

Nietzsche's Monster of Energy

The Self-Creation of the Great Man

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Abstract

In this thesis I develop an account of Nietzsche's great man framed around the idea that he is a 'monster of energy.' In the first part I establish that Nietzsche developed a criterion to assess the value of values, centred on whether they express abundance or exhaustion. Cultivating an abundance of energy is the key to how we should approach the problem of suffering, how we master *ressentiment*, and ultimately, how we experience authentic joy. We should thus use energy expenditure as the standard to evaluate the different narratives that we use to interpret ourselves and our existence. In the second part I use this criterion to establish the types of narratives most conducive to creating oneself as the monster of energy. I argue that the great man should desire to determine his own will, should cultivate strength of character, believe in the freedom of his will, and take responsibility for the self that he has created. Finally, I examine the attitude the great man should adopt towards his past, and argue that we should reject the idea that the eternal return plays an important role in the process of becoming a great man, since this process should emphasise the necessity of self-mastery, asceticism, and the cultivation of a unified and volitional self.

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