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NIETZSCHE'S IDEA OF THE ETERNAL RETURN OF THE SAME AND ITS
RELATION TO FATALISM

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Nietzsche's Idea of the Eternal Return of the Same and Its Relation to Fatalism

Nietzsche'nin Aynıının Ebedi Dönüşü Düşüncesi ve Fatalizmle İlişkisi

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FOREWORD

The idea of destiny has been a theme throughout history, from literature to art, from politics to science. Since this study is a study of philosophy, we tried to deal with fate philosophically. The philosophical treatment of destiny brought the idea of eternal return against fatalism. It is interesting that the idea of eternal return, despite its different qualities, has been the subject of humanity since time immemorial. This situation shows us that people are in a struggle against time. Archaic people tried to stop time, and philosophers in Ancient Greece studied the relationship between soul and body and resorted to ideas of immortality against time. In daily life, many situations force people and prevent them from feeling good, and after a while, people ask, "Will it always be like this?" he asks. This question becomes a fundamental theme in almost every field involving humanity: time and uncertainty. The idea of eternal return has fallen on humanity's agenda as an antidote to both time and uncertainty. Nietzsche added one more theme to these two themes and thus discussed the eternal return: Will. At the beginning of this work, we tried to discuss these two themes by adding Nietzsche's third theme. This is how the subject of this study was determined.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Ed.	Edition
p.	Page
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ABSTRACT

The idea of eternal return, one of the main themes of Friedrich Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, has been mainly discussed between two approaches: eternal return cosmologically and eternal return ethically.

This study has two main aims. Its primary purpose is to show that the idea of eternal return has an ethical rather than a cosmological one. The study's second aim is to show that the eternal return of the same is not a fatalistic idea. Eternal return is not a phenomenon that began to be discussed with Nietzsche. This phenomenon has been discussed since prehistoric and ancient times. When we look at the ideas of eternal return in the mentioned periods, it is seen that the eternal return of the same is put forward as a cosmological thought. The idea of eternal return in the animist world of mind, when even no trace of anthropomorphic gods has yet been found, tries to stop time by recreating a creative and perfect first act.

On the other hand, in the philosophical world where mythology opens the door, the eternal return gradually begins to gain an ethical appearance. Significantly Heraclitus' idea of the war of opposites influenced Nietzsche. For Nietzsche, the eternal return is not cosmological as it was in prehistoric and ancient times. Nietzsche discussed the idea of eternal return in the field of ethics. In this way, he put forward the eternal return around the basic concepts of *Übermensch* and *Amor Fati* as a "revaluation of values" principle. Besides, it can be said that the principle of eternal return does not mean an inevitable repetition for Nietzsche. In other words, it does not have a fatalistic quality. On the contrary, it is understood that eternal return, as the principle of revaluation values, is an antidote to absolute and fixed morals and principles.

Keywords: Eternal Return, Fatalism, Perspectivism, *Übermensch*, Revaluation

ÖZET

Friedrich Nietzsche'nin *Böyle Buyurdu Zerdüşt* isimli eserinin temel konularından birisi olan ebedi dönüş düşüncesi özellikle iki yaklaşım arasında tartışılmıştır: Kozmolojik olarak ebedi dönüş ve etik olarak ebedi dönüş.

Bu çalışmanın başlıca iki amacı vardır. İlk amacı ebedi dönüş düşüncesinin kozmolojik bir düşünce olmaktan ziyade etik bir niteliğe sahip olduğunu göstermektir. Çalışmanın ikinci amacı ise aynının ebedi dönüşünün fatalist bir düşünce olmadığını göstermektir. Ebedi dönüş Nietzsche'yle tartışılmaya başlayan bir olgu değildir. Tarihöncesi ve antik çağlardan beri bu olgu tartışılmaya gelmiştir. Söz konusu dönemlerdeki ebedi dönüş düşüncelerine bakıldığında aynının ebedi dönüşünün kozmolojik bir düşünce olarak ortaya konulduğu görülmektedir. Henüz insanbiçimci tanrıların bile izine rastlanmadığı, animist zihin dünyasının söz konusu olduğu dönemlerdeki ebedi dönüş düşüncesi yaratıcı ve kusursuz bir ilk eylemi yeniden canlandırarak zamanı durdurmaya çalışır. Buna karşılık mitolojinin kapı araladığı felsefi dünyada ise ebedi dönüş yavaş yavaş etik bir görünümü kazanmaya başlar. Özellikle Herakleitos'un zıtlıkların savaşı düşüncesi Nietzsche'yi etkilemiştir.

Nietzsche için ebedi dönüş, tarihöncesi ve antik çağlarda olduğu gibi kozmolojik bir nitelikte değildir. Nietzsche, ebedi dönüş düşüncesini etik alanında tartışmış ve bu minvalde *Übermensch* ve *Amor Fati* temel kavramları çevresinde ebedi dönüşü, bir "değerleri yeniden değerlendirme" ilkesi olarak ortaya koymuştur. Bunun yanında, Nietzsche için ebedi dönüş ilkesinin kaçınılmaz bir tekrar anlamına gelmediği de söylenebilir. Diğer bir deyişle fatalistik bir niteliği yoktur. Değerleri yeniden değerlendirmenin ilkesi olarak ebedi dönüşün, mutlak ve sabit ahlaklara ve ilkelere karşı bir panzehir gibi işlev gördüğü anlaşılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ebedi Dönüş, Fatalizm, Perspektivizm, Übermensch, Yeniden Değerleme

INTRODUCTION

The subject of this study was determined by a general thought effort on the concepts put forward by Friedrich Nietzsche. The German philosopher and philologist packed groundbreaking ideas into his short and turbulent life. That's why I don't just use the term philosopher for him because his philologist side has a very important place in the formation of his philosophy.

One of the groundbreaking concepts mentioned above is the idea of the eternal return, which we can call the main theme of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, one of Nietzsche's most important works. The main question of our study is asked around this concept and this question has two legs: Is the idea of the eternal return a cosmological thought or an ethical one? Is the idea of the eternal return a fatalistic idea? I think of these two questions as interconnected. Because, as a fatalistic thought, the cosmological aspects of the eternal return can be assumed. As we will mention in our study, fatalism assumes a divine upper will which determine everything. If a divine upper will determine everything, then what meaning does the will of a mortal, earthly, biological-as a result, a living-individual have? But we know the importance of the will for Nietzsche. In that case, the fact that the eternal return is a cosmological idea may cause it to acquire some fatalistic aspects. But we will argue in this study that the eternal return is not cosmological and therefore not fatalistic. In the first title of the first chapter, we will concentrate more on the ideas of eternal return in prehistoric and ancient times. The reason we do this is to see how the idea of the eternal return has undergone changes since prehistoric and ancient times and to try to clarify its reflections on Nietzsche. By prehistory we mean the times when writing was not yet discovered and historical people as an organized social being did not appear on the scene. In these times, people have more animistic thoughts. They have more open relationships with nature. What are these open relationships? For example, the sea is a living thing, a mountain is a living thing, just like a tiger or a bird or another human being. These forms of relationship are more open because they have not yet assumed a mystical and religious character.

The relationship with nature includes much simpler equations. In this regard, we will benefit from Mircea Eliade's *Cosmos and History*. Following Eliade, we will speak of primitive people who established open relations with nature, that is, animistic relations. He/She is not conscious of history; time is a field filled with many uncertainties for him/her. Although historical consciousness has not been formed, there is a consciousness of tomorrow and this tomorrow should be lived as smoothly as today. This is exactly why primitive people want to stop time and achieve this by animating an event that he sees as a perfect and at the same time founder and initiator. This seems to be the basis of the idea of the eternal return adopted by primitive people in the prehistoric age. We will try to show that primitive people's idea of the eternal return has a cosmological meaning. When we come to ancient times, we will talk about ancient people, namely Ancient Greek philosophy. In this person, on the other hand, historical consciousness has begun to form and its relationship with nature seems to be more indirect. The sea, mountain, or sky, which is seen as a direct living thing, has been replaced by the sea god, the mountain god, or the god of the sky. Gods began to mediate the relations between nature and people. As a result of this mediation, the relationship between people and nature began to mystify and acquire a religious character. In this period, we see that the idea of the eternal return has become mystical at the same rate, but the cosmological aspect has not been stripped yet. While examining the idea of the eternal return in ancient times, we will focus on the thoughts of Pythagoras, Heraclitus (a thinker we will especially focus on), Plato, Aristotle's thoughts, and the Stoics and Early Christian thought. The reason why we dwell on Heraclitus so much is that his way of thinking that informs the dialectic influenced Nietzsche a lot. As a matter of fact, among the thinkers and schools whose names we have mentioned above, Heraclitus will be the thinker who opens the door to the ethical consideration of the eternal return, although he thinks about the eternal return cosmologically. Heraclitus' ideas of change and the war of oppositions seem to have greatly influenced Nietzsche's idea of the eternal return. For this reason, it would be useful to dwell on it more. This influence may enable us to establish a similarity between the idea of the eternal return in Nietzsche and in ancient times.

Second title of first chapter will be the most crucial part. The last part of our work will be the most crucial part. This is the part that will contain the final answer to our main question. Let's remember our question: Is the thought of eternal return a fatalistic thought? If the will meets destiny and paves the way for the eradication of old values and the creation of new values, then eternal return cannot be a fatalistic thought. Because *Übermensch*, who destroys values and sets new values with its own creative will, is the person who writes its destiny, and this destiny is a necessary destiny for it.

When we come to the first part of the second chapter, there will be the concepts of *Übermensch* and *Amor Fati*, which are seen as the basic concepts in Nietzsche's philosophy. For Nietzsche, the *Übermensch* is a new stage. We shall see that it is its own legislator, judge, and criminal. *Amor Fati* is an ethical concept that we can translate as "love of destiny". Why is it ethical? Because the destiny in question in *Amor Fati* is a volitional and necessary destiny that can be repeated forever, it is creative and destructive. For Nietzsche, this is the point where will come into relation with destiny. More specifically, it is the most vital point to argue that the idea of the eternal return is not a fatalistic one. The next chapter can be thought of as a continuation of the previous chapter. After explaining the thoughts on *Übermensch* and *Amor Fati*, the possibilities of how to think of the eternal return in Nietzsche's philosophy ethically will be explored. After expressing our ideas about considering the eternal return as an ethical concept, we will focus on revaluation of values. Revaluation of values is also key to Nietzsche's philosophy. The meeting of the will with destiny will only be possible with the revaluation of values.

The final title of the second chapter contains the interpretation of eternal return as an ethical consideration. This interpretation is related to the phenomenon of revaluation of values. Actions and values that can be chosen endlessly are only possible with this practice of revaluation. In this study, we used the concept of "integrated/peaceful action" when it comes to actions and values that can be chosen infinitely. We want to express with this concept that, according to Nietzsche, an

action that can be the subject of eternal return can only occur with an action integrated with the will and in peace.

CHAPTER ONE: ETERNAL RETURN AND ANTIQUITY

1.1. THE IDEA OF THE ETERNAL RETURN OF THE SAME IN ANTIQUITY AND NIETZSCHE

The idea of the eternal return is a thought that has existed on the intellectual agenda of humanity since ancient times. There have been many studies on the emergence, development and change of this idea. These studies have diversified in direct proportion to the emergence of the idea of the eternal return in different cultures of the world. However, considering the limitations of our study, we will mostly focus on the sources of the idea of the eternal return in Ancient Greece. Another reason for this limited mention is that the idea of the eternal return was first discussed philosophically in Greece. Like many other myths, the idea of the eternal return was tried to be transformed from myth to logos in Ancient Greece.

In general, the idea of the eternal return in the ancient world is a more elaborated thought than is thought. One of the main reasons for this is that thought is related to time and life. Anthropologist and historian of religion Mircea Eliade points to the aim of “to endure to history” as the main reason why the idea of the eternal return takes place in the ancient world in a mythological sense. In the archaic man's world¹, he argues, the idea of the eternal return as a precaution against time was repeating a first action, thereby removing time from being an adverse process. According to Eliade, the practice of repeating this first action was a sacred practice and there was no such thing as profane in the primitive world.² More importantly is the purpose of these practices. As we mentioned above, Eliade stated that the idea of enduring history was the main reason for these practices. In addition, the practice of reviving the creative power of eternal action seems to have manifested itself in the phenomenon of blessing and celebrating the new year. Every New Year is the

¹ The word archaic “man” belongs to Eliade. In this part of our study, we will use the original terms in our works.

² Mircea Eliade, *Cosmos, and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*, Trans. Willard R. Trask, (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1959), 30.

beginning of time, a repetition of the cosmogony.³ Trying to repeat the cosmogony, that is, the aim of starting time from the beginning, and the fact that the eternal return is related to time and its beginnings in the universe show us that the idea of the eternal return was handled and processed as a myth in the cosmological sense in the ancient world.

Although the idea of the eternal return gained its philosophical significance in Ancient Greece, it was a general idea in antiquity. While we are investigating the similarities between Nietzsche's idea of the eternal return and how it is discussed in ancient times, we will also examine how the idea of the eternal return has been welcomed in different cultures outside of the Greek world. In doing so we will follow Mircea Eliade's work *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return* which focuses on the archaic man's practice of enacting the first action (transcendent and creative action), whose traces can be found in the Ancient Greek world too. We do so because we claim that the idea of the eternal return in Nietzsche is an ethical principle, and we think that this claim will be supported by this investigation.

When we look at the findings about the primitive man⁴ that has reached today thanks to the anthropological studies, we see that the archaic man's perception of time and correspondingly of history (or the idea of history writing) differs from the modern understanding of time and correspondingly the consciousness of history. History as a science expresses a linear understanding of time that is constantly moving forward and the human conditions in this time. Language makes the content of history visible and creates a classifiable time bundle. For example, everything that has happened from the past to the present has been transferred either orally or in writing, and the record of the past has emerged. The transfer constitutes the knowledge of the past. This information seems to be

³ Eliade, *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*, 55.

⁴ In his *Cosmos and History: The Myth of the Eternal Return*, Mircea Eliade uses the word "primitive" to express the consciousness of archaic man. (Chapter named: Archetypes and Repetition, 5.) In some parts of his work, the words "archaic" and "primitive" are used interchangeably. We chose to use the word "archaic."

much more comprehensive and detailed than the primitive man's perception of time because, for archaic man, the imitation of an archetypal model is a reactualization of the mythical moment when the archetype was revealed for the first time. Consequently, these ceremonies too, which are neither periodic nor collective, suspend the flow of profane time, of duration, and project the celebrant into a mythical time, *in illo tempore* ("in illo tempore" is Latin for "in that time" a term used by Mircea Eliade to describe the time before recorded history)⁵. So why was this first event/action worth remembering and re-enacting?

For archaic peoples, re-enacting and remembering some actions was significant. Eliade explains the significance of this repetition as the following: "*Among primitives, not only do rituals have their mythical model but any human act whatever acquires effectiveness to the extent to which it exactly repeats an act performed at the beginning of time by a god, a hero, or an ancestor*".⁶ In other words, when an act that is conducted by a god or ancestor at the beginning of time is repeated by people through rituals, it is believed that the recreation of the faultless and completely safe situations that resulted from the divine hand would also be recreated. Thus, magnificent execution of the first act would be repeated. The first feature of this animated action is that it was carried out first and most accurately by the strongest and the first being, that is god or a godlike figure. The re-enactment of a first action or event is also the repetition of the cosmogony. At this point, the choice of the action that repeats the cosmogony is related to the reasons mentioned above. That action must have been done most magnificently and by the first, because only in this way can one keep up with the changing and unreliable pace of time.

The idea of the repetition of the first act as well as cosmogony suggest that there was no history as we understand the term today for archaic man and/or that the perception of time was completely different. We may even argue that there was no perception of time, the consciousness of the past or history as today. Why?

⁵ Eliade, *Cosmos, and History: The Myth of Eternal Return*, 76.

⁶ *Ibid*, 21.

According to primitive mind⁷, the repetition of cosmogony or the first creation resulted in the abolition of time understood in its simple term as something moving forward. The reason for the abolition of time is the possibility of this abolished time to contain many distortions and disintegration. By re-enacting the great constructiveness of the first act, these possible distortions and disintegration are resisted, that is, against time.

*“Insofar as an act (or an object) acquires a certain reality through the repetition of certain paradigmatic gestures, and acquires it through that alone, there is an implicit abolition of profane time, of duration, of “history” and he who reproduces the exemplary gesture thus finds himself transported into the mythical epoch in which its revelation took place”.*⁸

Another meaning of this example gesture becoming exemplary is that it is the gesture that has received the highest approval in the minds of archaic people. Thanks to this gesture, the irreversible progress of history has been resisted. The people of the "prehistoric age", which is frequently referred to today when classifying the past, made the cosmogony repeat itself to transfer time to a primordial time all over again. This man's main purpose was not to improve life but to transfer him/herself to a primeval time that contained the most wonderful.

So far, we have interpreted the meaning of the rites and blessings that have a considerable place in the life of archaic people. The meanings attributed to these practices were intended to repeat a cosmogony for people living in prehistoric times. However, we see that such a perception of time is no longer as common as it used to be. Time has now begun to express linearity that is assumed to progress with a certain setting and order, and most importantly, constantly. However, as we have tried to indicate above, there was no such time for the archaic people.

⁷ As we mentioned in the fourth footnote, Mircea Eliade uses the concept of the primitive mind in conjunction with the concept of archaic man. In our study, the words "primitive man," "primitive mind," or "archaic man" were used interchangeably.

⁸ Eliade, *Cosmos, and History: The Myth of Eternal Return*, 35.

To address the emergence of the idea of the eternal return as a philosophical idea rather than a myth, we must now turn to the Ancient Greek thinkers. The most important point to be noted at this point is that the idea of the eternal return was mostly discussed in Ancient Greece over the basic discussion of the mortality or immortality of the soul. As it is often stated, until Socrates, Ancient Greek philosophers were more interested in natural sciences such as physics and biology, and astronomy. But there are some pre-Socratic philosophers who somehow incorporated the idea of the eternal return into their philosophical thinking. Two of these thinkers are particularly important for our subject: Pythagoras and Heraclitus. Influencing many Ancient Greek philosophers who came after him, Pythagoras and his followers dealt with the idea of the eternal return more in accordance with the quality of myth. According to Pythagoras and his followers, while the body is mortal because it is material, the soul is immortal. When the body is unclean, the soul is pure. Living is nothing but a constant journey. A constant going from this world to the next: here the idea of reincarnation (reincarnation) is encountered. It is accepted that the soul wanders from body to body, depending on how it evaluates its life in this world, and by observing a hierarchy between bodies.⁹ There is a remarkable point here. Although the idea of the eternal return has not yet lost its mythical character in Pythagoras and maintains a cosmological character in terms of being a commute between lives and times, it seems to have acquired an ethical plane in terms of being a process of rebirth and incarnation shaped by some moral conditions. The way in which Pythagoras and his followers approached the idea of the eternal return, half religious, half philosophical, can be interpreted as the reason for their giving an ethical character to it. At the beginning of this section, we mentioned that the idea of the eternal return was discussed mostly over the immortality of the soul in Ancient Greece and generally in ancient times. This line of discussion is a fundamental line on which ancient accounts of eternal return proceed. The fact that Pythagoras and his successors treated the idea of eternal return with the concept of transmigration with a philosophical as well as a religious

⁹ Mehmet Ali Ağaoğulları, *Sokrates'ten Jakobenlere Batı'da Siyasal Düşünceler*, (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2014), 59.

aspect may have brought an ethical aspect to their thoughts, but the most important point that should not be overlooked is that the eternal return has not been discussed outside of the main discussion line we have mentioned above.

Another Ancient Greek thinker that should be carefully considered regarding the idea of the eternal return is Heraclitus. Heraclitus is one of the first philosophers in the history of philosophy to place the dialectical method in the center of his philosophy so intensely. Heraclitus says that existence is in a constant state of becoming. The war of opposites brings about being. Evil creates good, hunger creates satiety. In this respect, according to Heraclitus, this war is necessary. In addition, Heraclitus's answer to the question "*What is the main substance of the universe, namely arkhe*", on which natural philosophers often dwell, is fire. Fire can change everything but is itself unchanging.

On the other hand, this change is not a random change, here another important concept in the philosophy of Heraclitus, logos, comes into play. Heraclitus also reveals the dialectical method he placed based on his philosophy over fire. According to him, fire first becomes one thing, then something else. But then these things go back to their original form, namely fire, following the same process, but in reverse. However, in the process of all these top-down and bottom-up changes, the amount of the thing that changes, namely the fire, does not change. Second, and more importantly, these changes themselves take place according to a measure, an unchanging law. The law, which does not change in the changing, according to which the change takes place, is the logic of the change: "*That which always was, and is, and will be everliving fire, the same for all, the cosmos, made neither by god nor man, replenishes in measure as it burns away.*"¹⁰ Heraclitus calls this measure or law "*logos*". Logos is an ambiguous Greek word that is extremely difficult to translate into other languages. It mainly means "*word, sentence that forms a whole, complete word, ratio, thought, meaning*" and finally "*reason*". What Heraclitus means here by logos is essentially measure and

¹⁰ Heraclitus, *Fragments: The Collected Wisdom of Heraclitus*, Trans. Brooks Haxton, (New York: Penguin Books, 2001), 21.

law: “*The sun will not exceed its dimensions. If he does this, the Erinys, the servants of justice, will catch him.*”¹¹ The situation where fire first becomes one thing and then something else and then returns to its original state is like the emergence of the idea of the eternal return from another angle. Heraclitus states that this is taking place according to a law, namely logos. But this law has no purpose, and Heraclitus clearly expresses this thought with the following fragment that has survived: “*Life is a child playing; so, it's a game of checkers: it's the child's kingdom.*”¹² This is how the idea of the eternal return, in which everything turns into something else and finally returns to its original state, was processed in this way in the philosophy of Heraclitus. The idea of eternal return, which we think is processed in the philosophy of Heraclitus, is a cosmological thought. The reason for this is Heraclitus' ideas about the beginning of the universe. According to him, the universe has no beginning, because Heraclitus talks about the immutability of logos-fire and existence relations and says that the world order is “*a fire that always burns according to logos and goes out according to logos.*”¹³ In another fragment of Heraclitus, he says that the world is an ever-living fire¹⁴. If the world order is a fire that always burns in accord with logos, then the event that everything becomes something else and then returns to its original state is also a cosmological event.

Another thing to add about Heraclitus is his thoughts on the soul. In Heraclitus, there is the change of souls rather than the death or immortality of the soul. The saying, “*The river where you set your foot just now is gone— those waters giving way to this, now this.*”¹⁵ can give a clue about what he thinks about spirits. The river example in the previous sentence is a metaphor for the philosophy of Heraclitus. This saying can be adapted to us as the same soul does not live twice because new souls are born each time. Because, in the cycle that is formed by the flashing of fire, which is the main substance of everything, according to the logos,

¹¹ Ahmet Arslan, *İlkçağ Felsefe Tarihi 1: Sokrates Öncesi Yunan Felsefesi*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2016), 195.

¹² Heraclitus, *Testimonia-Fragmenta-Imitationes*, Trans. Güvenç Şar, Erdal Yıldız, (İstanbul: Dergah Yayınları, 2016, 1.Ed.), 163.

¹³ Arslan, *İlkçağ Felsefe Tarihi 1: Sokrates Öncesi Yunan Felsefesi*, 195.

¹⁴ Heraclitus, *Fragments: The Collected Wisdom of Heraclitus*, 27.

¹⁵ *Ibid*, 39.

new souls are constantly formed, and this cycle turns into pure fire and repeats again. From this point of view, it can be said that according to Heraclitus, there is death for individual souls because the same soul will not be born again, but the concept of soul in general does not die because it maintains its existence uninterruptedly as something that is constantly changing and occurring.

The conclusion that can be drawn from a summary of how Pythagoras and Heraclitus, two prominent philosophers in pre-Socratic Greek philosophy, approached the idea of the eternal return in their philosophies, is that the eternal return in these thinkers is related to the immortality of the soul and the motions and cycles in the universe. After Socrates, there are two prominent names and a school of thought in Greek philosophy. Especially in his works of maturity and old age, Plato dealt with his theories about the soul in a more comprehensive way in his dialogues. Aristotle, on the other hand, cannot be said to be very close to the idea of the eternal return, but we think it is necessary to mention it in terms of participating in this ancient discussion about the soul. When we look at the Stoics, we see that the ideas of immortality of the soul and eternal return are handled much more intensely. In addition, the Stoics' idea of multiple universes is also important in terms of the way they handle the idea of eternal return.

Plato is quite detailed in creating his theory of the soul. Plato believes that body and soul are made of different stuff. This means that they have different essential properties, in particular, that the body is subjected to mortality and the soul isn't, that they have different relations to becoming and transformation (the soul only changes through recollection, while the body changes entirely through time, by way of aging, disease, amputation, growth, etc.), and finally, and importantly, that they are in a hierarchical relation with each other (they are engaged in a rivalry for dominance) as well as a normative relation (the soul is superior to the body and therefore it should dominate it).¹⁶ He talks about the parts of the soul, and the relationship of the soul with the body was seen as an issue that

¹⁶ Frank Chouraqui, *The Body and Embodiment: A Philosophical Guide*, (Lanham: Rowman&Littlefield, 2021), 17.

should be emphasized for Plato. According to him, the soul is the principle of change and transformation. What is even more important here is Plato's treatment of the soul as a principle. The soul is that which is in constant motion, and as such it is immortal. The discussion about whether the soul is mortal or immortal, which we have mentioned above, and which has been discussed since the time of the pre-Socratic philosophers, has gained the conclusion that the soul is immortal in Plato. Plato takes the soul as a principle of action in terms of its nature and essence. Plato divides the beings in the universe into two, namely as inanimate and animate. Inanimate beings are those that do not have the ability to move with their own power but move forcibly because of the application of an external force, motion. In contrast, living beings or animals are things that can move on their own, that carry within themselves the principles of their movement. It is the soul, which is the source and principle of these spontaneous, voluntary movements that make living beings into living beings and emerge from them. In his *Phaedrus* dialogue, Plato likens the soul to a winged chariot and says that the body becomes mobile only with the soul. One of the most critical issues in the metaphor of the winged horse is Plato's saying that with the incarnation of the soul, it is no longer possible to talk about an immortal being:

“Let us then liken the soul to the natural union of a team of winged horses and their charioteer. The gods have horses and charioteers that are themselves all good and come from good stock besides, while everyone else has a mixture. To begin with, our driver is in charge of a pair of horses; second, one of his horses is beautiful and good and from stock of the same sort, while the other is the opposite and has the opposite sort of bloodline. This means that chariot-driving in our case is inevitably a painfully difficult business. And now I should try to tell you why living things are said to include both mortal and immortal beings. All soul looks after all that lacks a soul, and patrols all of heaven, taking different shapes at different times. So long as its wings are in perfect condition it flies high, and the entire universe is its dominion; but a soul that sheds its wings wanders until it lights on something solid, where it settles and takes on an earthly body, which then, owing to the

*power of this soul, seems to move itself. The whole combination of soul and body is called a living thing, or animal, and has the designation "mortal" as well. Such a combination cannot be immortal, not on any reasonable account."*¹⁷

In *Nomos* (897a), Plato makes it clear that "*physical changes actually have a psychological origin*". According to this, the soul moves everything on earth and in the sea with its own movement, and these movements are not merely displacement movements, as we have pointed out before, they are willing, researching, paying attention, making decisions, thinking right and wrong, rejoicing and being sad, they include being brave and afraid, hating and loving, in short, all intellectual and emotional activities. As a result, this view means that the soul is at the root of everything that happens in the universe, and since the soul itself is a conscious entity in essence, the entire universe is managed mentally.¹⁸ Here, we see that Plato, like Heraclitus, associates the principle of movement and change with a rational source.¹⁹ Heraclitus said that the fire, which is the main substance of the universe and can change everything even though it does not change, flashes according to logos and goes out according to logos. This time, Plato states that the soul is the principle of change and movement, and says that the soul, which is a conscious being, is at the root of everything that happens in the universe.

On the other hand, Plato's thoughts on the form of the soul are also new in the history of Ancient Greek philosophy. Pre-Socratic Greek thinkers tended to think of the soul more as a material entity, for example, according to Anaximenes, the soul was a heap of air, according to Heraclitus it was pure fire, according to Democritus it was a combination of fine atoms. But in Plato, the soul is an immaterial, and spiritual, divine substance, and most importantly, the soul is a

¹⁷ Plato, *Phaedrus*, Trans: Robin Waterfield, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002, 1.Ed.), 27-31.

¹⁸ Arslan, *İlkçağ Felsefe Tarihi 1: Sokrates Öncesi Yunan Felsefesi*, 145.

¹⁹ What we mean when we say the rational source is Plato's view of the universe as something that is governed by reason. According to Plato, the soul is a conscious being, and wanting, investigating, being careful, making decisions, loving; In short, all intellectual and emotional activities are made possible by the spirit. So, if the soul is a conscious being, we can assume a rational source for managing the universe here.

principle. It is certain that Plato believed the soul to be immortal. But his teaching about which part of the soul is the immortal, and the nature of this immortality, its conditions, and what the future life will be like, is not certain. In many of his dialogues, Plato speaks of Orphean-Pythagorean transmigration, that is, the teaching that the soul passes into the body of a higher or lower species because of its good or bad behaviors in its previous life, and thus is subject to the wheel of births, and even occasionally uses this teaching. makes statements implying that it finds reasonable and adopts it. However, we have to say that this theory, that one soul wears out many bodies, is not a theory that he espouses. As he always presents this theory as a story or legend, it is understood that what interests him most in this theory is only its moral content.²⁰ That moral content is that if a person is wicked and cruel, or a good and virtuous person, he should be getting paid for that state in another life. Since there was no clear belief in the afterlife in Ancient Greece, the idea of a transmigration shaped by moral situations seemed plausible and appropriate for justice. But the point we are interested in here is how Plato looks at the idea of transmigration. The idea of transmigration and future life, like the natural philosophers, was thought through the basic debate of the mortality or immortality of the soul, but Plato, seeing the soul as a self-moving thing and the principle of change, looked at this debate from a much newer point compared to the thinkers of the past. The fact that the soul is not considered as a material phenomenon has opened the door to thoughts in which it is evaluated as moral. But still death is in play. The processes of change, transformation and reincarnation are still possible with death. Like the natural philosophers in the past, there is a situation for Plato to undergo a transformation with the universe. Although Plato considers moral reasons while dealing with the ideas of transmigration and future life, he has not yet separated the soul from death and considered it as a cosmological entity.²¹

Aristotle, the philosopher we will talk about after Plato, joined the debate on the immortality of the soul from an opposing side. His view of the mind-body

²⁰ Ahmet Arslan, *İlkçağ Felsefe Tarihi 2: Sofistlerden Platon'a*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2006, 1. Ed.), 375.

²¹ Plato's thinking of the soul as immortal indicates that he still thinks of the soul with death.

problem is not entirely clear. He rejects Platonic dualism and defines the soul (psyche) as the form of the living body.²² While referring to Plato's theory of the soul, we mentioned that he said that the body is a prison for the soul regarding the relationship between the soul and the body. Aristotle, on the other hand, does not look at the relationship between soul and body in this way. It is possible for the soul to preserve its existence after death in the views that completely deny the body like Plato or accept the soul and body as two completely different substances. For Aristotle, like Plato, the soul is "*the principle of life, movement, and thought.*" However, for Aristotle, this principle cannot exist independently of the substance or body of which the soul is. It asserts that seeing the soul's relationship with the body is like the relationship between the eye or the cutting with the ax; it is impossible to continue to see or cut after the eye explodes or the ax rusts after the body has somehow disappeared. Therefore, he would also see the continuation of the soul as impossible.²³ Aristotle has a remarkable idea of eternity. Aristotle attempts to show why the general structure of the universe must be such as it is. The activity of God is eternal life. Therefore, the movement of the heaven, which is a divine body, must be eternal, and for this reason the heaven must be a rotating sphere. But the center of a rotating body is at rest.²⁴ Aristotle's views on astronomy seem to have shaped his perspective on the divine and the mortal. According to Aristotle, we can say that the soul is related to life. So, there should be no soul movement after life ends because the soul exists with life and ends with life. Aristotle's conclusion from the fact that the activity of God is eternal life is that the movement of the heaven, which he sees as a divine body, must also be eternal. Aristotle's understanding of the soul is related to life and vitality. However, it may be an incomplete thought to think of this vitality in the animate-non-living dichotomy. If the soul is related to life and God has eternal life, God must also have a soul. The distinction to be made here is the state of the soul in the mortal and the divine. In the mortal, the soul is related to physiological life, and when life ends

²² Sir David Ross, *Aristotle*, (New York: Taylor&Francis, 2005, e-library edition), 4.

²³ Ahmet Arslan, *İlkçağ Felsefe Tarihi 3: Aristoteles*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2007, 1. Ed.), 32.

²⁴ Ross, *Aristotle*, 58.

physiologically, the soul's movement stops. However, in the divine, the soul is in motion endlessly by the infinity of the deity, just like the eternal movement of the heaven, which is considered a divine body, according to Aristotle.

Stoics, who were mentioned as a school of thought in the period after Aristotle and who deeply influenced both Rome and Christianity with their philosophy, handled the idea of the eternal return very clearly. The Stoics agree with Plato and Aristotle that there is only one universe. However, unlike them, they think that this unique universe is repeated in terms of time. According to them, each of these successive universes follows the same process, that is, they come into existence and disappear through the same stages.²⁵ In the Stoics, each of the successive universes, in terms of its general scheme of formation, starts from a universal fire event that took place at the beginning: In the next stage, the transition from fire to other elements and beings is followed by the stage of the other elements and beings turning into fire, melting and disappearing in it, so that after the general formation phase of the universe is closed, the same process starts from the same point and repeats through the same stages. As can be seen, the theory of 'eternal returns' is the theory that suggests that the universe re-created and disappeared cyclically following this same process.²⁶ The basis of these thoughts of the Stoics is the idea of God they have. According to them, the principles of the universe are God and Matter²⁷. God and Matter are eternal. If God is eternal and matter is eternal, then they still exist in the beginning, and since both are eternal, both will exist as the principles of the universe from now on. If the same matter was eternally shaped by the same god, it will also be eternally shaped. Therefore, after a universe disappears, another universe will be created, and life will continue in that universe. In fact, some Stoics said that the creatures living in the new universe formed by the

²⁵ Ahmet Arslan, *İlkçağ Felsefe Tarihi 4: Helenistik Dönem Felsefesi: Epikürosçular, Stoacılar, Septikler*, (İstanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2008, 1. Edition), 276.

²⁶ Arslan, *İlkçağ Felsefe Tarihi 4: Helenistik Dönem Felsefesi: Epikürosçular, Stoacılar, Septikler*, 277.

²⁷ We capitalize the first letter of the word "matter" because, according to Stoics, matter is perceived as a phenomenon shaped in the hands of God, and we want to reflect this.

destruction of the old universe will be the same living things with the re-creation of the creatures in the old universe.²⁸

When it comes to the Western world, we may think of different reasons for such a shift, one of which, maybe the most influential one, is the development of the Christian doctrines which is not completely detached from the Platonic ideas, or Neo—Platonism.

Plato was a major formative intellectual influence on Christianity which in turn, is the single most important intellectual influence in the way we in the West have come to think about our bodies and live in them. As you remember, understanding how this thinking and this mode of being came about is crucial for us, and it takes us back to Plato.²⁹ Plato described two worlds: the world of ideas and the world of representations. Considering pain as a means of salvation and purification, especially from the perspective of Christianity, may have been supported by this philosophical teaching. As it is known, according to Christianity, there are two kingdoms: the Kingdom of Earth and the Divine Kingdom. Just like the world of ideas and visible world. That's how closely Platonism and Christianity are weaved together—from a cultural perspective at least. In fact, we should say that the link between Platonism and Christianity concerns only one strand of Platonism, the one that emphasizes the first point: the soul and the body are naturally distinct, the body threatens the purity of the soul, and the soul should dominate the body.³⁰ The suffering and violence of this world may seem much more understandable to the Christian individual than to the archaic individual. The kingdom of earth is not the kingdom of God, his kingdom is in the heavens. Therefore, it is natural for this world to be full of pain and violence, and enduring it is important in terms of showing the degree of faith.

The second and more important reason for our subject seems to originate from Aristotle. Aristotle's doctrine of matter-form and teleological perspective, that

²⁸ Arslan, *İlkçağ Felsefe Tarihi 4: Helenistik Dönem Felsefesi: Epikuroşçular, Stoacılar, Septikler*, p.310

²⁹ Chouraqi, *The Body and Embodiment: A Philosophical Guide*, 16.

³⁰ *Ibid*, 17-18.

is, the doctrine that matter potentially carries its form and that its purpose is to reach this form, seems to have affected the perception of time that emerged with Christianity. The world's being full of pain and violence is thus made understandable for the second time. However, all these negativities have a purpose, salvation, and purification of the soul. The fact that everything has a purpose and meaning has changed the perception of time. All these positive and negative things that happen have a meaning. The deceased is not born again, and everything experienced becomes "history" irreversibly. It would also be useful to mention regret and prayer here. The rituals of archaic man are commonly physical. These are rituals performed with rhythmic physical movements such as dance, usually in the form of festivities. We have stated that the purpose of these rituals is to repeat the cosmogony. This purpose is not caused by any regret, the purpose is to revive and transfer to the best and undisturbed first time. But the monotheistic people attach great importance to prayer and repentance. The change in the perception of time has brought these two practices to the fore. Prayer for repentance and forgiveness for the irreversible actions done in the irreversible time may also be related to this perception of time.

By discussing the approaches of prominent philosophers and schools of thought in Ancient Greek philosophy to the idea of the eternal return, our aim was to show how all ancient philosophy looked at this thought. As we have seen, the idea of the eternal return, which was frequently processed when a dominant definition of creation and destruction was not yet formed, can be thought of as a situation related to cosmic perception. A universe that will constantly repeat itself and lives that will constantly be reborn is a situation that can only be possible within such a perception of cosmic time. In ancient times, when time was perceived as such, the idea of the eternal return was also grasped in cosmology both philosophically and mythologically, and therefore, rebirth or coming back to the beginning was considered as a process that could be possible after a real death.

After examining the ideas of the eternal return in ancient and archaic ages,³¹ we can refer to the idea of the eternal return in Nietzsche. We claim that Nietzsche's idea of the eternal return expresses an ethical rather than a cosmological concept. First, this chapter discusses the similarities between the ideas of eternal return in ancient times and those of Nietzsche's eternal return. At this point, the commonality of Heraclitus' thoughts with Nietzsche's thoughts is particularly interesting. There is a crucial moment in Nietzsche's final review of his philosophical career when he singles out Heraclitus as the canonical philosopher in whose company, he feels warmer and better disposed than elsewhere.³² He wonders whether he is right in seeing himself as the first tragic philosopher since there is some reason to think that Heraclitus might also have been a proponent of tragic wisdom. As evidence, he lists what he regards as Heraclitus' ideas of the affirmation of transience and destruction, of saying "yes" to opposition and war, and of becoming and the radical rejection of the very concept of "becoming." He says he must acknowledge that these ideas are more closely related to his ideas than any others conceived to date. And then he adds to this list the doctrine he elsewhere says is his own most significant idea, the eternal recurrence of the same, and says that this doctrine might also have been taught already by Heraclitus. As support, he cites the traces of this doctrine in the Stoics and their claim to have inherited almost all their fundamental ideas from Heraclitus.³³ Nietzsche sees Heraclitus' thoughts on the eternal return as a predecessor. However, here we should point out that Heraclitus may have conceived the idea of the eternal return in a cosmological situation. The important thing here is what Nietzsche inherited from Heraclitus. That thing is conflict and becoming. The most common theme in the fragments of Heraclitus that has survived to the present day is conflict and becoming. Heraclitus assumes conflict

³¹ What we understand from the archaic ages is the animistic age. In other words, it is the period in which life is attributed even to the inanimate, in the absence of certain gods. Antiquity, on the other hand, is the time that covers the early periods of pagan, ancient Greece, and Christianity.

³² Friedrich Nietzsche, *Ecce Homo: How to Become What You Are*, Trans. Duncan Large, (New York: Oxford World's Classics, 2007, 1.ed), 47-48.

³³ Paul S. Loeb, "Nietzsche's Heraclitean Doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence of the Same," *Nietzsche-Studien* 50 (2021): 70-101.

and becoming for both cosmological events and situations that develop between people:

“Justice in our minds is strife. We cannot help but see war makes us as we are. (...) The poet was a fool who wanted no conflict among us, gods or people. Harmony needs low and high, as progeny needs man and woman. (...) Without injustices, the name of justice would mean what?”³⁴

Now let's look at what Nietzsche has to say about conflict and becoming:

“There is wisdom in the fact that much in the world smells foul: nausea itself creates wings and water-divining powers! Even in the best there is something that nauseates; and the best is still something that must be overcome! Yes, my brothers, there is much wisdom in the fact that there is much filth in the world! – (...) That I must be struggle and becoming and purpose and the contradiction of purposes – alas, whoever guesses my will guesses also on what crooked paths it must walk! (...) Truly, I say to you: good and evil that would be everlasting – there is no such thing! They must overcome themselves out of themselves again and again.”³⁵

As we have seen, the themes of conflict, becoming, and opposition is very evident in Nietzsche's thoughts. These themes can be interpreted as leading because they form the basis of Nietzsche's basic ideas. For example, thoughts such as revaluation of values, eternal return, and affirmation of life are thoughts that rise on the themes of becoming and opposition. According to our interpretation, Nietzsche's connection with Heraclitus is based on the idea of becoming. Although Heraclitus does not reveal this idea systematically, Nietzsche states that the pioneer of the idea of becoming is Heraclitus.

³⁴ Heraclitus, *Fragments: The Collected Wisdom of Heraclitus*, 40, 52, 53.

³⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Trans. Adrian Del Caro, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006, 1.Ed.), 157-158, 164.

1.2. ETERNAL RETURN AND FATALISM

Another pillar of our study, which focuses on showing that Nietzsche's idea of the eternal return is an ethical thought, is the claim that the idea of the eternal return, in a sense Nietzsche mentions, takes an opposite attitude to fatalism. In this section, we will consider the prominent aspects of fatalism in items and show that Nietzsche's idea of the eternal return is the opposite of fatalism.

When we look at the concept of destiny in mythology, we encounter more personified figures. Especially the Moiras in Greek mythology and the Norns in Scandinavian mythology are prominent figures in this regard. The Moiras were the three goddesses of fate who personified the inescapable destiny of man. They assigned to every person his or her fate or share in the scheme of things. Their name means "Parts." "Shares" or "Allotted Portions." The individuals were Klotho (Clotho), the "the Spinner," who spun the thread of life, Lakheis (Lachesis), "the Apportioner of Lots", who measured it, and Atropos (or Aisa), "She who cannot be turned," who cut it short. At the birth of a human, the Moirai spun out the thread of his/her future life, followed his/her steps, and directed the consequences of his/her actions according to the counsel of the gods. It was not an inflexible fate; Zeus, if he chose, had the power of saving even those who were already on the point of being seized by their fate. The Fates did not abruptly interfere in human affairs but availed themselves of intermediate causes and determined many mortals not absolutely, but only conditionally, even human himself/herself, in his/her freedom was allowed to exercise a particular influence upon them. The Moirai were independent, at the helm of necessity, directed fate, and watched that the fate assigned to every being by eternal laws might take its course without obstruction. Moreover, as well as the other gods, human had to submit to them. They were assigned to the Erinyes, who inflicted the punishment for evil deeds and their proper functions; with them, they directed fate according to the laws of necessity.³⁶ Norns in Norse mythology also have characteristics similar to Moiras. In Norse

³⁶ <https://www.theoi.com/Daimon/Moirai.html>

mythology, the Norns are female beings who create and control fate. This makes them the most terribly powerful entities in the cosmos – more so than even the gods, since the gods are subject to fate just like any and all other beings. Several different images are used for the Norns’ fate-crafting activity throughout Old Norse literature. The three most common are casting wooden lots weaving a piece of cloth, and carving symbols – likely runes – into wood. In the Norse view, fate was blind and utterly implacable. You couldn’t change it; all that was left to you was to decide the attitude with which you would meet whatever fate happened to bring.³⁷ It is interesting that in both mythologies, fate is personified as female.³⁸ Another great point is that the activities of the goddesses of destiny are symbolized by specific actions such as accumulating, bending, and dividing. However, the most remarkable point is that even the gods must submit to fate. For example, although Zeus in Greek mythology can save the fate of some people, he is also subject to this fate. In the context of Nietzsche’s idea of the eternal return, the point we should focus on is the view of destiny in Scandinavian mythology. In Norse mythology, fate can only be faced; one must consider how to counter it. In this respect, the way destiny is perceived in Scandinavian mythology is closer to Nietzsche’s philosophy:

*“Courage is the best slayer; courage slays even pity. But pity is the deepest abyss, and as deeply as human beings look into life, so deeply too they look into suffering. But courage is the best slayer, courage that attacks; it slays even death, for it says: “Was that life? Well then! One More Time!” In such a saying, however, there is much sounding brass. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!”*³⁹

³⁷ <https://norse-mythology.org/gods-and-creatures/others/the-norns/>

³⁸ The roles of women in mythology vary depending on the culture and the era. Many of them, however, have similar characteristics in numerous world mythologies; these are called archetypes. A common female archetype is the wise woman who offers advice or predictions of the future, analogous to the wise old man, who plays a similar role. (<https://www.languagehumanities.org/what-are-the-different-roles-of-women-in-mythology.htm>)

³⁹ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 123-125.

Although we have said that the perception of fate in Norse mythology is closer to Nietzsche's thought. However, let us emphasize that destiny is not something that cannot be changed for Nietzsche:

“– as poet, riddle guesser and redeemer of chance I taught them to work on the future, and to creatively redeem everything that was. To redeem what is past in mankind and to recreate all “It was” until the will speaks: “But I wanted it so! I shall want it so –” This I told them was redemption, this alone I taught them to call redemption. –“⁴⁰

The term "fatalism" can refer to any of the following ideas:

- Any view according to which human beings are powerless to do anything other than what they actually do. Included in this is the belief that humans have no power to influence the future or indeed the outcome of their own actions.
- The belief that events are decided by fate and are outside human control.
- One such view is theological fatalism, according to which free will is incompatible with the existence of an omniscient God who has foreknowledge of all future events. This is very similar to theological determinism.
- A second such view is logical fatalism, according to which propositions about the future which we take to currently be either true or false can only be true or false if future events are already determined.
- A third such view is causal determinism. Causal determinism (often simply called "determinism") is now usually treated as distinct from fatalism, on the grounds that it requires only the determination of each successive state in a system by that system's prior state, rather than the final state of a system being predetermined.

⁴⁰ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 158-159.

- The view that the appropriate reaction to the inevitability of some future event is acceptance or resignation, rather than resistance. This view is closer to everyday use of the word "fatalism" and is similar to defeatism.⁴¹

When we look at the first general ideas we have listed regarding fatalism, to say that a human has no power over his/her future reflects the idea of "destiny to which even the gods are subject" in mythology. It can easily be said that Nietzsche is fundamentally opposed to this idea. For Nietzsche, who built his philosophy on the concepts of will to power and will, it would not be acceptable to say that man has no power over his future: *"Whenever the will to power fails there is disaster. My contention is that all the highest values of humanity have been emptied of this will—that the values of decadence, of nihilism, now prevail under the holiest names."*⁴² Another striking point in this quote is that Nietzsche's will to power is considered a sign of health. The fact that surrender in fatalism (the surrendering attitude of a person who thinks he/she has no power over his/her future) is also an obstacle to creating supreme values makes this thought invalid for Nietzsche. The belief in passivity on the future prevents the emergence of value and action reconciled with the will at a level that can be repeated indefinitely. Saying that people are powerless to do things other than what they do can also create nihilistic perspectives. If people accept that they cannot determine the consequences of their actions and can do nothing but what they can do, this creates inaction. This inactivity is fundamentally refutable to Nietzsche's philosophy. Because according to Nietzsche, it is not "happening" but "becoming" and no human is powerless against fate; there is *Übermensch* who is creating its own fate. *"I want to teach humans the meaning of their being, which is the Übermensch, the lightning from the dark cloud 'human being.'"*⁴³ We stated above that the idea that human beings are powerless and passive in the face of the future is close to theological determinism. Theological

⁴¹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fatalism>

⁴² Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Antichrist*, Trans: H. L. Mencken, (September 18, 2006, EBook #19322, Project Gutenberg), 44.

⁴³ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 12.

determinism is a form of predeterminism that states that all events are pre-ordained and/or predestined to happen by one or more divine beings or that they are destined to occur given the divine beings' omniscience.⁴⁴ According to Nietzsche, the precondition of knowledge is destroyed when the natural consequences of an action are considered to be created by "god," or "spirit," and are viewed only as moral consequences, rewards, punishments, counsel, or lessons.⁴⁵ What is the prerequisite of knowledge? This prerequisite is questioning. The unconditional belief that one or more divine will create the natural outcome of any action eliminates questioning. Everything has already been determined, and more importantly, it has been determined to be determined, so to object to it, to refuse to accept it, and to question it violates the sanctity of faith, which is sin. According to Nietzsche, sin is nothing, but a tool invented by the priestly personality to achieve dominance.⁴⁶

The second perspective we have listed about fatalism is logical fatalism. This point of view is essential because it touches on the "eternal" aspect of the idea of the eternal return. According to logical fatalism, propositions about the future that we now think are true or false can only be true or false if future events have already been determined. Logical fatalism presupposes that knowledge of the future is possible. The idea of re-evaluating the values that we will address in the following parts of our work and the idea of eternal return as the eternal repetition of actions and values that can be repeated endlessly, in harmony with the will, has to do with this type of fatalism. In other words, logical fatalism is possible only when eternal return is possible. Let us explain it this way: Suppose we adopt actions and values that we can repeat and adopt forever and will always say "yes" to. Then it will be destiny for us to do that action or to adopt that value. However, we need to emphasize here the positivity and negativity of the perspective toward fatalism. If the actions and values we adopt in the future are those we can repeat indefinitely, then these actions and values are ideally suited to our will. Fatalism no longer has a negative meaning for us after this point. Because no overdetermination develops

⁴⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theological_determinism

⁴⁵ Nietzsche, *The Antichrist*, 106.

⁴⁶ *Ibid*, 106.

outside our will, all determinations are by our will. The actions and values that will return to us forever by saying yes, each time have been our destiny, but this destiny was created entirely by our will. So, unless we know the future, when we think of Nietzsche's idea of eternal return, logical fatalism can only be possible with the eternal return. Propositions about the future that we now consider true or false can only be true or false in a future determined by actions that can be eternally repeated and values that can be embraced forever.

The third basic idea we have listed about fatalism is causal determinism. As we mentioned above, causal determinism can also be simply called determinism. We want to mention here the concept of "error, habit and instinct" in Nietzsche and its relationship with moral responsibility. Regarding error and habit, Nietzsche says in the *Genealogy*:

“We can see at once: this first deduction contains all the typical traits of idiosyncratic (...) we have ‘usefulness’, ‘forgetting’, ‘habit’ and finally ‘error’, all as the basis of a respect for values of which the higher man has hitherto been proud, as though it were a sort of general privilege of mankind.(...) even we knowers of today, we godless anti-metaphysicians, still take our fire from the blaze set alight by a faith thousands of years old, that faith of the Christians, which was also Plato’s faith, that God is truth, that truth is divine . . . But what if precisely this becomes more and more unbelievable, when nothing any longer turns out to be divine except for error, blindness and lies – and what if God himself turned out to be our oldest lie?”⁴⁷

According to Nietzsche, the origin of the good is selfishness. An opinion determined to be good at an uncertain point in the past was beneficial to the person or persons doing that valuation and was therefore affirmed as good. However, its source was forgotten, and it became a habit. For a long time, this thought was perceived as good again and gradually became an instinct, and later this thought

⁴⁷ Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, Trans. Carol Diethe, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006, 1.Ed.), 11, 112.

was called divine. The opposite of this thought was a disorderly thought, and all the values arising from this disordered thought turned into a nature that leads to sin and must be restrained. Thus, this so-called nature became the source of evil, sin, and crime. All values determined as good became moral imperatives and became divine. However, for Nietzsche, it was a mistake to continue to approve of these thoughts as good and eventually become godly values. It's like a misfiring bone. This mistake became a habit and eventually instinct. Nietzsche says the following about instincts in the *Genealogy*:

“All instincts which are not discharged outwardly turn inwards – this is what I call the internalization of man: with it there now evolves in man what will later be called his ‘soul’. The whole inner world, originally stretched thinly as though between two layers of skin, was expanded and extended itself and gained depth, breadth and height in proportion to the degree that the external discharge of man’s instincts was obstructed. (...) Animosity, cruelty, the pleasure of pursuing, raiding, changing and destroying – all this was pitted against the person who had such instincts: that is the origin of ‘bad conscience’.”⁴⁸

Bad conscience is a kind of shadow conscience. Being endowed with bad conscience, in other words, means feeling bad about oneself, suffering from one's own existence (guilt). That is why the person dominated by bad conscience is all too prone to self-loathing. Bad conscience, it follows, is ‘active’, not reactive: it creates an inner realm of meaning, imagination, and beauty as a means of compensating for the inability of the drives to express themselves externally. Selflessness, self-denial, self-sacrifice: all these belong to this realm and emerge from this condition. Bad conscience is thus an expression of humanity suffering from itself as a result of being made to be social.⁴⁹ This inner world created by remorse is a counter-conscience. The bad conscience thus emerges as a shadow

⁴⁸ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, 57.

⁴⁹ Peter R. Sedgwick, *Nietzsche: The Key Concepts*, (New York: Taylor&Francis, 2009, e-library), 17.

conscience, and the values of the inner world it creates become a "morality." Nietzsche attempts to show that the acquisition of the bad conscience was not an option for the human animal; rather, it became the chance and the possibility it is by an ineluctable leap, a catastrophe, and a fate. To relate the development of the bad conscience is thus to tell the fateful story of the human animal.⁵⁰ To summarize, according to Nietzsche, humanity cannot get rid of its animal past, and this situation emerges as a bad conscience in humanity. This conscience creates an inner world for itself. The values of this world are determined by influential people who have held power to create value in the past. This determination is reproduced by later generations as well. This reproduction is an error for Nietzsche, and as this error continues, these values become instincts.⁵¹ The values of the bad conscience create moral responsibility. However, we mentioned above that the values of bad conscience become divine due to mistakes and habits, that people internalize by adopting these values, and that the instincts that cannot be discharged are some "false" instincts. Then, from an ethical point of view, just as bad conscience creates a moral obligation, re-evaluating the values of this conscience also creates an obligation. Because in both cases, it is the perspectives that create the determinations. This is where the idea of the eternal return comes into play. The realization and adoption of action and value, which can be repeated endlessly, can provide a reevaluation of the values created by bad conscience due to habit and mistake.

Fatalism, as a surrender to the inevitability of a future event, seems to be associated with pessimism. Nietzsche says that pessimism is a preliminary form of nihilism.⁵² Nietzsche divides pessimism into two: pessimism as strength and pessimism as regression. Pessimism as power is about the energy of reason. Nietzsche also calls this analytically pessimism. Pessimism as regression relates to

⁵⁰ Keith Ansell Pearson, "A "Dionysian Drama on the 'Fate of the Soul'" An Introduction to Reading On the Genealogy of Morality", *Nietzsche's On the Genealogy of Morals: Critical Essays*, Edited by: Christa Davis Acampora, (Maryland: Rowman&Littlefield Publishers, 2006), 43.

⁵¹ At this point, we can also interpret instincts as old habits—a good nature against which an anti-nature is positioned.

⁵² Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, Trans. Walter Kaufmann, and R. J. Hollingdale, (New York: Vintage Books, 1968), 11.

increased fatigue and historicism.⁵³ Reconciling pessimism as power and analytically with the energy of logic demonstrates the relevance of such pessimism to knowledge. As knowledge and consciousness increase, all things that are believed, adopted, and assured of their authenticity can change. These changes can terrify the consciousness and lead to pessimism as they transform a familiar and safe world into a strange and uncanny place.⁵⁴

When it comes to pessimism as regression, Nietzsche speaks of historicism. When we say historicism, we can think of the "historical people" in Nietzsche's *On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life*:

“’And from the dregs of life hope to receive,

What the first sprightly running could not give’

Let us call them the historical men. Looking into the past urges them toward the future, incites them to take courage and continue to engage in life, and kindles the hope that things will yet turn out well and that happiness is to be found behind the mountain toward which they are striding. (...) For with a certain excess of history life crumbles and degenerates, and finally, because of this degeneration, history itself degenerates as well”⁵⁵

According to Nietzsche, historical people get their life energy by looking to the past. Hope is in the past. This hope can also be interpreted as a will. This will is deferred to the future. Procrastination works similarly to the "patience in this world, reward in the next world, impatience in the world, punishment in the next world" in religions that believe in the hereafter. Historical people do not believe that the moment imposes an obligation on them. According to historical people, time will reveal everything; justice, happiness, and well-being will be experienced in time. I

⁵³ Ibid, 11.

⁵⁴ We should add that this is a psychological interpretation.

⁵⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life*, Trans. Peter Preuss, (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1980), 12-13.

call all this will. Historical people can be thought of as people who refer their will to the future with history reference. So, what is the part about nihilism here?

To explain the relationship between nihilism and fatalism, it may be helpful to look at what Nietzsche said about the concept of "decadence." We have said that, according to Nietzsche, pessimism is a preliminary form of nihilism. In *The Will to Power*, Nietzsche says the following about the transformation of pessimism into nihilism: "*The development of pessimism into nihilism. - Denaturalization of values. Scholasticism of values. Detached and idealistic, values, instead of dominating and guiding action, turn against action and condemn it.*"⁵⁶ The denaturalization of values, their scholasticization, the emergence of dissolved and idealistic values can be explained by the emergence of general morality. I understand from general morality that values are imprisoned and frozen in dichotomy (for example, good-bad, merit-sin) and that values are not allowed to conflict. Because for the emergence of new values, the existence of dichotomy must continue, and the inner conflict of the dichotomy must continue. Otherwise, the dichotomy will freeze, and the sides of the dichotomy will be torn from each other, even though they seem side by side and related. For example, the domination and deification of the evaluations of what is good or bad will make the said evaluation of good and evil absolute and sacred. Thus, the good-evil dichotomy will no longer create new values because the names of good and evil have been given and evaluated. This evaluation is perceived as a predestination of God. Now nothing can be done against this appreciation. This immutability and intangibility lead to pessimism. Because a person cannot change something bad or harmful for him and cannot object to it, as this situation continues, the order on behalf of the good, the name of the wicked, is called forbidden. There is a reward when the command is fulfilled; If the ban is violated, there is a penalty. I understand the emergence of nihilism like that. From this point of view, nihilism means the existence of fatalism. Just like fatalism, there is immobility and acceptance in nihilism. However, there is another situation that should be mentioned here. This is what Nietzsche calls "*my*

⁵⁶ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, 24.

pessimism." For Nietzsche, it is pessimism to understand how higher emotions can become the source of misfortune and human devaluation.⁵⁷ Accordingly, Nietzsche's pessimism is related to a state of consciousness. We said above that there are two kinds of pessimism for Nietzsche. The first kind of pessimism, that is, pessimism as power, as the energy of logic, analytically is Nietzsche's pessimism. This type of pessimism expresses a state of awareness. Nietzsche says that pessimism is not a problem; it is a symptom and should be replaced by the word nihilism. He says that whether non-existence is better than existing is a disease. According to him, nihilism is only the expression of physiological decadence.⁵⁸

According to Nietzsche, there are two types of nihilism:

"A. Nihilism as a sign of increased power of the spirit: as active nihilism.

*B. Nihilism as decline and recession of the power of the spirit: as passive nihilism."*⁵⁹

In active nihilism, the spirit has become so intense that previous convictions and beliefs have become disproportionate. Certain convictions or beliefs are raised to the highest level, and everything outside of these convictions and beliefs is destroyed. On the other hand, passive nihilism no longer believes in anything, and this type of nihilism disproportionates previous convictions and beliefs. Both types of nihilism make the synthesis of values impossible. Active nihilism takes only specific values as truth and excludes and destroys the rest.

On the other hand, passive nihilism clings to nothing and is open to being swept away. Both types of nihilism create decadence. For Nietzsche, on the other hand, decadence itself is not something to be struggled with; the phenomenon of decadence is necessary; it belongs to every age and every person.⁶⁰ Now, let us remember that decadence helped form higher value judgments; therefore, if decadence is a result of nihilism, as a process that can be repeated endlessly and is necessary for the emergence of action and value judgments integrated with the will.

⁵⁷ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, 50.

⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 24.

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 17.

⁶⁰ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, 25-26.

However, on the other hand, if pessimism is a concept that can be used instead of nihilism, then pessimism is also necessary for the eternal return, but not because of the awareness of the end of life, as the consciousness that absolute thoughts suffocate life.

CHAPTER TWO: NIETZSCHE'S THE IDEA OF THE ETERNAL RETURN AND BASIC CONCEPTS

2.1. ÜBERMENSCH⁶¹ AND AMOR FATI

In Nietzsche's philosophy, the concept of *Übermensch* and the principle of *Amor Fati* have a fundamental role. Therefore, to comprehend the idea of the eternal return of the same, we should first analyze them. In particular, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, one of the most influential books of Nietzsche, is widely based on them: *Amor Fati*, *Übermensch*, and the eternal return of the same. Thus, this chapter will mainly dwell on what Nietzsche meant by *Übermensch* and *Amor Fati*. In doing this, we will ask the following questions:

- 1) What can we understand from fate and creative will in Nietzsche's philosophy?
- 2) What can we understand from *Übermensch*?
- 3) How can we interpret Nietzsche's famous sentence "human is something to be overcome"?

What is fate? In order to answer this question, we should focus on what Nietzsche says about death, mortality, and fate. In *Zarathustra*, he writes.

*"Creating – that is the great redemption from suffering, and life's becoming light. But in order for the creator to be, suffering is needed and much transformation. Indeed, much bitter dying must be in your life, you creators! Therefore, you are advocates and justifiers of all that is not everlasting."*⁶²

Here Nietzsche is critical of absolute morality and generalized truths. According to him, if morality or truth tells us or even commands us what is good or evil, that

⁶¹ Since Arthur C. Danto states in his book *"Nietzsche as Philosopher"* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005, 178-179.), I prefer to use the German word (*Übermensch*) directly instead of the words "Superhuman" or "Overman".

⁶² Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 66.

morality or truth kills creativity. Nietzsche states this in *Zarathustra (On the Blessed Isles)* with these words; “No more willing and no more esteeming and no more creating! Oh, if only this great weariness would always keep away from me!”⁶³ Will is one of the basic concepts in Nietzsche’s philosophy, and to understand what *Amor Fati* means, we should also understand the role of will (or will to power) in Nietzsche’s philosophy. Nietzsche examines many ideas about the will (Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Wagner) and concludes that these ideas represent false results. Nietzsche’s first point is that understanding the will as a single entity or faculty is mistaken.⁶⁴ In *Zarathustra*, Nietzsche gives an evident expression; “Indeed, through a hundred souls I went my way and through a hundred cradles and pangs of birth. Many a farewell have I taken already; I know the heartbreaking final hours. But thus, my creating will wills it, my fate. Or, to tell it more honestly to you: just such a fate – my will wills.”⁶⁵ Here bringing together “will” and “fate” seems paradoxical, for in philosophy where there is a will there is no fate and vice versa. However, again, Nietzsche is being metaphorical as well as provocative here. At the beginning of *Zarathustra* Nietzsche declares that *Gott ist tot* (God is Dead), meaning there is no fate or predestination. However, we should emphasize that God is used symbolically here. We claim that God is considered here symbolically. It is the symbol of all absoluteness and truths. Some interpretations claim that the last shred of respect for us is lost with the death of God. According to this, belief in God gave us dignity, at least as an interlocutor of God. However, with the death of God, scientific materialism triumphed, and human beings came to be seen only as an organism. This view reinforced thoughts of worthlessness and gave birth to nihilism.⁶⁶ God is the most renowned absoluteness of humanity; therefore, Nietzsche may have chosen this metaphor. In other words, there is no absolute value or morality left from the dead God, and humanity needs values. However, these values will not be values that emerge despite desires, such as those of Christianity.

⁶³ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 66.

⁶⁴ Strong, Tracy B., “Genealogy, the Will to Power, and the Problem of a Past”, *Nietzsche’s On the Genealogy of Morals: Critical Essays* (2006)

⁶⁵ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 66.

⁶⁶ Robert C. Solomon and Kathleen M. Higgings, *What Nietzsche Really Said*, (New York: Schocken Books, 2000), 96-97.

On the other hand, replacing belief in God with belief in science is not considered a remedy for Nietzsche. Because, as we mentioned above, science poses a similar danger to Nietzsche as Christianity did: self-denial.

In *Zarathustra (The Ugliest Human Being)*, there is a human who encounters Zarathustra when he comes out of his cave to find the *Higher Man*. This man is the ugliest man who killed God.

*“But he – had to die he saw with eyes that saw everything – he saw the depths and grounds of human beings, all their hidden disgrace and ugliness. His pitying knew no shame: he crawled into my filthiest nook. This most curious, super-obtrusive, super-pitying one had to die. He always saw me: I wanted revenge on such a witness – or to no longer live myself. The god who saw everything, even human beings: this god had to die! Human beings cannot bear that such a witness lives.”*⁶⁷

The Ugliest Man calls God a witness, Witness of what? The simple answer to this question is this: all kinds of absoluteness, that is, *the spirit of gravity*, in Nietzsche's words. *The Ugliest Man* also personifies great misfortune and failure, a living refutation of the idea that creation has a purpose. Zarathustra can admire *The Ugliest Man*, at least for his rejection of pity and his ‘great despising’ and destruction of values. Nevertheless, the murder of God is not a redemption of *The Ugliest Man* but the summation of his ugliness.⁶⁸ Nietzsche does not say there is no God; he emphasizes that it is already dead. In other words, Nietzsche wants to show that no absolute truth or God is permanent and final and that all absolutes and destinies are subject to only one fate, which is that everything is temporary; that is, it is not everlasting. Here, the role of the will is complimentary. We have tried to show that Nietzsche does not accept any absolute as an end. For the absolute to become a temporary phenomenon, it must not be imbued with any divine or otherworldly character. The way to achieve this is to subject the absolute to the will of a mortal

⁶⁷ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 215-216.

⁶⁸ Douglas Burnham and Martin Jesinghausen, *Nietzsche's Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, (Edinburg: Edinburg University Press, 2010), 177.

being. For Nietzsche, this is creative will. The creative will be the will that wants the eternally repeating cycle of time and existence. Thus, the will would be able to enter a cycle that wants forwards and backward rather than a linear movement.⁶⁹ The creative will be the will that creates the mortality of the absolute. Precisely for this reason, what can be interpreted as fate in Nietzsche is to subordinate the absolute to the will and designate it as the great fate that can include all possible destinies. In *Zarathustra*, at the end of the section *On the Old and New Tablets*, Nietzsche clearly states that his will is a necessity: “*Oh you, my will! You turning point of all need, you point of my necessity! Preserve me from all small victories! You ordaining of my soul, that I call fate! You in-me, over-me! Preserve and save me for a great fate!*”⁷⁰ Subjecting the absolute to the will of the ephemeral and temporary, to put it more clearly, is the removal of all morals and truths from being unchangeable and irrevocable. In this way, the eternal return is possible. Because if the absolute remains constant, nothing can be created again or disappear again. In this respect, for Nietzsche, there is only one fate that can make all possible destinies and truths possible. This fate is the creative will, which Nietzsche calls the great fate. To express our claim more clearly, we used the term “mortality of the absolute.” However, it would be helpful to expand this a little more. Of course, something that is no longer fixed, that loses its certainty, cannot be absolute. What we are trying to express here is that, according to Nietzsche, all the truths (belief systems such as religion and general morality) that seem involuntary are determined by the creative will. The will that created them can also eliminate them. The expression of Zarathustra as “*the godless religious*” shows that his relationship with the absolute is not a denial in the literal sense.⁷¹ The mortal absolute is the absolute that is accepted as involuntary, and from this moment on, the only thing that can be seen as absolute for Nietzsche is that truths are created by will. A sentence from *The Old and New Tablets in Zarathustra* may support this interpretation; “*Many noble ones are needed, to be sure, and many kinds of noble ones for nobility to*

⁶⁹ Karl Löwith, *Nietzsche's Philosophy of the Eternal Recurrence of the Same*, Trans. J. Harvey Lomax, (London: University of California Press, 1997), 78.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 173.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, 212.

exist! Or, as I once spoke in parables: "Precisely that is godliness, that there are gods but no God!"⁷² We mentioned above that the god in the phrase "God is Dead" may represent immutable and irrevocable truths, virtues, and all kinds of timeless absolutes. However, let us state that by the word absolute in this interpretation, we also mean all kinds of timeless and unchanging truths and virtues. In connection with this, this statement of Nietzsche can be interpreted as "the existence of absolutes, not of the absolute One, is absoluteness itself." The possibility of the eternal return is also related to the possibility of truths and virtues included in the temporal, that is, do not transform into the absolute One. At this point, it will be necessary to touch upon Nietzsche's idea of perspectivism, but we will not discuss it here as we will touch upon it in the following parts of our study.

While answering our first question, we tried to interpret what will and fate mean for Nietzsche. In the second part of this section, we will try to interpret the second and third questions together. How can the *Übermensch* and the phrase "man is something to be overcome" be interpreted? While answering these two questions, we will mainly refer to *The Last Man*, whom Nietzsche spoke of in *Zarathustra*. We think focusing on this human stage is necessary to understand *Übermensch*. Let us recall the saying of Zarathustra about people: "Mankind is a rope fastened between animal and *Übermensch* – a rope over an abyss"⁷³ Nietzsche conceives humanity in a kind of gradual state. Nevertheless, this does not appear to be an upward phase. *Übermensch* refers to being beyond human. First, for Zarathustra, animals signify innocence and reliability. When he gets bored in his cave, he calls them first: "Oh, clean fragrance around me," he cried out, "oh blissful stillness around me! But where are my animals? Come here, come here my eagle and my snake! Tell me, my animals: these higher men all together – do they perhaps not smell good? Oh, clean fragrances around me! Only now do I know and feel how I love you, my animals."⁷⁴

⁷² Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 162.

⁷³ *Ibid*, 7.

⁷⁴ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 240-241.

Another type of person that we think came before *The Last Man* and came after the animal is the religious person. Compared to *The Last Man*, Zarathustra takes a softer attitude toward this religious man. The saint Zarathustra met on his first descent from the mountain and the pope he met towards the end of the book in the chapter called *Retired* are examples of this type of person. Both characters have reclusive aspects. Zarathustra says he has nothing to give to the saint he met while coming down from the mountain and greets him. Then he is surprised that this saint did not hear of God's death.⁷⁵ The pope, whom Zarathustra meets while searching for *The Higher Man*, is another religious person seeking the saint he encountered while descending the mountain. This person is a former priest and is in crisis with his faith. Zarathustra invites him to his cave and tells him that he cannot cure his melancholy and that his god is dead.⁷⁶ These characters are reclusive, religious, and melancholic, but their search is not over. The saint seeks peace by retreating into seclusion. On the other hand, the retired priest becomes a guest of Zarathustra on his way to look for this saint. When we come to *The Last Man*, we see that Zarathustra recommended great contempt.

*“They have something of which they are proud. And what do they call that which makes them proud? Education they call it, it distinguishes them from goatherds. For that reason, they hate to hear the word ‘contempt’ applied to them. So, I shall address their pride instead. Thus, I shall speak to them of the most contemptible person: but he is the last human being. (...) ‘We invented happiness’ – say the last human beings, blinking. (...) No shepherd and one herd! Each wants the same, each is the same, and whoever feels differently goes voluntarily into the insane asylum.”*⁷⁷

The Last Man expressed here can be thought of as an educated, enlightened, science-acquainted modern man. In many ways, the vision of *The Last Man* that Zarathustra offers us provides a good way of understanding the vision of the

⁷⁵ Ibid, 5.

⁷⁶ Ibid, 212.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 9-10.

Übermensch through the stark contrast it presents. Where visions of the *Übermensch* provoke sublime thoughts of autonomy, individuality, and creativity, *The Last Man*'s self-obsessed sterility is intended to cause revulsion. Such a creature exemplifies the lack of what the *Übermensch* offers in abundance: futurity. *The Last Man* is a being beyond even self-contempt. All that matters to him is the prospect of comfortable living. This notion defines rotten happiness: "*We have invented happiness,*" say the last men, and they blink (...) *One still works, for work is a form of entertainment. But one sees to it that the entertainment be too burdensome. One no longer becomes poor or rich: both are too burdensome.*"⁷⁸ *The Last Man* exemplifies the tendencies of modern mass culture, with its dominant desire to ease the travails of existence. The world of *The Last Man* is one of minimal pain, small effort, and little sins. It is dominated by trite mass entertainment and self-indulgence.⁷⁹ The modern people of the modern age have killed God, but what foundation will it put in its place? Nietzsche sees this person as a generalized and inactive herd (no shepherd and one herd) that cannot create new values. So, Nietzsche wants to go beyond this type of person who is intolerant of self-contempt, *The Last Man*. This is the main reason why he went in search of a new humanity. But the possibility of this is open to debate. At this point, it would be good to benefit from the comments on nihilism.

Nietzsche's yearning for a new humanity can itself be seen as an expression of the nihilistic condition he wishes us to overcome. It reveals a dissatisfaction with the present, with 'man', expressing the same kind of negative attitudes, such as revenge and resentment towards life as it is, which characterizes the ascetic ideal. In the wake of the death of God, humanity seeks new idols who will command and provide a new metaphysical foundation for morals. In *Zarathustra* Nietzsche dramatizes the predicament in which modern human beings find themselves and shows both the necessity and the impossibility of instigating a new legislation. How can new values be fashioned and legislated when the transcendental basis which

⁷⁸ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 10.

⁷⁹ Sedgwick, *Nietzsche: The Key Concepts*, 112.

would support them has been undermined? In the age of nihilism, not only is it imperative to rethink the value of truth, but equally the value of morality, of justice, and of law.⁸⁰ But according to Nietzsche, a reassessment of the value of truth, morality, justice, and law can only be achieved with a new kind of humanity⁸¹, we must first learn how to go under or perish. There has never been an *Übermensch*, Zarathustra says, for man has yet to learn how to go under. When we do go under, we experience “the hour of the great contempt”, the hour in which our present happiness, reason, pity, justice, and virtue grow loathsome to us.⁸² The finitude of *The Last Man* also leads him to believe in the finitude of his age. Therefore, this person cannot despise himself. Therefore, *The Last Man* cannot advance on the path to the *Übermensch*. The man who deserves the greatest contempt is *The Last Man* because he is the last stage before the *Übermensch*. At this point, we need to touch on the idea of affirmation, which is essential to Nietzsche's philosophy. What needs to be approved, and why should it be approved? When we get down to the basis of the principle of affirmation, we can find the battle of opposites and the thought of becoming, which shaped Nietzsche's philosophy, inspired by Heraclitus. He also clearly states that: “*Oh my animals, this alone have I learned so far, that for mankind their most evil is necessary for their best – that whatever is most evil is their best power and the hardest stone for the highest creator; and that mankind must become better and more evil*”⁸³ In this way, we can say that Nietzsche makes possible the above condition of making the absolute mortal with this affirmation. Because the fact that any truth, morality, or law becomes an immutable absolute and becomes timeless is the biggest obstacle to becoming. The realization of creation is the condition of eternal return, and without this eternal return, the path to the *Übermensch* cannot be entered. Human is something that must be overcome because a human who can make laws for itself and create its truth and fate must

⁸⁰ Keith Ansell-Pearson, *An Introduction to Nietzsche as Political Thinker-The Perfect Nihilist*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002 (Digital printing)), 102.

⁸¹ Here we pay particular attention to using the word "humanity" instead of "human". Because, according to our thesis, *Übermensch* represents an apex state, the supreme moment of fulfillment and state of readiness rather than a person.

⁸² Ansell-Pearson, *An Introduction to Nietzsche as Political Thinker-The Perfect Nihilist*, 105.

⁸³ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 176.

also have the power to abolish them. *The Last Man*, who faces a nihilistic age and cannot find a transcendent basis to create new values, or a religious person who makes a single truth or morality the only absolute, cannot achieve this.

Another metaphor that we think is related to the concepts of *Übermensch* and *Amor Fati* is the “great noon”. The great noon, which Nietzsche (through Zarathustra) speaks of as a “rebirth,” has a meaning of renewal, like the reversal of the hourglass. What led Zarathustra to his crucial experience is briefly this: a conversion and rebirth to a new “great healthiness” out of an equally great sickness or despair, a sickness unto death.⁸⁴ Karl Löwith states that noon should be understood as the supreme moment of fulfillment, the apex, and crisis at which the vision of eternity becomes certain once and for all.⁸⁵ The statement that noon is the moment of the cycle finds its expression by Nietzsche in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* in the chapter called “At Noon” as follows: “*Let me be! Still! Didn’t the world become perfect just now? Oh, the golden round ball!*”⁸⁶ Noon is the moment of the cycle. This moment can be thought of as the threshold of extinction and recurrence. The critical time in which out of sickness great health is born is referred to as “the highest time” in the double sense of despair, when time is running out, and of blessed climax.⁸⁷ In Nietzsche, on the other hand, repetition began at the point where it received the highest affirmation of the will—to put it in Nietzsche's terms, the highest “yes”. Noontime represents this point. Because the fountain of eternity is this moment of noon: “*when, well of eternity! You cheerful, dreadful noon abyss! When will you drink my soul back into yourself?*”⁸⁸ These expressions of Nietzsche show us that noon is the time when the cycle of eternity begins. We said before that the *Übermensch* is an apex and state of readiness: Readiness for noontime, that is, to return eternally.

⁸⁴ Karl Löwith, *Meaning in History*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1949), 216.

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, 216.

⁸⁶ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 223.

⁸⁷ Löwith, *Meaning in History*, 217.

⁸⁸ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 224.

In this section, we tried to comment on Nietzsche's concepts of fate and the *Übermensch*. These are, of course, debatable comments. As we have mentioned above, fate is a creative will for Nietzsche. When *Amor Fati* is said, this should be the destiny in question. In the *Amor Fati* of Nietzsche's teaching, the self-affirmation of eternally recurring Being thus unites with an eternal Yes of one's existence to the whole of Being.⁸⁹ This will is the will to re-evaluate values or abolish them. This creativity itself may mean fate for Nietzsche. Creativity is a necessity, not a choice. The *Übermensch* is not a new human being, it is an apex, and this apex has the power to create new values and has the power to destroy them, when necessary.⁹⁰ Thanks to this power, a value that is sometimes exalted can be despised later; in this way, values are subject to an eternal return in the process of becoming. When Nietzsche says, "the arrow of the truth is crooked," it can be thought that he means that the creative will, which he sees as a necessity, surpasses all absolutes in terms of being able to create and eliminate his truths and virtues.

⁸⁹ Löwith, *Nietzsche's Philosophy of the Eternal Recurrence of the Same*, 26.

⁹⁰ *Übermensch* can be interpreted as a state of readiness for eternal return. *Übermensch* is a kind of "apex" From this point on, the state necessary for "affirmation" and eternal return is reached.

2.2. ETERNAL RETURN AND REASSESSMENT OF VALUES

Our main argument for this chapter is essential as it provides a basis for the remaining chapters. Here we will ask two questions and try to answer them. First, is eternal return a possibility? Second, what do we understand by the revaluation of values? The issue of revaluation of values is central to Nietzsche; it can be said that it is the most fundamental part of the defining characteristic of his philosophy. In the background of the link, we want to establish between the revaluation of values and the eternal return, there is the general claim of our thesis: Eternal return is an ethical thought, and it is being ethical is related to the revaluation of values.

Let us start by looking at what we can understand from the revaluation of values. What values is Nietzsche talking about, and why should these values be reevaluated? What criteria will the revaluation be based on? What might a revaluation of values have to do with the eternal return? What could be the relationship between the revaluation of values and the *Übermensch*? The answers to these questions can provide us with an idea about revaluation. It may be helpful to discuss Nietzsche's critique of the "thing-in-itself" here. In *The Will to Power* Nietzsche writes: "*The properties of a thing are effects on other "things": if one removes other "things" then a thing has no properties, there is nothing without other things, there is no thing-in-itself.*"⁹¹ As will be seen, for Nietzsche, there is no such thing as a thing-in-itself. So, what is there then? For Nietzsche, it is about experiences and actions.⁹² In other words, values have no absolute meaning, are not divinely sourced, and are not things in themselves, contrary to the way absolute morality⁹³ presents them. In *On the Genealogy of Morals* in which he gives a genealogical account of the creations of values in the Christian world, Nietzsche criticizes the idea of the "thing-in-itself" as well: According to him, behind the creation of values there are experiences and actions which then are constructed as

⁹¹ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, 302.

⁹² Alexander Nehamas, "The Eternal Recurrence," *Philosophical Review*, Vol.89, No.3, (1980): 343.

⁹³ Nietzsche uses absolute morality synonymously with Christianity in the preface of his work *The Birth of Tragedy*.

beliefs. There is an experience and action in the background of all values, and their continuation creates a belief. A belief then becomes an instinct over time and becomes a "nature".⁹⁴ Nietzsche attempts to show that so-called "nature" is in fact not our nature or part our nature, rather it is something constructed or invented. In *The Genealogy of Morals*, he writes:

*"(...) we need a critique of moral values, the value of these values should itself, for once, be examined – and so we need to know about the conditions and circumstances under which the values grew up, developed and changed (morality as result, as symptom, as mask, as tartuffery, as sickness, as misunderstanding; but also, morality as cause, remedy, stimulant, inhibition, poison), since we have neither had this knowledge up till now nor even desired it. People have taken the value of these 'values' as given, as factual, as beyond all questioning; up till now, nobody has had the remotest doubt or hesitation in placing higher value on 'the good man' than on 'the evil', higher value in the sense of advancement, benefit and prosperity for man in general (and this includes man's future). What if the opposite were true? What if a regressive trait lurked in 'the good man', likewise a danger, an enticement, a poison, a narcotic, so that the present lived at the expense of the future? Perhaps in more comfort and less danger, but also in a smaller-minded, meaner manner? . . . So that morality itself were to blame if man, as species, never reached his highest potential power and splendour? So that morality itself was the danger of dangers? . . ."*⁹⁵

As can be seen, for Nietzsche, there are permanent influences⁹⁶ of actions, thoughts, and conditions - in short, various variables - rather than the thing-in-itself. The revaluation of values seems to be a revolt against morality when viewed from this perspective and an investigation and research activity simultaneously. In

⁹⁴ David Owen, "Nietzsche, Revaluation, and the Turn to Genealogy", *Nietzsche's On the Genealogy of Morals: Critical Essays* (2006)

⁹⁵ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, 7-8.

⁹⁶ By the word "permanent influence" I mean the position in which the effects created by these values, as Nietzsche refers to situations originating from experiences and thoughts, first turn into belief and instinct.

Zarathustra he says that until his time, one had delusions and no knowledge about good and evil.⁹⁷

Nietzsche's main concern, especially in *The Genealogy of Morals*, is the question of how the values attributed to good and evil have been determined. It is not easy to give a clear answer to this question. According to Arthur C. Danto, it does not matter that we pass away⁹⁸ and return⁹⁹ and pass away again. What counts is what we eternally do, the joy in overcoming ourselves whatever our task may be, and the meaning we give to our lives. Moreover, adopting such an attitude for the sake of life all of this for the sake of the thing itself, not for any consequences: For it leads to what it has led to and always will. What we do either has intrinsic meaning, or it has none. It is we who give value together with significance. Here we must look at Nietzsche's perception of instinct. Nietzsche gives a clue about what he understands by instinct in his work *On the Genealogy of Morals: The proud knowledge of the extraordinary privilege of responsibility, the consciousness of this rare freedom and power over himself and his destiny, has penetrated him to his lowest depths and become an instinct, his dominant instinct: – what will he call his dominant instinct, assuming that he needs a word for it? No doubt about the answer: this sovereign human being calls it his conscience ...*¹⁰⁰

Based on this quote, it is seen that instinct is a situation related to habit, according to Nietzsche. It is a deep-seated habit. If this habit is abandoned, people feel alienated, as if they have forgotten their nature. Behaviors that are continued for an extended period aiming for a particular benefit¹⁰¹ turn into instincts and become nature. We understand this from Nietzsche's concept of instinct. If there is no intrinsic value in life then we should accept that it is we who would create a

⁹⁷Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 161.

⁹⁸ The word "pass away", which is an English verb phrase, means "to die, to end, to end, to pass by". Here, we think that this verb phrase expresses temporality.

⁹⁹ Danto's use of the word "return" is to demonstrate that for Nietzsche the idea of the eternal return does not simply mean a circularity.

¹⁰⁰ Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, 36-37.

¹⁰¹ These benefits can be varied; not performing any behavior may cause wrath or repeating a behavior may be believed to bring luck. In any case, some benefits come with being mindful of that behavior.

meaning, that is, we should affirm ourselves in our fate.¹⁰² The joy of overcoming ourselves is just as important here as the inner meaning of what we do forever. Here the concept of the eternal itself can be interpreted as a possibility. For Nietzsche, Christianity means absolute morality. The absoluteness of this morality means that dualities such as good and evil are sealed with a divine seal, as if they are given and factual. Thus, the idea of eternity, both as eternal life and as the eternal reign of the values, are also embedded in the Christian morality. But then, if Nietzsche criticizes the idea of eternity in the Christian thinking, why does he himself use the term “eternal”? In other words, what is “eternal” in the idea of the eternal return? We should understand a circular infinity from the idea of the eternal return. It is not a loop with immutable and irrevocable values; it is the opposite cycle.¹⁰³ We would argue that the revaluation of values occurs within this cycle. From this point of view, we say that the eternal return is the possibility that provides this cycle.

At this point, we should discuss the idea of the *Übermensch*. In *Daybreak*¹⁰⁴, Nietzsche discusses the relationship between desire and morality and argues that desires are the preconditions of morality.¹⁰⁵ However, this precondition has been forgotten, and morality has been positioned as if it were against desires. Indeed, the second part of *On the Genealogy of Morals* focuses on the relationship between morality and desires. For Nietzsche, the moral law always had to be kept above desire. People did not want to impose such a law on themselves; they wanted it to be picked up from somewhere, found from somewhere, or ordered to itself from

¹⁰² Danto, *Nietzsche as Philosopher*, 194.

¹⁰³ We want to explain this word with a quote from Nietzsche: “Where all becoming seemed to me the dance of gods and the mischief of gods, and the world seemed unloosed and frolicsome and as though it were fleeing back to itself: – as an eternal fleeing from and seeking each other again of many gods, as the blissful contradicting, again-hearing, again-nearing each other of many gods...” (*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 157-158.) This cycle expresses reciprocity, and the things included in the cycle are opposites. It is precisely thanks to this contrast that they constantly destroy and recreate each other. This cycle is the cycle that allows new values to appear.

¹⁰⁴ Friedrich Nietzsche, *Daybreak*, Trans. R. J. Hollingdale, (UK: Cambridge University Press, 2006, 9. printing), 63-64.

¹⁰⁵ “But up to now the moral law has been supposed to stand above our own likes and dislikes: one did not want actually to impose this law upon oneself, one wanted to take it from somewhere or discover it somewhere or have it commanded to one from somewhere.” (*Daybreak*, 63-64.) As it turns out, according to Nietzsche, desire is related to the will. This will is unadulterated, vital, and exactly the kind of will Nietzsche would say “yes” to. I understand will from Nietzsche’s concept of desire.

somewhere.¹⁰⁶ He says: “*The most basic laws of preservation and growth require the opposite: that everyone should invent his own categorical imperatives.*”¹⁰⁷ When I say moral law here, I want to emphasize a law imposed from outside by a higher authority. It is the kind of law that forbids life if it is not obeyed. It is a sacred and absolute law that cannot be reversed. (For example, the prohibition of denying God, the ten commandments and other sacred obligations, even ideologies). So why did people place these moral laws imposed on them from outside above their desires? Nietzsche says the reason for this is "fighting the urge" and lists six methods of this struggle:

“I find no more than six essentially different methods of combating the vehemence of a drive. First, one can avoid opportunities for gratification of the drive, and through long and ever longer periods of non-gratification weaken it and make it wither away. Then, one can impose upon oneself strict regularity in its gratification: by thus imposing a rule upon the drive itself and enclosing its ebb and flood within firm time-boundaries, one has then gained intervals during which one is no longer troubled by it - and from there one can perhaps go over to the first method. Thirdly, one can deliberately give oneself over to the wild and unrestrained gratification of a drive-in order to generate disgust with it and with disgust to acquire a power over the drive: always supposing one does not do like the rider who rode his horse to death and broke his own neck in the process- which, unfortunately, is the rule when this method is attempted. Fourthly, there is the intellectual artifice of associating its gratification in general so firmly with some very painful thought that, after a little practice, the thought of its gratification is itself at once felt as very painful(...) Fifthly, one brings about a dislocation of one's quanta of strength by imposing on oneself a particularly difficult and strenuous labor, or by deliberately subjecting oneself to a new stimulus and pleasure and thus directing one's thoughts and plays of physical forces into

¹⁰⁶ Nietzsche, *Daybreak*, 63-64.

¹⁰⁷ Nietzsche, *The Antichrist*, 50-51.

other channels.(...) Finally, sixth: he who can endure it and finds it reasonable to weaken and depress his entire bodily and physical organization will naturally thereby also attain the goal of weakening an individual violent drive: as he does, for example, who, like the ascetic, starves his sensuality and thereby also starves and ruins his vigor and not seldom his reason as well. - Thus: avoiding opportunities, implanting regularity into the drive, engendering satiety and disgust with it and associating it with a painful idea (such as that of disgrace, evil consequences or offended pride), then dislocation of forces and finally a general weakening and exhaustion - these are the six methods: that one desires to combat the vehemence of a drive at all, however, does not stand within our own power; nor does the choice of any particular method; nor does the success or failure of this method."¹⁰⁸

Nietzsche states that humanity does not have a general purpose. Even if it did, it could align with humanity's desires. However, until now, the goals set have been kept above desires. Moral laws have been opposed to desires.¹⁰⁹ At this point, the *Übermensch* can be called a new "species"¹¹⁰ that can make laws for itself in line with its desires and abolish these laws in line with its desires. As we mentioned in the previous section, *Übermensch* is a metaphor for human potential. He represents the most gloriously selfish creator-spirit, allied to what Nietzsche elsewhere refers to as the "Dionysian." The *Übermensch* exemplifies the self-possession, autonomy, and uniqueness of the sovereign individual in modernity dominated by the impersonal forces of mass production and consumption. The *Übermensch* is, in short, a being of unprecedented freedom, not least because he has stepped beyond morality and the realm of universal injunctions.¹¹¹

"But he will have discovered himself who speaks: "This is my good and evil. "
With this he has silenced the mole and dwarf who says: "Good for all, evil

¹⁰⁸ Nietzsche, *Daybreak*, 64-65.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 63-64.

¹¹⁰ I do not use the word "human" for *Übermensch* because Nietzsche thinks *Übermensch* with the transcendence of humans.

¹¹¹ Sedgwick, *Nietzsche: The Key Concepts*, 111.

for all.” Indeed, nor do I like those for whom each thing is good, and this world seems the very best. Such types I call the all-complacent. All-complacency that knows how to taste everything – that is not the best taste! I honor the obstinate, choosy tongues and stomachs, which have learned to say “I” and “Yes” and “No.””¹¹²

Calling everyone good or evil, seeing the world as the best of all existing worlds, and frugality: The keywords for the meanings attributed to values to become absolute and for the emergence of general morality can be seen in the Zarathustra quoted above. From the point of view of religion, the source of nature is also divine. Because nature was created by God and is governed by God, this nature should not be thought of only as physical nature. We mean the world, geography, nature, and living things by physical nature. According to the religious interpretation, the nature of the human was also created by God. How can one speak of the existence of human nature? People adopt values, thoughts, mentalities, approaches, and actions; all these can be considered parts of "human nature." If we pay attention, we also count the values among these parts. If God created human nature, then it can be concluded that the values considered part of this nature were also created by God. In short, it is thought that moral dichotomy such as good-bad, beautiful-ugly was created by God and "given" to the human. However, if these values are not considered "sacred," they cannot be absolute. The revaluation of values begins at this very point, with the rejection of the sacred and the absolute. However, against this, *Übermensch*, represented in the person of Zarathustra, may represent a preparing. Lawrence J. Hattab states that *Übermensch* is a structural concept that prepares the possibility of life affirmation and eternal recurrence, and he states that it would be more appropriate to read *Übermensch* as a kind of supreme achievement

¹¹² Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 155.

(like a situation¹¹³) rather than a high type or a lofty "new human."¹¹⁴ In this regard, we should again refer to perspectivism, which is central to Nietzsche's philosophy.

We can think of perspectivism as a principle: A principle that is necessary for the revaluation of values. For Nietzsche, the only principle of a holistic critique is his own perspectivism. As it can be understood from here, he perceives criticism as an individual activity. According to him, there is no moral phenomenon, a moral interpretation of the phenomena. Knowledge has no illusions, but knowledge itself is an illusion; knowledge is a fallacy, or worse yet, a distortion.¹¹⁵ Therefore, interpretation is vital for Nietzsche. The way to interpret is to put forward one's own perspectives. Perspectivism makes it possible to reevaluate phenomena. The phenomena called values have hitherto been adorned with transcendent meanings. We have noted that for Nietzsche, there are only phenomena rather than taken for granted values or absolute values. These phenomena, however transcendent they are thought to be, can be reinterpreted. Or to put it differently, anything that can be interpreted and reinterpreted through perspectivism cannot be transcendent or absolute.

As we have seen Nietzsche opposes the idea of transcendence, which makes values indifferent to their source, and the idea of causal derivation or initial plane, which puts an indifferent source to values. And he shows this through genealogy which means both the value of origin and the origin of values. Michel Foucault says genealogy requires ruthless wisdom. We can think of this cruelty as being open to knowledge at the expense of the erosion or destruction of faith. According to Foucault, genealogy rejects the metahistorical deployment of ideal significations and opposes the search for origins. According to him, while examining the history of logic, Nietzsche saw the passion and ambition of the scientist behind devotion to truth and scientific precision, the weapons of reason forged by personal conflicts.

¹¹³ What I mean by "situation"; It is a point that Hatab expresses with the highest success. We mean the most successful situation possible.

¹¹⁴ Lawrence J.Hatab, *Nietzsche's Life Sentence: Coming to Terms with Eternal Recurrence*, (New York: Routledge, 2005), 55.

¹¹⁵ Gilles Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, Trans. Hugh Tomlinson, (New York: Continuum, 2002), 90.

The role of genealogy is to record its history: the history of morals, ideals, and metaphysical concepts, the history of the concepts of liberty or of the ascetic life; as they stand for the emergence of different interpretations, they must be made to appear as events on the stage of historical process.¹¹⁶ The fact that Nietzsche sees personal conflicts, ambitions, and passions behind devotion to truth and scientific certainty reveals the connection of "knowledge" with perspectives that emerges in trying to obtain truth and scientific knowledge. Personal opinions, beliefs, passions, or ambitions, however personal, are necessary to provide scientific knowledge and aim at truth. Another issue Foucault mentions is the origin. He says the genealogy does not target origin. Because the genealogy's search for the origin will lead him to a search for a kind of sacred knowledge. However, Foucault says that the role of genealogy is to record history. How values, ideals, morals, and concepts have followed their course throughout history, their ups and downs, and their adventures; In short, this is the task of genealogy.

Genealogy as a method enables Nietzsche to criticize the taken for granted values in philosophy and in the morality of his time and to define the values of the future.¹¹⁷ The genealogical point of view is in line with Nietzsche's principle of perspectivism through which he rejects the theological ideals of a God's-eye view and a pre-given world.^{118 119} According to him, noble types are needed for the new nobility to exist, there is no god, but gods are divinity itself.¹²⁰¹²¹ At this point, we should look at the relationship between perspectivism and *Übermensch*. Perhaps

¹¹⁶ Michel Foucault, *Nietzsche, Genealogy, History*, Edited by. D. F. Bouchard, (New York-Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977)

¹¹⁷ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, 2.

¹¹⁸ Christoph Cox, *Nietzsche: Naturalism and Interpretation*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 70.

¹¹⁹ Nietzsche says "God is Dead" with *Zarathustra's* mouth, which also clearly shows this rejection.

¹²⁰ We can interpret these types of nobility and deities as a plurality of points of view, hence perspectivism.

¹²¹ It is not my interpretation to interpret perspectivism as a doctrine. It belongs to Cox. (Cox, 1999, 59.) Deleuze implies that perspectivism is a principle. For this study, we consider perspectivism as a principle, not a doctrine: The principle of re-interpretation of phenomena-hence values-.

Nietzsche's most revealing statement on the principle of perspectivism and the *Übermensch* can be found in *Zarathustra*.

*“I disturbed this sleepiness when I taught: what is good and evil no one knows yet – except for the creator! He, however, is the one who creates a goal for mankind and gives the earth its meaning and its future: This one first creates the possibility that something can be good and evil.”*¹²²

This creator is *Übermensch*¹²³. Giving new meanings to values also means taking their old meanings from them. *Übermensch* means that perspectivism is the only measure of revaluation of values. At the beginning of this chapter, we asked if the idea of the eternal return is a possibility: The possibility of revaluating values and affirming life. We can add another question: Is the idea of the eternal return a ground or a necessary condition for a reassessment of values? Is the fundamental issue here to delve into the genealogy of existing values? *Zarathustra* gives us many hints in this regard. Nietzsche says that there is no absolute knowledge of good and evil; only the creator knows the knowledge of good and evil. We have mentioned above that the creator is the *Übermensch*. This creativity can be understood as a lifestyle. It is a style that does not accept any value as given, does not sanctify, and does not make absolute; its principle is perspectivism. As we mentioned above, *Übermensch* is the readiness for life-affirming and eternal return as a way of creating and destroying new values and being both the perpetrator and the judge of the created values. According to Nietzsche, they are just a burden. In *Zarathustra*, Nietzsche expresses this as follows:

“Almost from the cradle, grave words and values are imparted to us; “good” and “evil” this dowry calls itself. For its sake we are forgiven for being alive. And for this reason, one lets the little children come to one, in order to restrain them early on from loving themselves: this is the spirit of gravity’s doing. And we – we faithfully lug what is imparted to us on hard shoulders

¹²² Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 157.

¹²³ The word “creator” does not represent a human being here. Our argument is that *Übermensch* expresses a state of readiness and an apex rather than being a person. When we say, “the creator is *Übermensch*,” we mean a situation.

*and over rough mountains! And if we sweat, then we are told: "Yes, life is a heavy burden!" But only the human being is a heavy burden to himself! This is because he lugs too much that is foreign to him. Like a camel he kneels down and allows himself to be well burdened."*¹²⁴

The spirit of gravity is a spirit created only by values that have been taught, independent of our desires and will. Therefore, Nietzsche advises us to eliminate this spirit, saying it is a burden.¹²⁵ This means reevaluating values, getting rid of the spirit of heaviness. It is the *Übermensch* who can do this: To create and destroy, to re-evaluate. We said above that *Übermensch* is an apex and readiness. We interpret the eternal return as allowing for new values and evaluations to create new values of the most victorious situation and to destroy and reevaluate these values when necessary.

2.3. ETHICAL CONSIDERATION OF THE IDEA OF THE ETERNAL RETURN

In the previous section, we tried to explain the concepts of *Übermensch* and *Amor Fati*. This section shows that the eternal return has an inseparable connection with the issue of the revaluation of values. Because of this bond, it is a thought that has ethical purposes. When we say ethical purposes, we are trying to explain the interests of eternal return as a thought that deals with morality and focuses on values.

By ethically considering the eternal return, we understand action that eternally at peace with the will. This action seeks an action that would be done a thousand times if one was born a thousand times. We said in the previous chapter that *Übermensch* is a state of readiness for an affirmed life and the eternal return. Nietzsche's Zarathustra is symptomatic of this situation: "*I love all those who are*

¹²⁴ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 154.

¹²⁵ Again, the metaphors of "flying, learning to fly" mentioned in the section *Zarathustra* can be interpreted as getting rid of the spirit of gravity.

like heavy drops falling individually from the dark cloud that hangs over humanity: they herald the coming of the lightning, and as heralds they perish. Behold, I am a herald of the lightning and a heavy drop from the cloud: but this lightning is called *Übermensch*.¹²⁶ –” Zarathustra can also be interpreted here as a kind of omen. According to Nietzsche, being like Zarathustra on the way to *Übermensch* is something to be embraced. To be like Zarathustra is to be a "herald of lightning." However, here we must look at *The Last Man*. *The Last Man*, according to Nietzsche, is the man to be despised. This person is a person who thinks he/she has discovered happiness. This situation is why, according to Zarathustra, this person should be despised. Because this man has stopped, he does not know or accept that man is a bridge. It does not continue the road to *Übermensch*. The reason for this can be understood from what Zarathustra said about *The Last Man*: “They abandoned the regions where it was hard to live: for one needs warmth. One still loves one’s neighbor and rubs up against him: for one needs warmth.”¹²⁷ *The Last Man* can be interpreted as someone avoidant to oppositions and conflicts. All values are stamped with an absolute meaning; these value stamps are now made real, and no revaluation effort is attempted. According to Zarathustra, this cannot be the way to *Übermensch*. Another reason why this type of person is so fond of Zarathustra is that the Last Man is "educated." We can connect *The Last Man* with the contemporary people¹²⁸ (people whom Nietzsche considers his contemporaries) in *The Anti-Christ*. The main difference between Zarathustra and *The Last Man* is that one is a traveler, and the other is a resident. So, according to Zarathustra, it is contemptible to think that happiness has been discovered or to claim that values have fixed meanings (essences). When he said there are no moral phenomena, there are moral interpretations of the phenomena, Nietzsche was demonstrating his

¹²⁶ The expression "Overman" belongs to the translation of the source in question. In this study, we use the original version of the concept, *Übermensch*.

¹²⁷ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 10.

¹²⁸ *The Antichrist*, p.86: “Toward the past, like all who understand, I am full of tolerance, which is to say, generous self-control: with gloomy caution I pass through whole millenniums of this madhouse of a world, call it “Christianity,” “Christian faith” or the “Christian church,” as you will—I take care not to hold mankind responsible for its lunacies. But my feeling changes and breaks out irresistibly the moment I enter modern times, our times. Our age knows better.... What was formerly merely sickly now becomes indecent—it is indecent to be a Christian today.”

rejection of the essence. From this point of view, we can see how the action that is eternally at peace with the will and, therefore, perfect is sought.

Nietzsche says in *Zarathustra* that he wants to teach people the meaning of becoming and that this meaning is *Übermensch*, the lightning flashing from human, who is a dark cloud.¹²⁹ Being in becoming precisely explains the point of contempt for *The Last Man* above. Considering the point reached as the final point and not acting from there can be interpreted as a situation contrary to becoming. If everything is in a state of becoming, then nothing can be said to be fixed, so values cannot remain constant. However, at this point, there is something that seems paradoxical. How will the absence of fixed meanings of morality and values make the eternal return possible? Eternal repetition is not about the essence of values; it seeks action and value that can be eternally reconciled with the will that can be eternally repeated. All that is becomes and passes away; thus, every joy and every sorrow is condemned to extinction. Through eternal return, however, all that is transient is rendered eternal, and life is thereby celebrated.¹³⁰ In his work *The Will to Power*, Nietzsche says that the world is something that comes and goes, that it continues to be and passes away, and that the excrement of the world is also its food.¹³¹ From this point of view, saying "yes" to life means saying yes to everything that makes it possible for a new world to emerge and pass away at every moment. What is unacceptable here for Nietzsche, we may ask? What is unacceptable for him is the disappearance of all oppositions¹³², the illusion that everything is in its place, and the creation of absolute morality. With the creation of absolute morality,

¹²⁹ If we recall what Foucault said about genealogy, there Foucault was saying that genealogy requires brutally comprehensive wisdom. This is how the black cloud metaphor can be interpreted: full and frightening, like before the rain, just like *Zarathustra*.

¹³⁰ Sedgwick, *Nietzsche: The Key Concepts*, 53.

¹³¹ Nietzsche, *The Will to Power*, 548-549.

¹³² What we mean by oppositions is the dichotomy. The existence of oppositions is vital for Nietzsche. However, we should not interpret this simply as "without good, there would be no evil." What is at issue here is not to break up the dichotomy, that is, to prevent the dualities from excluding each other. For example, leaving the good to God and the evil to the devil is an example of the disintegration of a dichotomy. Fragmented dichotomy leads to the emergence of excluded values. For Nietzsche, the value oppositions that are part of the affirmation of life should not be positioned in favor of one against the other. In the following pages, we will discuss this issue again when we refer to Nietzsche's critique of Christianity.

life¹³³ is no longer something that comes and goes, it cannot feed and re-create itself, and thus life ceases. Nietzsche explains this situation in *The Anti-Christ* as follows:

*“The fact that the strong races of northern Europe did not repudiate this Christian god does little credit to their gift for religion—and not much more to their taste. They ought to have been able to make an end of such a moribund and worn-out product of the *décadence*. A curse lies upon them because they were not equal to it; they made illness, decrepitude and contradiction a part of their instincts—and since then they have not managed to create any more gods. Two thousand years have come and gone—and not a single new god! Instead, there still exists, and as if by some intrinsic right, —as if he were the ultimatum and maximum of the power to create gods, of the creator spiritus in mankind—this pitiful god of Christian monotonous-theism! This hybrid image of decay, conjured up out of emptiness, contradiction and vain imagining, in which all the instincts of *décadence*, all the cowardices and wearinesses of the soul find their sanction! —”¹³⁴*

In another part of *The Anti-Christ*, Nietzsche says:

“Is it understood at last, will it ever be understood, what the Renaissance was? The transvaluation of Christian values, —an attempt with all available means, all instincts and all the resources of genius to bring about a triumph of the opposite values, the more noble values.... This has been the one great war of the past; there has never been a more critical question than that of the Renaissance— it is my question too—; there has never been a form of attack more fundamental, more direct, or more violently delivered by a whole front upon the center of the enemy!” (...) Once the concept of “nature” had been opposed to the concept of “God,” the word “natural” necessarily took on the meaning of “abominable”—the whole of that fictitious world has its sources in hatred of the

¹³³ We consider life and the world synonymous.

¹³⁴ Nietzsche, *The Antichrist*, 60.

natural (—the real! —) and is no more than evidence of a profound uneasiness in the presence of reality...."¹³⁵

Why is it necessary for opposing values to triumph? In footnote 5, we talked about the disintegration of dichotomy. When the sides of the dualities are alienated from each other, one of these sides becomes an excluded value in favor of the other. It seems that it becomes a noble value for precisely this reason. Nietzsche sees opposing values as noble values. Because the opposing values of the values that have been made absolute are the values that will break that absoluteness, that is, that will pave the way for the revaluation of the values. Opposing values will create the corrosive situation necessary for evaluating values. What we mean by this corrosive situation is the affirmation of values opposite to those made absolute. Thus, the divinity of absolute values will erode against the naturalness of the value-opposite-value dichotomy. The inevitable result of this is nihilism. However, according to Nietzsche, the word pessimism is more appropriate at this point than nihilism. This is because nihilism manifests itself with the consensual religiosity (active nihilism) of absolute and sanctified values and by not bothering to create any value anymore (passive nihilism). However, pessimism can be interpreted as a state of grave grief that emerged due to the horror of seeing that the values seen as absolute and sacred until now were just a result of habit and mistake.¹³⁶ Although it is a state of grief, this grief is seen as a necessary condition on the way to *Übermensch*. The main issue we have tried to explain so far has been to show that opposition and conflict are essential for Nietzsche. What could be the primary intention of all this conflict?

It may be easier to answer the above question when we look at the discussions under the title of "morality as anti-nature," which is the name of a chapter in Nietzsche's *Twilight of the Idols*. According to Nietzsche, it is a great mistake to try to destroy these passions to avoid the negative consequences of

¹³⁵ Ibid, 56,130.

¹³⁶ See Chapter 1.2, 22.

passions.¹³⁷ "If your eye offends you, pluck it out"¹³⁸ The commandment is presented as a way of getting rid of the negativities of the passions. He considers the attitude of the Church towards the passions:

*The church combats the passions by cutting them off in every sense: its technique, its 'cure', is castration. It never asks: 'how can a desire be spiritualized, beautified, deified?' — it has always laid the weight of its discipline on eradication (of sensuality, of pride, of greed, of the thirst to dominate and exact revenge). — But attacking the root of the passions means attacking the roof of life: the practices of the church are hostile to life"*¹³⁹

Here, we can say that what Nietzsche means by the word "passion" is related to the fact that one value is emphasized against the other, glorified and sanctified, which we expressed above when explaining opposing values. In other words, passion is a counter-value. This counter-value is the side of a dichotomy. One of the sides is put against morality; the name of this side is crime, sin, or nature. Thus, the dualities are fragmented, and the basis for creative conflict is now lost. For creative conflict values to be reassessed, dichotomies must continue to exist. The dualities that allow the emergence of new values by eroding each other must exist forever. These new values will be values that can be repeated forever as values that the "will" will say yes to without hesitation.

There is an ambiguity when we say that dualities must continue to exist, and therefore conflict is also necessary. Should the existence of dualities be understood and affirmed as ethical advice, or should they be affirmed because they are interconnected and imperative? Nietzsche himself does not offer a clear explanation for answering this ambiguous question. In the *Twilight of the Idols*, we see two different approaches within the same chapter. The first approach is:

"An individual is a piece of fate, from the front and from the back; an individual is one more law, one more necessity imposed on everything that is

¹³⁷ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Antichrist, Ecce Homo, Twilight of Idols: Morality and Other Writings*, Tran. Judith Norman, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005)

¹³⁸ New Testament, "Matta", 18:9

¹³⁹ Nietzsche, *Twilight of Idols*, 172.

*coming and going to be. To say to an individual: 'change yourself' means demanding that everything change, even retroactively..."*¹⁴⁰

In the first approach, we should remember perspectivism when considering that the individual is an extra law and necessity. Perspectivism is a principle about the individual because each individual has their perspective. That is why, for Nietzsche, absolute morality is fatal to life. Because all the dichotomies and conflicts experienced by the individual should be considered a source for the emergence of new values, from this point of view, according to the first approach, the individual's being a law, and a necessity is a necessity in terms of being connected with society, the world, and the universe. From this point on, the existence of the individual's laws, values, and perspectives is expressed as a necessity rather than being defended as ethical advice. The second approach takes us to another point:

"But we who are different, we immortals, have opened our hearts to all types of understanding, comprehension, approval. We do not negate easily, we stake our honour on being affirmative. We are increasingly opening our eyes to that economy that both needs and knows how to make use of everything rejected by the holy insanity of the priests, the sick reason of the priests—to that economy in the law of life that that can take advantage of even the disgusting species of idiot, the priests, the virtuous, —But we ourselves, we immoralists, are the answer to this..."

The second approach has an ethical aspect. Here, Nietzsche speaks of needing and affirming all kinds of understanding, comprehension, and, most importantly, not quickly denying. In the first approach, he said that the individual is a different destiny and necessity, but here he assumes a situation of choice and speaks of non-denial. Therefore, the affirmative approach to different values, insights, understandings, perspectives, and all dualities gains an ethical feature here.

For Gilles Deleuze the eternal return is a new formula of practical synthesis: *whatever you will, will it in such a way that you also will its eternal return. If, in all that you will you begin by asking yourself: its it certain that I will to do it an*

¹⁴⁰ Nietzsche, *Twilight of Idols*, 175.

infinite number of times? This should be your most solid center of gravity"¹⁴¹ One thing in the world disheartens Nietzsche: the little compensations, the little pleasures, the little joys and everything that one is granted once, only once. Everything that can be done again the next day only on the condition that it be said the day before: tomorrow I will give it up—the whole ceremonial of the obsessed. And we are like those old women who permit themselves an excess only once, we act and think like them. "Oh, that you would put from you all half willing, and decide upon lethargy as you do upon action. Oh, that you understood my saying: *"Always do what you will—but first be such as can will."*"¹⁴² Laziness, stupidity, baseness, cowardice or spitefulness that would will its own eternal return would no longer be the same laziness, stupidity etc.¹⁴³ We mentioned in the fourth chapter that *Übermensch* expresses a state of readiness and an apogee. The thought of eternal return, it makes willing a creation, it brings about the equation "willing=creating". We see that the connection Nietzsche established between will and destiny maintains the ambiguity we mentioned above: *"Oh you my will! You turning point of all need, you point of my necessity! Preserve me from all small victories! You ordaining of my soul, that I call destiny! You in-me, over-me! Preserve and save me for a great destiny!"*¹⁴⁴

By defining will as destiny, Nietzsche also reveals his attitude towards everything small, as Deleuze emphasizes. The will, according to Nietzsche, is a guardian of great destiny. According to Nietzsche's connection between will and destiny, will and necessity are intertwined. By making this connection, Nietzsche makes the will a necessity. We see the individual as the main element of revaluation of values, perspectivism, and eternal return. The integration of will with necessity causes the disappearance of the binding quality of the sacred. If we make a two-way distinction here, we can talk about external and internal law concepts.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹ In the edition of Gilles Deleuze's *"Nietzsche and Philosophy"* that we used in our study, it was noted that this word of Nietzsche is in Chapter 242 of the fourth book of *The Will to Power*.

¹⁴² Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 137.

¹⁴³ Deleuze, *Nietzsche and Philosophy*, 69.

¹⁴⁴ Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, 173.

¹⁴⁵ The concepts in question are our expressions. By the concept of external law, we understand religious, ideological, or other kinds of metanarrative rules. Internal laws, on the other hand, are

External law is a law that is independent of the individual's perspective and is imposed from outside. We can give examples of religious laws to these laws. We can say that these laws develop out of the individual's will.¹⁴⁶ Perspectivism is the most distinctive feature of *Übermensch* by removing the domination of the external law over the will. Individual views, understandings, insights, and values formed by them bring about questioning and rejection of external laws. This questioning and rejection make dualities neutralized by the sacred again conflict. The individual will shape this conflict, and right at this stage, the individual gets the opportunity to want it endlessly in whatever he wants, whatever he wants, that is, the possibility of eternal return.

It is here that the emergence of internal laws takes place. The individual confronts the external laws with his internal laws and is obliged to do so. Otherwise, the danger of nihilism will arise. For Nietzsche, the great destiny is the formation of internal laws, obeying these laws, and re-denying and recreating the same laws. However, in doing so, the individual must integrate his will and necessity: He must create values that he can want endlessly and be both their creator and destroyer, judge, and criminal.

laws created from individual perspectives. We speak of them as laws because Nietzsche sees nihilism as a necessary but unsustainable process.

¹⁴⁶ What we mean by the will of the individual is the specific development processes of the personality, and a more emotional will be shaped by the effect of the place, time, conditions, and events in which this process takes place.

CONCLUSION

The subject of this study has been formed on the axes of two approaches discussed so far regarding the eternal return. The cosmological and ethical interpretation of the eternal return has created this axis of discussion. It should be noted here that this discussion is a new one. It seems that the idea of the eternal return is not a new one. As a theme that has existed since prehistoric and ancient times, the idea of "repetition" has always been followed by societies. Until Nietzsche, this thought had more cosmological meanings, but as seen in Nietzsche's philosophy, the idea of the eternal return is more of an idea related to the field of value.

In the first part of the first chapter of our study, we adopted a panoramic approach to eternal return. We have studied the ideas of eternal return in primitive times. When we look at these thoughts, the central theme is the re-enactment of a creative and perfect "first action." The main reason for reviving the first action is to develop a defense against time uncertainties. The way to provide this defense is to stop time by reviving creative and perfect action. Undoubtedly, the psychological foundations of this practice are undeniable. However, the idea of recreating an action thought to have taken place in the past and being immune to uncertainties is essential in that it forms the basis for the idea of the eternal return of the same. It can be argued that the mental world of the archaic man who lived in times defined as primitive was a conservative mental world. Because the act, which is thought to be perfect and creative, is kept alive by reviving, the assurance brought by the act in question is also like the instinct of conservative thought to protect the institutionalized thoughts and attitudes of the past against the future. The belief that the perfect and creative first action will bring security also gives a cosmological meaning to the idea of eternal return. Because when the first action is re-enacted, a whole time will stop, the universe will become unscathed, and therefore a state of total renewal will emerge.

The idea of eternal return gained a philosophical character, mostly around the discussions of Ancient Greek philosophers. Pythagoras' thoughts about the soul and body still need to be fully elucidated from mythological and cosmological qualities. According to him, the soul is pure from the body; the body is material, but the soul is not; therefore, the soul must be immortal. Living is nothing but a constant journey. The idea of reincarnation also emerges at this point. The better the previous life was lived, the better the new address of the soul will be. This idea is cosmological in that it assumes the soul is a being in motion and immortal because the soul is not assumed to belong to a single body but has a universal mode of action in that it can circulate in the bodies of all living things in the universe.

On the other hand, this idea about the soul-body relationship also contains mythological elements. However, where it is mythological, this idea also carries an ethical character. According to the virtuous life of the previous life, the new body will be the new address of the soul according to that virtue. So, where is philosophy in that? Although not common among pre-Socratic philosophers, this idea of Pythagoras also falls within the field of moral philosophy. At this point, the shaping of soul migration according to a virtuous life provides the emergence of Pythagoras' idea of eternal return as a cosmological, mythological, and ethical, i.e., philosophical thought.

Heraclitus, who had pioneering ideas about the eternal return and was more prominent among the pre-Socratic philosophers as he had a significant influence on Nietzsche, also discusses the idea of the war of opposites. Heraclitus speaks mostly in aphorisms, and his words that have survived to the present day are not very holistic and obscure his comments. However, we know he speaks of the idea of a war of opposites. According to him, everything is in question with its opposite. For example, cold creates heat; the way up is also the way down. Heraclitus sought an answer to the question of the universe's primary substance, which is a general curiosity among pre-Socratic philosophers. His answer to this question is fire. However, this fire is not the concrete fire we know. As we mentioned in our study, Heraclitus says that the fire flashes according to the logos. Logos has many

meanings, but we found it appropriate to discuss the meanings of measure and reason for our study. A particular interpretation can be made here: Everything changes according to a measure and takes on new forms; fire transforms everything to its original form and can give everything another form. From this point of view, Heraclitus' thought about the eternal return has more of a cosmological quality. So, where is Nietzsche's influence from Heraclitus? Nietzsche seems to have been influenced by Heraclitus' method. The struggle of opposites and the fact that each opposition brings out something new may have laid the groundwork for Nietzsche's idea of reevaluating values.

Philosophy historians generally believe that moral problematizations are the subject of philosophy after Socrates. As in many other fields, moral interpretations dominated the idea of eternal return. We see this in Plato. According to Plato, the soul is immortal and the body's prisoner. This idea is similar to that of Pythagoras. However, it is seen that Plato brings radical innovations to this idea. According to Plato, the soul is the principle of change and transformation and is in constant motion. Therefore, it is the spirit that makes living things alive. Because not carrying something that is constantly in motion, for example, dying, will mean that the soul leaves the body. Plato divides the beings in the universe into two animate and inanimate. The soul is also the principle of vitality as a principle of change and transformation and as something in constant motion. Because every living thing changes and transforms. So it can be said that according to Plato, vitality and spirit are the same things. He does not think of the soul as independent of vitality. According to him, the source of all intellectual and emotional activities is the spirit that moves everything in the universe. Therefore, the soul is conscious because the body alone cannot perform the activities mentioned above. This idea is similar to the idea of a flashing fire according to a measure and logic. Spirit is a principle and acts according to a certain consciousness. Plato also has thoughts about transmigration. According to him, the soul, constantly in motion, can pass to other bodies. These new bodies are determined similarly to Pythagoras' thought: new bodies are related to how the previous life was spent. Plato's thinking of the soul as

the principle of vitality can be considered a new situation in the history of philosophy.

When we turn our direction to Aristotle, we see that his view of the soul is different from Plato's. When we turn our direction to Aristotle, we see that his view of the soul differs from Plato's. Like Plato, Aristotle sees the soul as the principle of life, movement, and thought. However, according to him, the soul is the form of the living body. The main point where he differs from Plato is this thought of Aristotle's about the soul. Another thing that Aristotle thinks differently from Plato is about the continuity of the soul. According to Aristotle, the soul does not continue to exist after death; the soul is limited to bodily life. Bodily activities are also finite, but the activity of God is eternal. Therefore, eternal life belongs to God and the divine. Therefore, according to Aristotle, the soul is associated with life; if God has eternal life, he must also have a soul. As it is understood from here, according to Aristotle, there is no understanding of eternal life or spirit that passes from body to body; according to him, only God and the divine have eternal life and soul.

When we look at the Stoics, we see that their thoughts about the universe intersect with the idea of eternal return. According to the Stoics, there is only one universe, but this universe repeats itself over time. According to them, there were different universes before that, and these universes were constantly destroyed and recreated by a universal fire. It is helpful to think of this cyclical universe idea in coordination with the Stoics' idea of God. According to them, the principles of the universe are God and Matter. God and Matter are eternal. The same Matter is constantly processed and recreated by the same god, so, according to some Stoics, the creatures living in this universe are constantly reliving the same life. The Stoics' idea of a cyclical universe is an excellent example of the cosmological perception of eternal return.

Another idea of eternal return in our study belonged to the Neo—Platonists. As can be understood from their names, Neo—Platonists were highly influenced by Plato, and these thinkers became the thinkers who formed the core of Christian thought. Like Plato's distinction between the visible world and the world of ideas,

Christian thought also distinguished between the Divine Kingdom and Kingdom of the Earth. According to Plato, the soul is superior to the body; according to Christianity, the soul is superior to the body and should dominate the body. This way of thinking formed the core of the drive to absolutize certain perceptions and evaluations. Accordingly, the soul comes from God and is holy; everything but the sacred label of the soul is unpredictable and belongs to the earth, hence coming from the devil. Plato's visible world was transformed into Kingdom of the Earth and nature in Christianity, while the world of ideas turned into the Divine Kingdom and the spirit of God, the holy spirit. The closer mortals are to this holy spirit, the closer they are to salvation and enlightenment. The idea of transmigration in Christianity seems to have changed in the axis of the belief in heaven-hell, that is, the afterlife. A mortal who does not live by God's orders and prohibitions on earth is born into another life in hell, while a mortal who lives by God's orders and prohibitions go to heaven. This afterlife theme is similar to the central theme of the idea of transmigration; the new body is related to how the previous life was lived.

When we look at the ideas of eternal return in antiquity in general, it is seen that these thoughts are of cosmological, mythological, and religious nature. However, in ancient Greece, it is seen that the ideas that prepared the ground for the eternal return attained a philosophical quality to a certain extent, if not wholly. In terms of similarities with Nietzsche's idea of eternal return, it can be said that Heraclitus influenced Nietzsche as a method. However, Nietzsche's idea of eternal return occupies a unique place in the history of philosophy. Nietzsche's idea of eternal return is a thought set. We interpret it this way because the idea of eternal return cannot be thought of independently of the ideas of *Übermensch*, *Amor Fati*, reevaluation of values, perspectivism and affirmation of life. The analyzes and evaluations we made under the first title of the second chapter focused on two of the most fundamental parts of this thought set: *Übermensch* and *Amor Fati*. We interpreted *Übermensch* as an apex. We noted that he was not a new kind of person; it is a state of readiness. Nietzsche also said this openly: "*Man is something that shall be overcome*" If the human is something to be overcome, then moving from man to another kind of human does not mean the act of overcoming. On the other

hand, it is undeniable that Nietzsche's concept of overcoming the human expresses a higher state. This higher status includes the ability to legislate by oneself, obey these laws, and violate them. Thus, *Übermensch* indicates a situation in which one can be both a judge and a criminal. According to Nietzsche, this is an apex. From this point on, the person violates his/her laws, which means "going under." Great Noon is the state of being *Übermensch*. In this case, human legislates for him/herself, judges him/herself, and becomes a violator of his/her law. At this point, it is necessary to mention *Amor Fati*. Destiny is the will to love. In other words, they are actions and values that the will can indefinitely approve, and these actions and values are eternally integrated/at peace with the will. The will that can want it forever is creative will. It is the will that re-evaluates values and creates new values. This embraceable destiny that Nietzsche speaks of is the destiny that carries actions and values that the will of the human can eternally approve.

We have stated that the concept of *Übermensch* expresses the state of reevaluation of values, which is symbolized by the fictional temporalization that Nietzsche calls "great noon." Reevaluated values will reveal new values. However, we should point out that the main issue here is to ensure that none of the values remain constant rather than new values. In other words, it can be said that the primary importance of reevaluating values is preventing morality's absolutization. When values can be reevaluated, all oppositions that have been absolutized and frozen by divine interpretations will be able to function again. The conflicting situation of the opposition will lead to the emergence of new values.

Moreover, it will make the conflict re-emerge. According to Nietzsche, every absolute value precludes life and prevents the reevaluation of values; in other words, it prevents the realization of eternal return. Because when that happens, everything is determined, the boundaries of all values are drawn, and nothing new emerges. What needs to be discussed more than the emergence of nothing new is the elimination of perspectivism, that is, the plurality, diversity, and independence of individual perspectives. Everyone has a different perspective. According to Nietzsche, it is a suffocating situation from the individual's point of view that the

values created by the will of influential individuals who lived in an unknown past are adopted and applied for many years. These values eventually become truths and judgments. Basing the meanings given to values in a certain period of history on sacred and divine sources and making the meanings of these values absolute is similar to the archaic human trying to stop time by reviving a first action that he/she thought was creative and perfect.

The most important result of reevaluating values and their relevance to perspectivism is that this idea is not fatalistic. The eternal return stands against fatalism by not making any absolute evaluation and revealing that the meaning of each value can change. While examining the relationship between eternal return and fatalism, we touched on the concepts of pessimism and nihilism. According to Nietzsche, pessimism is a concept that should replace nihilism. Nietzsche describes his pessimism with the fear and grief that results from the awareness that no value is absolute. He talks about two types of nihilism: active and passive nihilism. Both types of nihilism emerge due to the awareness that values cannot be absolute. For this reason, Nietzsche suggests using the word pessimism instead of nihilism. Active nihilism can be interpreted as a defense mechanism developed against the horror that occurs due to the awareness that values cannot be absolute. The mind, which realizes that the values adopted, believed, and accepted as truths may not be absolute and therefore not sacred, may try to believe in these values more firmly and convincingly. This situation can be interpreted as active nihilism. Passive nihilism is another name for Nietzsche's pessimism. The pessimism that emerges from being aware that values and morals are not absolute and sacred may cause no new values to be replaced by lost values. According to Nietzsche, decadence brings nihilism, and decadence is inevitable in the case of reaching consciousness. The main issue is not the elimination of this decadence but the attitudes to be taken against the decadence.

One of the main problems of our study was that Nietzsche's idea of eternal return is an ethical thought. Nietzsche said to seek action that can be repeated eternally. Here the following interpretation can be made: According to Nietzsche,

any action to be taken must always be an action that the will can approve. Movement is the basis of life, everything alive moves. The action does not take place in motion. So action is vital, and action sanctioned by the will is also life sanctioned by the will. This is what we mean by affirmation of life. How do actions take place? When it comes to human actions, it can be said, in general, that people act for a particular purpose. The impulses and the values adopted to determine the quality of these goals. We can embed religions, ideologies, and philosophical attitudes into these values. In particular, we see that religions and ideologies create morals. The values of these morals guide the people who adopt them as a credo. In addition to these, impulses are also guiding people. Nietzsche uses the word instinct rather than drive. However, let us remember what Nietzsche said about instincts: According to Nietzsche, the values created by the value setters in the past have been applied and adopted for a long time, and their adoption has turned into a habit at times; these habits have naturalized that they have now turned into instincts. Therefore, according to Nietzsche, the source of instincts cannot be explained by God's gift. Nietzsche emphasized this situation when he said that "*there are no moral phenomena, there are moral interpretations of phenomena.*" So, finally, it can be said: If individual perspectives against general and absolute morals and values are brought forward, all values that are sanctified and unquestionable can be reevaluated, and this is the state of being *Übermensch*. For the individual, destiny is to create new values with his/her will, which should be values that the will can approve eternally so that life can be approved.

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