'Is Heidegger's History of Being a Genealogy?'
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Abstract

This paper argues that Heidegger's 'history of being' is a debunking narrative, characterised by both analogies and disanalogies to genealogy, at least in its Nietzschean form. I begin by defining such narratives in terms of non-truth-tropic explanation. In §2, I argue, contra Foucault, that the debate is not best approached via the idea of an "origin" or "*Ursprung*". Instead, having flagged some classic features of at least Nietzschean genealogy (§3), I examine two case studies from Heidegger's 'history of being'. The first, I argue, is not a debunking history (§4). The second is – and its target is ironically Nietzsche himself (§5). I highlight Heidegger's psychological and epistemic claims, and I draw a comparison with MacIntyre's discussion of 'dead-end' problems. I conclude that Heidegger's history of being *is* a debunking history, but *not* a genealogy, at least in the Nietzschean sense: amongst other things, Heidegger's method differs in its stance on truth and on the role of polemical writing (§6).

Is Heidegger's History of Being a Genealogy?

The gulf between Heidegger and genealogy may seem obvious. *Being and Time* uses the term only once, simply to insist that genealogical investigation is secondary to ontology (BT:31). His 1936-1943 Nietzsche lectures, which so shaped Nietzsche's French 20th century reception, run to well over a thousand pages. But they contain no substantive discussion of genealogy as a method or of the *Genealogy of Morality* as a text. The three volume *Heidegger Concordance*, which indexes more than 80 volumes of his collected writings, does not even include an entry for "*Genealogie*"; for comparison, "*Dialektik*" has close to one thousand (Jaran and Perrin 2013, 290).

      The total absence of genealogy in Heidegger's thought would be intriguing for two reasons. First, at a textual level in relation to Nietzsche: is the silencing of genealogy's sceptical tone necessary for Heidegger's construction of Nietzsche as an unabashed metaphysician? Second, at a philosophical level: genealogy is so central in post-Nietzschean European philosophy that, where it is missing, it is worth asking what takes its place – just as it is profitable to ask what fills the role of Kant's Transcendental Deduction in Schelling or Merleau-Ponty.

      I will argue, however, that the situation is in fact more complex and more interesting than that. There *is* a significant affinity between some of Heidegger's central moves and genealogy. But it is an affinity, not an identity: as I show, Heidegger relies on a form of subversive historical narrative which nevertheless diverges from genealogy. Understanding that difference can help clarify both Heidegger's position and the distinctive nature of genealogy.

1 – GENEALOGY AND THE HISTORY OF BEING

To begin, some preliminary clarifications. 'Genealogies' obviously come in many variants and often depart radically from Nietzsche's original: for example, Williams' approach is avowedly fictional and vindicatory (Williams 2002, 19, 263). I start with a deliberately broad category: 'large-scale debunking history'.

> A large-scale debunking history is a macro-historical account of the development of the dominant metaphysical and moral framework in a given period. It explains the beliefs central to that framework in a way that undermines their justification.

For simplicity's sake, I confine myself to beliefs, but the definition could be expanded to practices or institutions. By "macro-historical" I mean an account that operates at a large,

typically epochal, chronological scale: speaking of 'before the slave revolt', for example, rather than of specific events or dates.[1]

The main form of 'undermining' with which I am concerned is when the acquisition process for a given belief is not truth-tropic: wishful thinking, for example, is not a good way to arrive at true beliefs and a worldview shown to be dependent on it is thereby undermined. Kahane thus talks of "off track processes…processes that are not truth tracking" and Nichols of "epistemically defective processes" (Kahane 2011, 106; Nichols 2014, 727). There are complex issues as to how exactly such arguments should be formulated, for example with respect to safety and sensitivity conditions, but I will not address these here.[2] Intuitively, all we need to begin is the "the worrying thought…that given the forces acting upon us, we would have believed that P whether it was true or not" (White 2010, 8).

Debunking history is intended to be a separate category from genealogy: I am not claiming that every instance of it is genealogical. But many canonical genealogies are debunking histories. For example, I take it as uncontroversial that the *Genealogy of Morality* is a large-scale debunking history as defined. Here is a recent version of the view from Kail:

> What the mechanisms that Nietzsche identifies as productive of the beliefs distinctive of [contemporary morality] have in common with one another is that they are not sensitive to features relevant to the truth of the belief thus explained, but emerge because they serve the psychological well-being of the believer. The belief that altruism is good, for example, emerges not through an appreciation of evidence in its favor, but because acquiring that belief palliates the discomfort engendered by *ressentiment.* (Kail 2014, 229)[3]

Similarly, for Sinhababu the key is that the slaves' "mechanisms of belief-formation", and by extension are own insofar as we have inherited much of the slaves' worldview, "are unreliable in generating true belief" (Sinhababu 2007, 262-3).

Note that truth-tropicity is distinct from another issue often discussed in the context of Nietzschean genealogy, contingency. Saar, for example, talks of genealogies as cultivating a "sense for the non-necessary" (Saar 2002, 237). But contingency alone is neither necessary

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[1] As has been widely discussed, one disconcerting aspect of Foucault is his oscillation between micro- and macro- history: for example, between a modestly scholarly focus on "the birth of the prison only in the French penal system", out of fear that anything broader would be "too schematic: (Foucault 1995, 309n3), and a vision of Western modernity itself as a carceral or panoptical culture.

[2] For helpful discussion see Srinivasan 2015.

[3] Kail, following Leiter, in fact talks of "MPS" or "morality in the pejorative sense" rather than "contemporary morality" as I have it here: I have altered this to avoid unnecessary complications regarding Nietzsche's views on ethics.

nor sufficient for a debunking history as defined. The fact that our beliefs or practices are contingent by itself says nothing about their value, and belief acquisition can evidently rest on contingencies without being problematic, unless we assume that all physicists were somehow fated to receive the training on which their beliefs depend. Conversely, we can easily imagine a necessary and yet non-truth-tropic story: for some Christians, the whole of post-Lapserian degeneration falls into this category. Contingency is thus neither sufficient nor necessary for debunking and I will set it aside. Whilst I cannot discuss the complexities here regarding different strengths of modality, Heidegger certainly regards the story of epistemic failure that he tells as closer to a necessary than a contingent one.

With respect to Heidegger himself, I will talk loosely of the 'history of being'. By this I mean Heidegger's various historical accounts of our relationship to being, accounts which stress a decline starting with Plato and culminating in modern technology. I will avoid textual complexities when not directly relevant: for example, I ignore the difference between *Sein* and *Seyn*. I also sidestep how metaphysically inflationary Heidegger's "being" is or isn't: there is a tendency in at least some passages to hypostatise it into a quasi-mystical agent, what Sheehan rightly satirised as "big being" (Sheehan 2001, 8). Finally, I will not focus on the complex differences between 'early' and 'later' Heidegger and where exactly that boundary lies; my main interest will be in texts from 1935 onwards.

The overall argument is simple: I will claim that Heidegger *does* offer a debunking history, but *not* a genealogy. I contend that this difference is revealing both with respect to Heidegger and with respect to genealogy in a broadly Nietzschean sense.

2 – THE IMMACULATE ORIGIN: HEIDEGGER AS 'ARCHAIZER'

First, however, I need to set aside another way of thinking about the issue, one central to Foucault in particular.

Foucault's famous essay 'Nietzsche, Genealogy, History' turns on the relationship between *Ursprung*, *Entstehung* and *Herkunft*. To seek an *Ursprung* is to seek a "lofty", almost theological, origin, "the exact essence of things, their purest possibilities, and their carefully protected identities" at the "moment of greatest perfection" (Foucault 2001, 78-9). Genealogy, as an inquiry into *Herkunft* or *Entstehung*, exists precisely to problematize such origins.

> A genealogy of values, morality, asceticism, and knowledge will never confuse itself
> with a quest for their "origins"…[I]t will cultivate the details and accidents that
> accompany every beginning; it will be scrupulously attentive to their petty malice; it

will await their emergence, once unmasked, as the face of the other. (Foucault 2001, 80)

From this perspective, Heidegger's history of being is naturally classified as anti-genealogical, as a naïve *Urpsrung* story: this is because it seems to posit a decline after an initial moment of purity in the pre-Socratics. Geuss, whose discussion orientates itself around Foucault's essay, thus explicitly contrasts Nietzsche with "conscious archaizer[s] like Ludwig Klages or Heidegger" (Geuss 1999, 277). Likewise, Habermas, who obviously has very different commitments to Geuss, locates Heidegger as essentially an "*Ursprungsphilosphie*" (Habermas 1987, 153).

Heidegger certainly invites this critique. Even in *Being and Time*, he promises to reach "those primordial experiences [*die ursprünglichen Erfahrungen*] which have guided us ever since" (BT:43). His Parmenides lectures, fifteen years later, begin by repudiating any equation of the "beginning" with "the imperfect, the unfinished, the rough…the primitive" (Ga54:2). Instead, Anaximander, Parmenides and Heraclitus are valorized as the West's "most primordial of all thinkers [*erstanfânglichen vor allen anderen Denkern*]" (Ga54:2).[4] The rot, he typically explains, sets in with Plato's doctrine of forms, in which the original experience of being first "degenerates" (Ga40:67/48).

Heidegger's position is in fact more complex than this rough outline allows. For example, his own relationship to Plato, and indeed to the theory of forms, is massively more conflicted than his official line (Golob 2014; Gonzalez, 2009). He also leaves a gap between Plato and the reception of him, lamenting that the "'doctrine of ideas' has had its essence ripped out…[offering] what is most pernicious from the 19th century but nothing from 'antiquity'!" (Ga34:116). Nevertheless, I propose simply to grant the basic distinction Foucault draws. Whatever the complexities of Heidegger's story, talk of "a fall" [*Abfall*] from some "primordial" experience clearly marks a very different sensibility than Nietzsche's own (Ga40:191/139). This is why every textbook to the *Genealogy* warns that Nietzsche is not straightforwardly positive about the masters (GM:1/10-11).

Nevertheless, this whole issue is in an important sense irrelevant in the present context. Suppose (i) that Nietzsche had held a crassly positive and heroizing view of the masters. Suppose (ii) that the rest of his account remained as it actually is: to take one obvious reading, showing that contemporary morality rests on non-truth-tropic foundations as

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[4] This is not the place to address the complex interplay Heidegger sets up between *Ursprung* and *Anfang*, but, from the point of view of Foucault's complaint, the difference is unimportant.

a product of ressentiment or a political power grab. The important point is that (i) and (ii) are entirely *compatible*: explanatory facts about beliefs acquired during the slave revolt and inherited by us may undermine our current practices irrespective of whether some anterior state, itself further prior to that revolt, is positively or negatively valued.

In sum, the 'archaizing' tendencies attacked by Geuss attacked are present in Heidegger and they do mark a significant divergence from Nietzsche or Foucault. But that leaves open the question of whether he employs debunking history and, if so, how it relates to genealogy. It is to that question I now turn.

3 – TRANSITION TO TWO CASE STUDIES

I will examine two potential cases of 'large-scale debunking history' in Heidegger's work, both linked to Nietzsche. The first ultimately does not fall into the category, but it is a useful foil (§4). The second is indeed a debunking history (§5).

My interest in what follows is in the *form* of Heidegger's arguments; I cannot directly assess their individual premises, any more than I can directly assess the slave revolt hypothesis. I will also not rehearse the familiar broader differences between Heidegger and many genealogists. If, for example, you believe that Nietzsche endorsed naturalism, that will obviously separate the two authors; my aim is to establish whether, despite such evident differences, they might nevertheless share a certain method, genealogy.

Before proceeding, it may help to recall a few of the classic questions faced by genealogies so that we can see how Heidegger's position compares.

(i)   How does genealogy avoid the genetic fallacy, i.e. confusing, as Nehamas put it, "the origin of something with its nature or value"? (Nehamas 1985, 107)

(ii) Why is a historical account necessary: would it not be simpler to give a direct argument against whatever the objectionable beliefs are? After all, Nietzsche states that the genealogy is "only one means among many" to carry out his project (GM:Preface).[5]

(iii) Who is the target audience of the genealogy? This is evidently linked to whether genealogy is meant to be in some sense an 'internal' or 'immanent' critique.

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[5] I return to this point, and the possibility of a different reading of Nietzsche here, below.

4 – HEIDEGGER AS DEBUNKING HISTORIAN? THE CASE OF SUBJECT-PREDICATE GRAMMAR

The first case concerns a systematic bias which Heidegger believes is characteristic of Western philosophy, namely a tendency to derive metaphysics from a narrow focus on the subject-predicate assertion. Clearly, there are echoes of Nietzsche's worries about the links between grammar and substance metaphysics (JGB:§53). As Heidegger puts it in 1935, discussing Aristotle and Kant:

> We cannot emphasize this fact too often: those determinations which constitute the being of the thing [i.e. *katagoria*] have received their name from assertion [i.e. *kataphasis*]…The fact that since then in Western thought the determinations of being are called 'categories' is the clearest expression of the point: the structure of the thing [*Ding*] is connected with the structure of the assertion. (Ga41:62–4; similarly, Ga30:419)

Elsewhere, he extends this to other obvious candidates such as Leibniz (Ga26:41–2). Strikingly, he even claims that Nietzsche himself lapses into this framework (N III: 40) (I discuss Heidegger's Nietzsche interpretation in detail below).

Heidegger's argument raises two issues. One is exegetical: is he right that these thinkers made this connection and, if so, is he right that the order of explanation runs from their philosophy of language to their metaphysics and not conversely? The other is methodological: if Heidegger is right in identifying this underlying assumption, does that constitute a debunking history? I'll focus on this methodological issue.

From Heidegger's point of view, this underlying assumption distorts Western thought by tacitly imposing a bias towards a substance ontology.[6] In revealing this bias, his history makes such thought "transparent", exposing its "concealments" (BT:43). In particular, Heidegger wants to show how deeply embedded this assumption is:

(i) Intra-theoretically, for example, how closely tied it is to the various Western theories of truth (Ga9:231/136, Ga19:524; Ga34:52, 66, 124-5).

(ii) Inter-theoretically, for example, how, despite the huge variances between Kant and Nietzsche, both remain committed to "what Aristotle advanced more than two thousand years before" (N III:40).

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[6] In his terms, it forces entities back onto "the uniform plane of that which is merely present-at-hand" (BT:199-200). For discussion of the argument, see Golob Forthcoming.

He takes (ii) not as evidence of reasoned convergence, but as a sign that the assumption has become an unquestioned default, whilst (i) suggests that it will be almost immune to revision. We might speak of a 'pessimistic Lakatosianism' here: for Heidegger, the assumption constitutes an ossified "hard core" of the Western research programme, unresponsive to argument partly because it is so embedded its proponents are not always even aware of it, partly because it is shielded by an ever-changing "protective belt of auxiliary hypotheses" (Lakatos 1995, 48).

Suppose this outline of Heidegger's argument is correct: do we have a debunking history?

Well, one interesting consequence is that Heidegger's story operates in a grey area between reasons and causes. He is not claiming, at least here, that his opponents' beliefs are a function of some obviously epistemically faulty process such as *ressentiment*. Rather, the claim is that there is a philosophical assumption in play, but one which is so deep-rooted, so ossified, that it is no longer evidence-responsive. We also see here Heidegger's assumption that every philosopher has some 'master' principle which dominates their thought. As he famously puts it, " every great thinker thinks only a single thought": even when their system is "many-chambered," these are "chambers that adjoin, join, and fuse with one another [*ineinander verfügen*]" (WhD:20-21). One consequence is that if this master principle is non-truth-tropic, as here, that discredits an entire philosophy.

There are, however, reasons for hesitancy in classing this as a debunking narrative. While Heidegger regards the assumption as non-truth-tropic, insulated from questioning and sustained merely by 'weight of tradition', many of his opponents obviously do not: Kant, for example, explicitly celebrates the move in the Metaphysical Deduction.[7] Nietzschean genealogies often have a shock value: they suddenly expose a belief as being motivated by something quite different from what we thought. This is not simply a theatrical trick: the more obvious it is that a process is not truth-tropic, the more it must be concealed even from those using it – it would be conceptually, as well as politically, difficult for the slaves to believe both that their morality is a product of *ressentiment* and that it is true and just. But when sophisticated opponents explicitly defend the belief acquisition process in play, it will be harder to make the case that it is non-truth-tropic.

Of course, harder is not impossible. For example, MacBride has forcefully argued that whilst Kant was indeed aware of the subject-predicate grounds for his metaphysics, he

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[7] I discuss this issue in detail in Golob Forthcoming.

thought of this ultimately as a "matter of brute fact", opening the way for a debunking story exposing the complacency of that view as a product of metaphysically non-truth-tropic facts such as 18th century logic teaching and the grammar of Indo-European languages (MacBride 2018, 17-18).[8] Clearly, this will depend on how one reads the transition from the Metaphysical Deduction to the Principles.

On balance, however, Heidegger's argument is closer to traditional history of philosophy than the *Genealogy* in which a practice is shown to be rooted in something of which its advocates were unaware and with which they cannot be reconciled. Debunking history is best seen as an approach, allowing 'family resemblance' flexibility, than a concept with rigid boundaries. But Heidegger's first argument is a marginal case insofar as it fails to identify an evidently non-truth-tropic cause for the relevant belief.

5 – HEIDEGGER AS DEBUNKING HISTORIAN? THE CASE OF THE WILL TO POWER

I come now to the second case. Again, my concern is with the *form* of Heidegger's argument, rather than its individual premises or exegetical claims: assessing those would be a book-length project.

Central to Heidegger's *Nietzsche* lectures is the claim that Nietzsche unwittingly continues Cartesian metaphysics. Heidegger identifies Descartes with a shift to subjecthood in a distinctively authoritarian sense, whereby other entities and their being are understood merely as objects for human control (N III:100-2). Mathematics comes to delineate what is 'really real' for Descartes precisely because it is the most effective vehicle for such manipulation (N III:116). In this sense, Descartes is the decisive "foundation" of the technological "modern age", "defined by the fact that man becomes the centre and measure of all things" (N III:102). Cartesian epistemology follows from this: it seeks a certitude "in which man can by himself be sure of his own definition and task", a self-assurance and autonomy that Heidegger reads as inherently domineering (N III:102-3). Nietzsche, interpreted above all as the thinker of the will to power, is then aligned with this: his ontology completes the trend by equating being with power construed as energy, i.e. as an endlessly malleable resource for the overman who exemplifies an "absolute machine economy"

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[8] I am indebted to Fraser MacBride for extensive discussion here. Another option would be to claim that whilst Kant is perhaps immune to Heidegger's argument, there are pre-Kantian philosophers who unwittingly made the same assumptions – and that the debunking argument should be refocused to target them (I owe this suggestion to several participants at the workshop organised for this special issue).

founded on "absolute dominion over the earth" (N III:117).[9] Nietzsche's system, from perspectivism to the re-evaluation of values, thus "merely carries out the final development of Descartes' doctrine, according to which truth is grounded on the self-certainty of the human subject", now "absolute lord over every perspective" (N III:86;147).[10]

All this obviously begs countless exegetical questions, not least regarding the assumption that the *Nachlass* contains Nietzsche's "chief philosophical work" (N I:3). But my interest is not in the textual fidelity of Heidegger's claims: his textual analyses say more about him than their targets, although given their influence, particularly on 20th Century French thought, it would be a mistake to simply dismiss them. Rather, let us suppose for a moment, his interpretative claims have some merit: what can we say about the argument form? Would this constitute a debunking history?

A few points before we reach a verdict. First, note that Heidegger presents Nietzsche as *unwittingly* trapped within the Cartesian framework: "no matter how sharply Nietzsche pits himself time and again against Descartes", he succeeds only in radicalising Cartesian philosophy, by amplifying human dominion over other entities yet further (N III: 28). Thus "he believes he is speaking *against* Descartes" when he is in fact extending that very approach: for example, Nietzsche's emphasis on the body is a superficial matter which "misapprehends…the historical essential inner connection between his own fundamental metaphysical position and that of Descartes" (N III:133; 258). Further, as in §4, Heidegger presents the Cartesian framework as a kind of unquestioned 'default': "without asking for reasons to justify it", Nietzsche simply takes over key parts of Descartes' views (N III:131).

Note also that Heidegger assumes that the Cartesian dimension of Nietzsche's work is obviously non-truth-tropic. This is partly for the reasons given in §4: as an unquestioned, unnoticed hand-me-down, it is unlikely to be responsive to the phenomena. This is the claim I dubbed 'pessimistic Lakatosianism'. But this is now supplemented by a quasi-psychological point: Cartesianism is motivated by an insecure desire for control. This has obvious Nietzschean echoes: recall Kail's charge that contemporary morals are "not sensitive to features relevant to the truth…but emerge because they serve the psychological well-being of the believer" (Kail 2014, 229).

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[9] This is, obviously, a highly controversial reading of the will to power. Contemporary Nietzsche scholarship on the topic, of which Reginster 2006 is the most influential example, unsurprisingly takes a much more deflationary line.

[10] Heidegger's Nietzsche is relentlessly mono-thematic: "In Nietzsche's language, will-to-power, becoming, life, and Being, mean, in the broadest sense, the same thing" (Ga9:213).

Now let's return to 'large-scale debunking history' as defined in §1. Heidegger's story is clearly a macro-history: it seeks to concentrate the entire "modern" worldview into a handful of metaphysical choices. Like the *Genealogy,* it presents that macro-historical reconstruction as a necessary condition on contemporary self-knowledge: as Nietzsche puts it, "direct self-observation is not nearly sufficient for us to know ourselves: we require history, for the past continues to flow within us in a hundred waves" (MaM II.223).[11] And, like the *Genealogy*, that history exposes a disconcerting loss of epistemic control, as an agent's beliefs, in this case Nietzsche's own, are revealed to be "secretly directed and forced into determinate channels" by very different factors than those they assume (JGB:§3).

But what about the key issue of 'undermining' – this, recall, was what was lacking in §4. Heidegger's Nietzsche lectures contain two answers.

First, and most obviously, there is a psychological dimension. If the Cartesian-Nietzschean metaphysical system is driven by a desire for domination, we have a classically debunking cause for the beliefs: this desire is, evidently, orthogonal to truth, just as the *ressentiment*-derived fantasies of the slaves. The claim is not a first-order metaphysical one, that Nietzsche and Descartes both share an identical power ontology: that would be exegetically hard to sustain and alone says nothing about the legitimacy of such an ontology. Rather, the claim is a psychological one that both of their metaphysics are driven by an insecure desire for control, a desire that by the point of Nietzsche is visible on the surface of the metaphysics.

Second, in §4, Heidegger was vulnerable to the fact that Kant was fully aware of the premise in question. In effect, Kant pushes back against 'pessimistic Lakatosianism' by arguing that these historical communalities reflect stumbling attempts to converge on a genuinely legitimate principle, a principle that Kant has now made systematic (Kant 1998, A81/B107). Heidegger's new argument is more effective conceptually, although of course more questionable exegetically, because his claim is that Nietzsche inherits a self-reinforcing and unquestioned framework from Descartes and is then unwittingly pinned within it. Yet the situation is still delicate. Even if Heidegger is right, why can't Nietzsche simply *embrace* this new information once brought to his attention and re-evaluate Descartes as an ally? Here is

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[11] I chose this passage from *Human All Too Human* because it provides such a neat encapsulation of the view, but the same emphasis on history as necessary for self-knowledge defines the *Genealogy* too (GM:Preface/1). Note this question of whether historical reconstruction is necessary for self-knowledge is distinct from the question of whether such reconstruction is necessary for Nietzsche's critique of morality. My point is thus compatible with, e.g., Leiter's view that "the genealogy of morality...is but one instrument for arriving at a particular end, namely a critique of morality" (Leiter 2002, 177).

another way to put it. In classic readings of the *Genealogy*, there are two dimensions: shock as morality's origins are exposed and recoil as its advocates see that they cannot stomach these. Heidegger's claims about Descartes might come as a shock, but why should they produce recoil as opposed to a doubling down on a Nietzschean ontology, with Descartes now recruited to the banner? The shock might speak to some lack of historical awareness on Nietzsche's part, but that is insufficient to show his position is misguided.[12]

The key element in Heidegger's case is not, however, the surprise, but the suggestion of intellectual inevitability. Consider the crudest form of causal debunking: 'of course you believe that given your upbringing'. The implication is that your belief formation process was not truth responsive: even if the claims *were* false, you would *still* have believed them due to your parents or background or race or etc. Heidegger's suggestion is that Nietzsche's views are similarly a function of the trajectory of the canon: he is simply the unwitting exponent of the final stage of the dialectic.

> With this utterance, "Life is will to power," Western metaphysics completes
> itself…Nietzsche's utterance, "being as a whole is will to power," states concerning
> being as a whole that which was predetermined as a possibility in the beginning of
> Western thinking and *became unavoidable because of an inevitable decline from this*
> *beginning*. (NI:18–19 – emphasis added)

From an ad hominem perspective, this is obviously unwelcome given the stress Nietzsche places on his intellectual originality. But it is the epistemic dimension that is important here: insofar as his beliefs are insensitive to the truth in this fashion, they will be systematically unjustified. Recall White's phrase: "we would have believed that P whether it was true or not" (White 2010, 8).

A comparison with MacIntyre may help flesh this out. MacIntyre frequently argues that certain thinkers are caught in a trap whereby inherited assumptions, of which they may not even be conscious, close off the intellectual options, forcing them to rationalise what intellectual 'dead-ends'. This is how he presents Prichard's insistence that moral reasons not be explained in terms of any other norms.

> If we could not explain Prichard's concept of duty historically, I think we should be
> very much in the position of anthropologists who come across a new and
> incomprehensible word, such as, for example, tabu, a word which is puzzling
> because it appears not simply to mean "prohibited" but to give a reason for the

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[12] I am indebted to very helpful discussion with Daniel Rodriguez-Navas here.

prohibition, without its being clear what reason. Consequently, just as we may ask of Polynesians why we should refrain from doing something because it is tabu, so we shall want to ask Prichard why we should do something because it is our duty. And in each case the answer will be similar, and similarly incomprehensible: "Because it is tabu," "Because it is your duty." The lack of connection with other aims, purposes, and desires produces in the end unintelligibility. (MacIntyre 1998, 56)

From an external, 'anthropological', point of view, the historian reconstructs how successive generations gradually closed off the avenues to an informative account of the good – with Prichard's rationalizing of this bankruptcy ultimately the only option left. Heidegger's Nietzsche or MacIntyre's Prichard are players suddenly seated at the board forty moves in. The historian, from the third-person perspective, is able to reconstruct how those prior moves create a conceptual space in which they are forced to play out 'dead-end' options, options which from the players point of view seem not just viable but obligatory. This is how Heidegger understands the hermeneutic 'dead weight' Nietzsche inherits from Descartes.

This allows for an important qualification to the idea of a non-truth-tropic 'process'. For Heidegger, Western philosophy is the story of the increased radicalization of a handful of basically mistaken premises: underlying this radicalization are a range of non-truth-tropic processes, from the dominance of subjectivity or traditional grammar to a simple desire for control. In now reconstructing this, the historian, Heidegger, is able to draw conclusions as to how those failures might be avoided: thus, precisely at the culmination of the chain of errancy, there is the chance for "another beginning" (Ga65:178).[13]

Bringing these points together, the history of being, or at least this central chapter of it, is indeed a large-scale debunking history.[14] As in readings such as Kail's, the genetic fallacy is avoided by identifying non-truth-tropic functions that still taint contemporary beliefs.

6 - IS THE HISTORY OF BEING A GENEALOGY?

Whilst Heidegger's account is a debunking history, it is less clear that it is a genealogy in anything like the sense of Nietzsche's original. I will now note some of the central differences. This will help position both Heidegger's views and Nietzsche's own.

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[13] Whether we can take this chance is not a matter of will for Heidegger, and depends in part on only quasi-voluntary issues such as mood: hence Heidegger's late valorisation of a kind of contemplative passivity. For extensive discussion of these issues, see Davis 2007.

[14] Of course, all this is conditional on accepting Heidegger's exegesis. My point is that *if* we take what he says to be true, it would qualify as a debunking narrative; in contrast, in §4, *even if* we take him at his word, one might easily push back on whether subject-predicate metaphysics necessarily leads us astray.

First, even when he appeals to psychological states, Heidegger places massively less emphasis on *individual* psychology. In contrast to the intricate character sketches of philosophers found in Nietzsche, diagnoses which are intended to explain and so have some distance from their philosophies, Heidegger's treatment of the canon is a treatment of their systems: 'Nietzsche' is indistinguishable in his analysis from 'Nietzschean metaphysics'. This is of a piece with his general suspicion of biography: he is happy to dismiss "the character of the philosopher and issues of that sort" (Ga18:4/5). It is also a function of the intellectual inevitability implicit in Heidegger's story which minimizes the role of individuals in the face of the "destiny [*Geschick*] of being" (Ga9:330).

Second, Heidegger, like much of Derrida, equates Western history with the history of Western metaphysics. His debunking story thus operates entirely within the space of the philosophical canon and a handful of artworks, such as Hölderlin's poetry, that are interpreted to have close kinship with his own thought. In particular, there is no need to assess political or social institutions in the way Nietzsche or Foucault do: the assumption is that metaphysics, in particular the technological dominance exemplified in Nietzsche, sets the tone for all else.

Third, Nietzsche recognizes, in a way that Heidegger does not, a possible gap between value and truth: as he puts it, "we do not consider the falsity of a judgment as itself an objection to a judgment" (JGB: 4). This means that a belief system might be discredited in terms of its truth and yet its value remain unclear. Nietzscheans hence routinely separate genealogy from critique:

> Genealogical inquiry into the origin of morality provides the sort of knowledge that is
> required for critique of it, but is not itself such a critique. (Reginster 2006, 198)

In contrast, in Heidegger, there is no 'further question' of value. His theory of truth is obviously highly complex, but to establish that an approach distorts the phenomena, does not let it 'show itself from itself' in the language of his early work, *is* a sufficient critique in his eyes. One symptom of this is that, for all Heidegger's superficial links to modern ecology, his objection to contemporary technological practices is not that they damage the natural world, where "damage" is pollution, loss of habitat, loss of wilderness, or species extinction, but rather that building a hydroelectric plant on the Rhine crudely forces being in to a particular conceptual framework, the *Ge-stell* (Ga7:16). As Braver comments, "pollution isn't the problem with technology; our distorted relation to being is what we should be concerned

about".[15] Heideggerian 'genealogy' in both §4 and §5 proceeds by exposing the roots of what one might call 'hermeneutic' errors.

Fourth, a historical presentation is necessary for Heidegger in a way that it is not for Nietzsche. Think of the MacIntyrean comparison: confronting Prichard's arguments in the absence of the historical context would be radically less effective. For Nietzsche, genealogy is "one of many means" to address the "value of morality" (GM:Preface/5), whereas 'Heidegger's later philosophy' and the 'history of being' might almost be synonymous. Even if one holds that genealogy is in fact a necessary tool for Nietzsche, the link between Heidegger's case and history remains more intimate.[16] We can make decent sense of the various ends that Nietzsche is pursuing outside of a genealogical context: even if genealogy were necessary for the re-evaluation of values, we can understand how the latter might, perhaps in another society, be achieved directly by normative arguments. In contrast, it is hard to even specify Heidegger's aims outside of the attendant history of being: hence commentators vary from speaking vaguely about a plenitude or an intimacy at the pre-Socratic stage, terms which need the historical framework for their explication, to using norms, such as ecological ones, that are easily recognizable but, as noted, distort Heidegger's position.

Fifth, genealogy in the Nietzschean tradition is a "polemical" genre: thus, the text's subtitle, "*Eine Streitschrift*". There is, as with every literary genre, a question of how tightly we define this.[17] But for Nietzsche at least "polemic", derived of course from "*pólemos*", is not simply contentious or forthright, but *tactical*, designed to intervene in and manipulate a targeted social context. Thus, one of the classic questions in the literature is *who* is Nietzsche's intended audience: prominent suggestions include Christians, those who share Nietzsche's "evaluative tastes", and Nietzsche's "contemporaries", a group that presumably cuts across the other two (Geuss 1999, 21; Leiter 2002, 176; Owen 2007, 135). This imposes an adequacy condition on his story. If, for example, Nietzsche wants to undermine morality via a naturalistic history, he needs his audience to accept such naturalism. In contrast, there is no sense in Heidegger of a clear readership or calls the "rhetorical provocations" which Nietzsche carefully calibrates for different groups (Janaway 2009, 96). Instead, as in MacIntyre's metaphor, the tone is external, more 'anthropological' than polemical. This

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[15] Braver 2014, 147. I discuss this issue in more detail in Golob 2017.
[16] I am very grateful to Daniel Rodriguez-Navas for helping me see this issue is more complex than I assumed. For discussion, please see his paper in this special issue.
[17] Is the post-colonial *Bildungsroman*, for example, still a *Bildungsroman*?

reflects a broader feature of Heidegger's philosophy: an indifference to the very Nietzschean task of audience seduction. *Being and Time*, for example, frequently notes that the inauthentic are perfectly capable of repressing ontological insights in favour of a "tranquilized" life (BT:222); elsewhere, he laments how even his own attempts at debunking history simply became tenure fodder for academics (Ga94:74). By Heidegger's later work, this has been reinforced by his valorisation of complex forms of quasi-passivity: it is a matter of waiting attentively for a shift in the dominant vision of being, rather than engineering it through the kind of political intervention Nietzsche is making.[18]

Bringing together the previous section with these five significant points of divergence, I conclude that Heidegger's history of being *is* a debunking history, but *not* a genealogy, at least in the Nietzschean sense.[19]

Abbreviations

Heidegger's Works

BT   *Being and Tim*e, trans. J.Macquarrie and E.Robinson. New York: Harper & Row, 1962.

N I   *Nietzsche*, *Vol. I,* trans. D.F. Krell. Harper Collins, Vol I. 1979.

N III   *Nietzsche*, *Vol. III,* trans. D.F. Krell. Harper Collins, Vol III. 1987.

Ga7   *Vorträge und Aufsätze*. Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2000.

Ga9   *Wegmarken.* Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1976.

Ga18   *Grundbegriffe der aristotelischen Philosophie*. Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2002

Ga19   *Platon: Sophistes.* Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1992.

Ga26   *Metaphysische Anfangsgründe der Logik im Ausgang von Leibniz*. Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1978.

Ga34   *Vom Wesen der Wahrheit. Zu Platons Höhlengleichnis und Theätet*. Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1988.

Ga40   *Einführung in die Metaphysik*. Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1983 [I follow the standard practice in this case of listing the pagination of the original edition after that of the *Gesamtausgabe* text].

Ga41   *Die Frage nach dem Ding.* Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1984.

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[18] For a detailed overview of these issues see Davis 2007.

[19] I am extremely grateful to all those involved in the workshop dedicated to this special issue: the paper is greatly improved thanks to that discussion.

Ga54   *Parmenides.* Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1982.

Ga65   *Beiträge zur Philosophie*. Frankfurt: Klostermann, 1989.

Ga94   *Überlegungen II-VI (Schwarze Hefte 1931–1938*). Frankfurt: Klostermann, 2014.

WhD   *Was heisst Denken*? Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1984.

Nietzsche's Works

GM   *Zur Genealogie der Moral*, KSA 5. *On the Genealogy of Morality*, trans. C.Diethe.
        Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

JGB   *Jenseits von Gut und Böse*, KSA 5. *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans J.Norman.
        Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

MaM   *Menschliches, Allzumenschliches*, KSA 2. *Human All Too Human*, trans. R.J.
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