues: "A specific name for this reality would be the 'will to power', namely described from the inside" (*KSA* 11:40[53]). In sum, for Nietzsche will to power should replace material atoms at the bottom of reality.

Let me take stock. Nietzsche comes to kind monism, the view that reality wholly consists in one kind of thing, by rejecting Cartesian dualism. What version of kind-monism does he adopt? He rejects monism concerning mind and God or spiritual substance. He rejects Newtonian material monism, specifically materialist atomism, and instead holds that physical forces – which, I argue below, instantiate mental properties – are ubiquitous, fundamental, and ultimately constitute non-fundamental material reality.

8. Ubiquity of force

I have argued that for Nietzsche reality is will to power. I would like to drive this point home by looking at his explicit remarks on organic and inorganic

reality. First, consider organic reality, which covers anything living. Nietzsche states that "life itself is *will to power*" (*BGE* 13, see also *Z* II: "Overcoming"), and that "will to life" is "will to power" (*GS* 349). "Life" is "defined as an enduring form of the process of force determinations" (*KSA* 11:36[22]). "*The will to power*" is offered as "the basic will of all living things" (*KSA* 11:34[260], see also 35[15]; 12:7[54]). In sum, Nietzsche asserts that "The character of the absolute will to power is present in the entire realm of life" (*KSA* 11:1[54]). Organic reality is will to power.

Not surprisingly, then, he expands his monism to human beings. He claims, for instance, "Movements are symptoms, thoughts are likewise symptoms: desires are verifiably behind both, and the fundamental desire is the will to power" (*KSA* 11:1[59], see also 1[20]). And: "our intellect, our will, likewise our sensations are dependent on our *valuations*: these correspond to our drives and their conditions of existence. Our drives are reducible to *the will to power*" (*KSA* 11:40[61], see also 1[30], 39[12]). Human beings are fundamentally will to power – our movements, thoughts, desires, intellect, will, sensations, and drives, for example, are ultimately grounded in will to power (see also *KSA* 11:35[15], 40[7], 2[99]).

Consider now the inorganic world. Nietzsche notes that "the *inorganic world* that stands behind [the organic world] is the *greatest synthesis of forces*" (*KSA* 11:1[105]). He even writes, " – that it is the will to power that also guides the inorganic world, or rather that there is no inorganic world" (*KSA* 11:34[247]).

Why suggest there is no inorganic world? The answer is panpsychism. In another *Nachlass* passage, Nietzsche calls out the "fundamentally false valuation of the *sensate* world toward the *dead one*" (*KSA* 10:11[70]). According to him, it is "fundamentally false" to value the living (organic) world over the dead (inorganic) world. He claims that "we call [the living world] the *interior* and we see the dead world as *exterior* – fundamentally false! The 'dead' world! eternally animated and without error, force against force!" (*KSA* 10:11[70]). So, it is false to believe that the inorganic world is "exterior" to the "interior" organic world. What comprises inorganic reality also comprises organic reality, and so inorganic reality is not "dead" – it is "eternally animated" through interactions of "force against force".

For Nietzsche the difference between the organic and inorganic is not a difference in *kind* but *degree*. He writes, "the living is only a form of what is dead" (*GS* 109, see also *KSA* 11:35[59], 36[22], 39[13], 10:11[70]). To be a "form" of something, in this sense, is to share its ontological kind. Organic and inorganic existents differ only in degree: "The transition from the world of the inorganic into that of the organic is that from the firmest perceptions of force values and power ratios into that of *uncertain, indefinite* ones" (*KSA* 11:35[59], see also 36[22]). The specifics of this "transition" do not concern me. What matters is that forces, which for Nietzsche *perceive* in

some rudimentary sense, render the organic world ontologically continuous with the inorganic world. The ubiquity of force establishes an ontological continuity between organic and inorganic reality.

9. Continuity and emergence

Before continuing with the overall argument, I want to flag that such continuity suggests another reason Nietzsche might be sympathetic to panpsychism. I cannot make a complete case for the argument here, but it warrants mentioning.

A primary argument for panpsychism turns on rejecting mind emergence (see Goff, Seager, and Allen-Hermanson, "Panpsychism", Section 3.1). It is common to believe that at some earlier time in the history of our universe, the mind did not exist, but at some later time, the mind does exist. In some sense, then, or in some way, the mind *emerged* from the material. This view is called *mind emergentism*. It holds that at some point in the past mental properties emerged from non-mental properties.

One might immediately see the worry: mind emergentism seems to require some kind of "miracle" (Skrbina, "Panpsychism", 105). How might something with entirely non-mental properties – no properties of perception, intention, feeling, and the like – somehow give rise to perceiving, intending, and feeling entities? This puzzle has hurt the plausibility of mind emergentism (Skrbina, *Panpsychism in the West*: 17–20; "Panpsychism", 104–6). The two anti-emergentist camps that arise in response hold that reality is either entirely without mind or entirely minded. For those who want to retain the mind, panpsychism is the choice. Or at least, commitment to anti-emergentism, while retaining the mind, strongly suggests panpsychism.

As I see things, Nietzsche's view that reality is ubiquitously force, together with his remarks on the nature of opposites, suggest that he might indirectly support panpsychism. Recall his famous take on opposites from *HH* (see also *BGE* 2):

> Almost all the problems of philosophy once again pose the same form of question as they did two thousand years ago: how can something originate in its opposite, for example rationality in irrationality, the sentient in the dead, logic in unlogic, disinterested contemplation in covetous desire, living for others in egoism, truth in error? Metaphysical philosophy has hitherto surmounted this difficulty by denying that the one originates in the other and assuming for the more highly valued thing a miraculous source in the very kernel and being of the "thing in itself."
>
> (*HH* I: 1)

Nietzsche holds that one of the primary problems facing philosophy is trying to explain how something originates from its opposite. He reports that traditional metaphysical views have offered a particular answer to this question.

Such views deny that opposites develop from each other and instead posit that the higher valued opposite, such as truth, ultimately derives from a source outside the world of experience, such as Kant's thing in itself.

Nietzsche suggests that there are no opposites. The passage is titled "*Chemistry of concepts and sensations*", which indicates that chemistry might help illuminate how we should best understand apparent opposites. How might this work? He claims there exists "neither an egoistic action nor completely disinterested contemplation; both are only sublimations" (*HH* I: 2). In chemistry, *sublimation* is a process where a solid state moves to a gaseous state without passing through the intermediary liquid state.

For Nietzsche we should apply this kind of continuity to understanding opposites. We think opposites exist because we ignore the hidden middle process between complex phenomena. The middle process, which ties apparent opposites together, "reveals itself only under the most painstaking observation". As he adds in *The Wanderer and His Shadow*: "Ordinary, imprecise observation sees opposites everywhere in nature (like 'warm and cold', for instance), where no opposites exist, but only differences of degree" (*HH* II: 67). Chemistry can supply a way of understanding the phenomena, whereas philosophy has long gone wrong by positing the existence of opposites.

Mind emergentism, however, embraces an extreme ontological opposite: no mind, then mind. Nietzsche asks, rhetorically, "how can something originate in its opposite?" (*HH* I: 1). In this case, how can mind originate in a non-mental world? Nietzsche's likely answer: it can't. On these grounds – again, coupled with the view that reality is will to power – a case could be made that Nietzsche is an anti-emergentist, specifically a panpsychist. But we cannot yet make that conclusion until we demonstrate that forces are minded.

10. Mental qualities of force

I have claimed that Nietzsche thinks reality is ubiquitously and fundamentally will to power. To show that reality is minded I need to show that will to power involves noetic properties. This will help enhance the plausibility of the anti-emergentist argument just suggested while also finalizing my primary argument for Nietzsche's panpsychism.

Before beginning, I want to note that the noetic qualities Nietzsche thinks forces exhibit are not features of representational consciousness which produce reflections like self-awareness. In contemporary terms, Nietzsche rejects *panexperientialism*, the view that representational consciousness is fundamental and ubiquitous. For Nietzsche "consciousness is the latest development of the organic, and hence also its most unfinished and unrobust feature" (*GS* 11, see also 354). Representational consciousness comes onto

the stage late in the development of the world. Forces are not tiny persons, or homunculi. Forces exhibit a much more primitive form of mentality, which I now explore.

Nietzsche famously employs highly mental imagery when describing will to power – this much is uncontroversial (Doyle, *Nietzsche's Metaphysics*; Ulfers and Cohen, "Panpsychism"; Richardson, "Nietzsche's Value Monism", "Nietzsche on Life's Ends"; Poellner, "Nietzsche's Metaphysical Sketches"; Dries, "Becoming and Nihilism"; Hill, *Nietzsche*, *Nietzsche's Critiques*; Porter, "Nietzsche's Theory of the Will to Power"; Staten, "A Critique of the Will to Power"). Some people take this mental imagery to be merely metaphorical, whereas I take Nietzsche at his word when he describes the activities of force using mental language.

What mental features do forces have? Consider this *Nachlass* entry: "In order for this will to power to be able to express itself", Nietzsche explains, "it must perceive those things it pulls, that it *feels* when something assailable by it approaches it" (*KSA* 11:34[247]). These forms of *feeling* and *perception* appear ubiquitous. The organic world contains feeling and perceiving entities, of course, but Nietzsche says that "absolute accuracy" requires us to "concede *perception* even for the inorganic world" (*KSA* 11:35[53], see also 11:35[59]). Will to power involves forces that sense opposition and exhibit perceptual awareness, both of which are typically associated with mentality.

These properties lead Nietzsche to say that bundles of forces *interpret* their environment. "The will to power *interprets*", he asserts, "it demarcates, determines degrees, power differentials. Mere power differentials could not perceive themselves as such: a growing-willing something [viz, a bundle of forces] must be there, that interprets every other growth-willing something [viz, other bundles of forces] in terms of its value" (*KSA* 11: 2[148], see also 11:2[151], 12:9[151]; *BGE* 230, 259). Bundles of forces participate in *interpretive* activities like demarcating boundaries, determining differences, and even evaluating other forces. This form of interpretative awareness seems to require some kind of mindedness.

Nietzsche sometimes understands the interpretive awareness of forces as *intentionality*. He writes, for example, "'Attracting' and 'repelling' in a purely mechanistic sense is a complete fiction: a phrase. We cannot conceive of an attraction without an *intention*. – The *will* to gain power over something or to resist its power" (*KSA* 11: 2[83], emphases added). The basic idea is something we mentioned above. For Nietzsche Newtonian processes such as attraction and repulsion are nothing without reference to fundamental forces that set matter in motion. He here suggests that the activity of forces requires reference to an "intention" consisting in a "will" to overcome and resist being overcome.

The awareness forces exhibit when attempting to expand influence then involves active *willingness* towards some target. He writes, a "quantum of

power is essentially a *will* to violate and to defend oneself against being violated'' (*KSA* 12:14[79], my emphasis), and ''a quantum of force'', which, I think, can be substituted for a quantum of power, ''is equivalent to a quantum of drive, *will*, effect'' (*GM* I: 13, my emphasis). Forces express will in ways that appear to assume minded engagement with reality: they ''violate'' and ''defend'' against other forces, for instance. This form of will is ultimately will to power. Indeed, Nietzsche asserts that ''all driving force is will to power'' (*KSA* 12:14[121]).

Altogether, then, will to power seems to involve mental qualities such as perceptual and interpretive awareness of the environment, intentionality concerning attraction and repulsion, and a willingness to engage opposing forces. All of these features are essentially features of mental life. However we understand the specific nature of perceptual awareness, interpretation, intentionality, and will, they certainly all appear to involve reference to some type of mental phenomena. The terms Nietzsche uses to describe will to power predicate noetic features of reality. Will to power involves mentality. Since ''will to power'' is the ''single will that inheres in all that happens'' (*KSA* 12: 11[96]), Nietzsche is a panpsychist.

11. Panpsychism

Let me finish the paper by looking at where Nietzsche seems committed to panpsychism in *Beyond Good and Evil*. I focus on Nietzsche's thoughts on organic and inorganic nature. When discussing organic nature, Nietzsche states that ''life itself is will to power'' (*BGE* 13). He later expands on this synonymy to inform us about the properties of living organisms as will to power: ''life is *essentially* appropriation, injury, overpowering of what is alien and weaker, suppression, hardness, imposition of one's own forms, incorporation and at least, at its mildest, exploitation'' (*BGE* 259). The attributes of life listed here – appropriation, suppression, imposition, incorporation, and so on – are attributes of will to power. All appear to involve some kind of mental quality. If so, then it looks like Nietzsche is attributing noetic properties to all living phenomena.

Next consider Nietzsche's discussion in *BGE* 230. He describes the ''basic will of the spirit'' in noetic language (*BGE* 230). He says the will ''wants to be master'', ''wants to feel that it is master'', ''has the will from multiplicity to simplicity'', ''tames, and is domineering and truly masterful'', works to ''appropriate the foreign'', expresses an ''inclination to assimilate the new to the old, to simplify the manifold'', and can be summarized as ''growth'', which Nietzsche identifies with ''the feeling of increased power'' (*BGE* 230). There should be no debate that these properties are essentially associated with minded entities.

Plus, importantly, Nietzsche thinks the capacities exhibited by the basic will of the spirit are ''the *same* as those which physiologists posit for

everything that lives, grows, and multiplies'' (*BGE* 230, my emphasis). These capacities, namely, the capacity to feel, will, appropriate, incline, and so forth – which all describe will to power – are mental capacities. And Nietzsche thinks these capacities should become the very basis for understanding organic processes. Again, the living world is minded.

Now turn to inorganic reality. Nietzsche mentions that we live in ''a world whose essence is will to power'' (*BGE* 186). At face value, it looks like the features that describe will to power in organic reality should then carry over to inorganic reality. If so, then we arrive a ubiquitously minded world. Panpsychism then emerges once we remember that for Nietzsche, following Boscovich, force not just ubiquitous but fundamental.

The mindedness of inorganic reality emerges elsewhere too. Consider his views on natural laws in *BGE* 22. Nietzsche first calls out a ''bad mode of interpretation'' offered by physicists (*BGE* 22). This interpretation consists in attempting to show ''conformity of nature to law'' (*BGE* 22). Nietzsche rejects this motivation because he thinks it is surreptitiously motivated by the modern democratic obsession with equality. Indeed, he thinks someone with a different mode of interpretation might understand natural law-like phenomena differently, namely, as ''will to power'' (*BGE* 22). The traditional physicist and Nietzsche's new interpreter examine ''the same 'nature'" and ''the same phenomena'' (*BGE* 22) but they disagree about how best explain it. Nietzsche favours the will to power interpretation but finishes the passage by granting that his preference is just one way of interpreting reality.

Nietzsche effectively wants to replace what we consider laws of nature with power relations (for an opposing reading, see Clark and Dudrick, *Nietzsche's Soul*, 223–9). He commonly notes that "'laws of nature' are determinations of power relations'' (*KSA* 11:39[13], see also 34[247], 1[30], 2[139]). ''What is at stake'' in laws of nature is, in fact, ''an absolute determination of power relationships: the stronger gains mastery over the weaker'' (*KSA* 11:36 [18]). Here we have more highly noetic language. Forces ''*attempt*'', that is, attempt to ''*gain mastery*'', for example. And to suggest replacing laws of nature with law-like power relationships between bundles of forces – relationships that govern events within both organic and inorganic reality – Nietzsche seems to think inorganic reality is minded.

We have once again arrived at Nietzsche's panpsychism. ''*The essence of the world*'', he states without hesitation in the *Nachlass*, is ''*a thinking* […] *thing*'' (*KSA* 11:39[11], emphasis added). It cannot be clearer than that.

Let me finish by looking at how *BGE* 36 develops from the *Nachlass*. The passage mainly derives from *KSA* 11:40[37]. Nietzsche first asks, ''Should it not suffice for us to think of a 'force' as a unity in which willing sensing and thinking are still mixed and undifferentiated?'' (*KSA* 11:40[37]). Given what I have argued, we should read this as rhetorical. In short: yes, forces

are minded. He then says, "Ultimately nothing is given as 'real' except thinking and sensing and drives […] I do not mean as appearance: but precisely as real as our willing feeling thinking are – but as a more primitive form of them" (*KSA* 11:40[37]). The idea is that forces, in the form of "drives" which contain a "unity" of "willing sensing and thinking", comprise basic reality. So, forces are minded and comprise basic reality.

Such entities are also ubiquitous throughout the world. He continues:

> In the end the question is this: whether we acknowledge the will really as *effecting*? If we do this, then naturally it can only have effect on something that is *of its kind*: and not on "materials." *Either* one must interpret all effect as illusion (for we have formed our idea of cause and effect only according to the model of our will as cause!) and then nothing at all is comprehensible: *or* one must attempt to think all effects as being of the same kind, like acts of will, hence make the hypothesis as to whether all mechanical events, insofar as there is force in them, are not simply force of will
>
> (*KSA* 11:40[37])

In contrast to other readings (e.g. Clark, *Nietzsche on Truth*, 7), Nietzsche endorses causality in a world that is ubiquitously will. He holds that will "can only have effect on something that is *of its kind*, and not on 'materials'". Will, or bundles of forces, cannot be in causal relationships with anything ontologically distinct from will.

Nietzsche explains that if we accept the Cartesian dualist view that the subject is ontologically distinct from its thoughts or actions and somehow provides the basis for causing those thoughts or actions, we come to an erroneous position on causality, and consequently we *fail* to comprehend the world. But if we posit the view that all causal events most basically consisting in relations between forces, such that "there is no other causality at all than that of wills to wills" (*KSA* 11:35[15]), then we have a good chance of explaining *all* worldly phenomena. So, denying panpsychism effectively undercuts our chances at coming to understand the natural world, whereas advancing panpsychism enables success.

Argument

Let me summarize my argument for the view that Nietzsche is a panpsychist.

(1) Only one substance (or kind of stuff) exists.
(2) Will to power is the only substance that exists.
(3) If so, reality is ubiquitously will to power.
(4) So, reality is ubiquitously will to power (from 2, 3).
(5) Will to power holds that forces comprise fundamental reality.
(6) So, reality is ubiquitously and fundamentally will to power (from 2, 3, 4, 5).
(7) Forces instantiate noetic features.

(8) If so, reality is ubiquitously and fundamentally minded (from 5, 7).
(9) So, reality is ubiquitously and fundamentally minded (from 4, 6, 7, 8).

The conclusion establishes panpsychism. The justification for premise (1) derives from Nietzsche's attacks on Cartesian dualism – Nietzsche is a kind monist. Both published work and unpublished notes substantiate premise (2), that is, the idea that the essence of the world is will to power. Premise (3) should be straightforward: if the only substance (or kind of stuff) that exists is will to power, then everything is will to power. With respect to premise (5), the view that forces are fundamental comes from Boscovich, and Nietzsche interprets force as will to power. I just spent time defending premise (7), namely, that for Nietzsche forces essentially exhibit mental qualities. Finally, like premise (3), premise (8) is largely straightforward. If these premises are true, Nietzsche is a panpsychist.

But are the premises true? I have tried to frame the argument in a way that might allow for challenges from multiple directions. For instance, those who think that Nietzsche is not interested in having clear metaphysical commitments concerning the nature of reality could deny premise (1) (for a list of those who embrace this reading, see Remhof, *Nietzsche as Metaphysician*, Chapter 1.1). Or one might challenge premise (5) by arguing that will to power is not an ontological thesis. Maybe it is merely psychological (see Leiter, *Nietzsche on Morality*). There are other places to push back, of course, but I am hopeful that the textual evidence I have provided sufficiently supports the soundness of the argument.

Conclusion

What next if we accept this conclusion? Three kinds of projects come to mind. Internal to Nietzsche's texts, I'd like to see how commitment to panpsychism might affect his non-metaphysical commitments – if there are important connections. I have in mind, say, epistemological commitments, or his even his practical ethical concerns. Nietzsche's ontological positions, for instance, strongly impact his view of truth (Remhof, *Nietzsche's Constructivism*, Chapter 5.1) and even nihilism (Remhof, *Nietzsche's Constructivism* Chapter 6). We might also blend the internal and the external, so to speak, and flesh out the details of Nietzsche's view by closely comparing his version of panpsychism to contemporary versions developed in the literature. Once we nail down more details about Nietzsche's panpsychism, then, external to Nietzsche's texts, we might wonder whether his particular panpsychist position is independently plausible, or whether his panpsychism might have theoretical virtues to offer. I look forward to future work on Nietzsche as panpsychist.

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