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Abstract for the doctoral dissertation: Philosophizing Without the In-Itself:
Philology, Genealogy, and the Question of Method in Nietzsche and Merleau-Ponty

This thesis explores and questions the status and relations of the two methods developed by Nietzsche. Indeed, Nietzsche offered not only one but two original methods to philosophy. The first is the philological method, which continues the traditional quest for truth and knowledge. Its originality lies in the fact that philology no longer aims at an objective and exhaustive adequation with a reality in-itself, but – in an attempt to be economical in its axioms, applying Occam's razor to hierarchize between outlooks – it tries to think of our relation to the world, to others and to ourselves solely according to experience, trying to be as faithful as possible to it with the fewest number of principles and assumptions. Thus, despite dismissing the ontology of the thing-in-itself, philology remains an epistemological task, hierarchizing the different perspectives according to their faithfulness to experience. Nonetheless, to this traditional task seeking knowledge, Nietzsche adds a whole new problem to philosophy, which is not concerned with knowledge or truth anymore but with the way we live, questioning the value for life of each interpretation. To tackle this axiological problem, Nietzsche elaborates genealogy as the method that looks at the drives that motivated a

that there is a dignity and relevance specific to philology, which escapes both genealogy and the will to power. Conversely, by integrating drives and values into his dimensional ontology, Merleau-Ponty shows that genealogy is broader than the will to power and can become an independent method, available to anyone without requiring any particular ontological framework. As such, genealogy could be adopted by many more thinkers, just like sociology or anthropology, examining our cultural values and judging them axiologically. Therefore, the comparison between Merleau-Ponty and Nietzsche leads to recognize the autonomy of each method, preventing them to subordinate the other, ensuring their coexistence and the legitimacy of pursuing their respective task. Each method retains its own legitimacy because they pose different questions to experience and explore a different direction of it: philology looks for the general ontological structure of experience, common to all beings, while genealogy delves into the particularity of each perspective, observing its influence on life, comparing the perspectives according to this criterion and establishing hierarchies to try to benefit life and increase its power.

Keywords: Epistemology, Ontology, Axiology, Metaphysics, Philosophy, Methodology

