



***Übermensch Delineated by Meteion in Naoki
Yoshida's Final Fantasy XIV: Endwalker***

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Abstract

This study examines the representation of the *Übermensch* concept in Naoki Yoshida's *Final Fantasy XIV: Endwalker*, focusing on the character Meteion. This paper uses qualitative methods to investigate the narrative, character development, and thematic aspects of *Final Fantasy XIV: Endwalker*. It specifically explores how the character Meteion represents Friedrich Nietzsche's concept of the *Übermensch*. The findings demonstrate that Meteion offers an advanced view of the *Übermensch*, questioning conventional ideas of superiority and evolution. Conversely, Meteion's progression and behavior within its narrative emphasize a route towards self-improvement and the establishment of fresh values, in accordance with Nietzsche's concept of the *Übermensch* as an individual who surpasses human limitations as well as social standards. Through Meteion, this study remarks, *Final Fantasy XIV: Endwalker* criticizes nihilism and calls for personal and societal improvement. This shows how modern people understand Nietzsche's ideas in the context of digital storytelling. Meteion's figure serves as a vehicle for exploring themes of existentialism, morality, and humanity's evolutionary potential, establishing *Final Fantasy XIV: Endwalker* as a key cultural artifact in the discussion of the *Übermensch* and its significance in current society.

Keywords: Endwalker, Final Fantasy XIV, Meteion, *Übermensch*

A. INTRODUCTION

Within the expansive realm of literature, every narrative story offers a unique examination of the human mind, the structure of society, and the timeless questions that define human existence. As both literature and philosophy try to understand and explore the human situation in their own unique ways, the relationship between the two has long been studied by experts. With its deep emotional depth and rich stories, literature is a great way to describe philosophical ideas. It makes difficult ideas easier to understand and often makes one experience them. R's text, which I have sought to view once as literature and once as science, illustrates, since it is about reading, the two ways in which a text might refer to readers, and with these two modes of reference in

mind, we may return to philosophy as literature, not by way of treating philosophical texts as literature, but by way rather of displaying one of the ways in which philosophy really does relate to life (Danto, 1984: 173). In comparison, philosophy provides readers with a disciplined method for breaking down and making sense of the themes and ideas in literature, which frequently makes reading more enjoyable by revealing deeper meanings.

Nowadays, literary work can be enjoyed through digital or electronic ways where Rettberg (2019) writes “Electronic Literature considers new forms and genres of writing that exploit the capabilities of computers and networks – literature that would not be possible without the contemporary digital context. These include combinatory poetics, hypertext fiction, interactive fiction (and other game-based digital literary work), kinetic and interactive poetry, and networked writing based on our collective experience of the Internet.”

In the realm of philosophy, René Descartes, a 17th-century French philosopher, is renowned for his theory of mind-body dualism and his method of doubt, which sought to question all knowledge until reaching something undeniable: “I think, therefore I am” (Hatfield, 2023). Radical skepticism and the discovery of self-evident truth made it possible to study the human condition and the nature of existence. Expanding on this basis, Friedrich Nietzsche, a German philosopher from the 19th century, proposed the notion of the *Übermensch*, often referred to as the “Overman”.

Nietzsche’s *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* introduces the idea of the *Übermensch*, or Overman, as a way to deal with the issues of nihilism. The *Übermensch* proposes a new ideal for humanity, one that overcomes the limitations of conventional morality and the despair of nihilism by establishing new values. Nietzsche’s *Übermensch* is not a physically superhuman being. Instead, it is an individual who has the strength and will to choose their own path and set their own ideals, which affirm life and existence. Ojimba (2019) states that “Nietzsche’s concept of the superman represents the highest principle of development of humanity. It designates the affirmation of man’s full potentiality and creativity. It is the affirmation of one’s fate whether pleasurable or painful.”, “But it is meant to be a possibility which men of the present could realize with all their spiritual and physical energies, provided they adopted the new values.” (Nietzsche, 2006: xi). The quotation implies that modern people can realize the *Übermensch*—a figure who embodies strength, vitality, and the creation of new values—if they are willing to devote their full spiritual

and physical energies to adopting these new, life-affirming values. Nietzsche (1968: 342) defines *The Will to Power* as “The will to power interprets (—it is a question of interpretation when an organ is Constructed): it defines limits, determines degrees, variations of power. Mere variations of power could not feel themselves to be such: there must be present something that wants to grow and interprets the value of whatever else wants to grow.” The quote essentially means that living beings have an innate desire to grow and become stronger, which they achieve by making sense of their environment and themselves. This process involves identifying what is beneficial and can aid in their growth.

Final Fantasy XIV: Endwalker is the fourth add-on pack published in 2021, for Square Enix’s highly acclaimed MMORPG or massively multiplayer online role-playing game Final Fantasy XIV. Naoki Yoshida is the director of Final Fantasy XIV, and Natsuko Ishikawa is the lead story designer for Endwalker expansion. *Final Fantasy XIV: Endwalker* has received many awards including the Excellence in Narrative by 2022 SXSW Gaming Awards. Meteion, a creation of Hermes with more emotion-derived energy known as dynamis, is one of the most important new characters in this expansion. Hermes tasked Meteion and her sisters to find the meaning of life in other stars. At first, Meteion is a cheerful, outgoing, and caring creature who is aware of her surroundings and other people’s feelings. However, as she sees the hopelessness and pain in the stars her sisters have visited, she is consumed by nihilism and changes into a sorrowful and destructive being. However, the character’s journey and progress throughout the story depict the *Übermensch*’s struggle to affirm life and the world, rather than turning away from it.

This paper entitled “*Übermensch* Delineated by Meteion in Naoki Yoshida’s *Final Fantasy XIV: Endwalker*”, aims to investigate the manifestation and effects of Nietzsche’s *Übermensch* concept in the character Meteion. Meteion’s journey and change are similar to *Übermensch*’s fight against despair and the need to overcome oneself. By finding similarities between philosophical ideas and parts of narratives, this paper aims to help readers better understand both the philosophical idea and the narrative character.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study's research method is a qualitative approach. It means that the research writer does not give a table of data to analyze, but gives a direct quotation that represents *Überschensch* by Meteion in Naoki Yoshida's *Final Fantasy XIV: Endwalker*.

C ANALYSIS

Meteion: "What they live for, what gives their lives meaning... There was never a single answer." (Gamer Escape, 2024: Endwalker (Level 90))

The above quotation portrays that Meteion projects the player's emotion and feelings, then tells the player that she could not find a single answer on what other civilization lives for, and what gives their lives meaning. This demonstrates how diverse and difficult life and individual situations are. There is no single solution to the question of what gives life value, and each individual must develop their own.

Meteion: "You gather pieces of happiness, precious and fragile, only to lose them. Then start again." (Gamer Escape, 2024: Endwalker (Level 90))

The above quotation actualizes that Meteion captures the essence of the *Überschensch's* journey. This cycle of gathering happiness and experiencing loss, just to restart, reflects the *Überschensch's* ongoing journey of self-overcoming and the creation of new values. Just as the *Überschensch* must meet and overcome the despair of nihilism, individuals must manage life's unavoidable losses and obstacles, viewing them as opportunities for growth and reaffirmation.

Meteion: "On and on it goes, until death takes you into its gentle embrace." (Gamer Escape, 2024: Endwalker (Level 90))

The above quotation shows that Meteion's acceptance of death as a gentle embrace can be interpreted as an acknowledgment of life's fragility, which, rather than being a source of sorrow, is an encouragement to live with intensity and purpose. Meteion's comments serve as a reminder that life is fleeting and that one should strive to make the most of it by constantly seeking self-overcoming and the creation of new values. The gentle embrace of death is not a defeat, but a natural end of a life lived with willful acceptance, which represents *Überschensch*.

Meteion: “That which Hermes sent us to find...was there all this time. On Etheirys.” (Gamer Escape, 2024: Endwalker (Level 90))

The above quotation explores Meteion's realization that the answers Hermes seeks throughout the universe are actually within their own world, Etheirys, mirrors Nietzsche's concept of the *Übermensch*'s internal journey to find purpose. This insight suggests that the search for meaning and values is an internal one, finding potential in what is known instead of looking outside. It supports life and their world, which is how the *Übermensch* deals with the existential problem of nihilism.

Meteion: “Like a field of flowers, perhaps. At first a single blossom, it spreads and takes on more colors.” (Gamer Escape, 2024: Endwalker (Level 90))

The above quotation implies that Meteion, after hearing that the player created his or her meaning together with the comrades, as a group. Meteion's comparison of a person's growth to a flower field serves as a metaphor for the journey toward becoming an *Übermensch*. Initially, a person is like a single flower, simple and unadorned. As they experience life, they evolve, adopting a variety of perspectives and complexities, much like a flower field that becomes more colorful and diverse. This process of growth and embracing a broader view of life is akin to overcoming nihilism and stepping into the role of an *Übermensch*, where one creates their own meaning in life.

Meteion: “No expression of regret will undo what my sisters and I have done. Will restore what we have stolen.” (Gamer Escape, 2024: Endwalker (Level 90))

The quotation above emphasizes Meteion's awareness that regret cannot undo the past. It is similar to *Übermensch*'s understanding that one must live with the consequences of their choices and use them as a foundation for growth and self-overcoming. This perspective promotes a proactive approach to life, in which people accept their history but do not allow it to define their future. Instead, they try to make life worth living by taking charge of their lives and the world they live in.

Meteion: “But if you would allow it, I would sing one last song. A song of the newfound joy that swells in my heart... Of the beauty of light when it shines across a dark and starless sea...Of a dream that from the soil of worlds now lost to sorrow, life will spring forth once more...Nourished by gentle rains and caressed by uplifting winds. A song of hope.” (Gamer Escape, 2024: Endwalker (Level 90))

The quotation above explores that Meteion's song of “the newfound joy that swells in my heart” and “the beauty of light when it shines across a dark and starless sea” symbolizes the Überschensch's triumph over despair and the ability to find joy and beauty even in the darkest of circumstances. The idea that “life will spring forth once more” and “nourished by gentle rains and caressed by uplifting winds” is similar to how the Überschensch brings life and hope into the world through their own strength and creativity. It demonstrates the will to power, as well as the ability to overcome oneself.

Meteion: “One day, life will fill the universe again. And Hermes will see this and smile.” (Gamer Escape, 2024: Endwalker (Level 90))

The quotation above underlines that Meteion reflects the Überschensch's belief in life and the creation of new values. Through her interactions with other characters, she begins to understand the strength and resilience of life, leading her to affirm life and express hope for the future even though she sees and experiences a lot of sadness and pain. Meteion believes that when Hermes sees that life fills the universe, he will smile and realize that the meaning of life he seek this whole time is in Etheirys, which is his home.

Meteion: “How, I do not know. But I do know that, where there is a will, there is a way.” (Gamer Escape, 2024: Endwalker (Level 90))

The quotation above implies Meteion's phrase “Where there is a will, there is a way” reflects Überschensch's unbreakable spirit and drive to find a way forward, even if the way appears unclear at first. This quote is about the idea that a strong will can get past doubt and uncertainty. Meteion's comments echo the essence of Nietzsche's Überschensch, emphasizing the power of will and the ability to solve problems and create meaning even in the absence of clear direction or answers.

Meteion: “After all, miracles happen every day, do they not?” (Gamer Escape, 2024: Endwalker (Level 90))

The quotation above emphasizes that Meteion's belief in the occurrence of daily miracles reflects the Übermensch's affirmation of life and the creation of new values. Despite the despair and suffering she has witnessed and experienced, Meteion expresses a belief in the possibility of miracles, which can be seen as an affirmation of life.

Meteion: “Hold in your heart your desire to return to them, then follow my lead and walk forth.” (Gamer Escape, 2024: Endwalker (Level 90))

The quotation above explores that Meteion's words suggest a similar notion of self-determination and the importance of personal desire as a guiding force. These ideas are similar to Nietzsche's Übermensch because they both stress the value of personal desires as a source of meaning and direction and encourage people to actively pursue their goals as a way to fight nihilism and affirm life.

Meteion: “That hope will surely guide you true.” (Gamer Escape, 2024: Endwalker (Level 90))

The quotation above implies that Meteion's words reflect Übermensch's focus on the strength of individual will and the ability to create a guiding light through hope, even when there are not any set routes or guarantees. Meteion's advice to hold on to hope shows one's belief in each person's ability to find their way, even when the road is not clear. This is a key part of the Übermensch's journey of self-creation and self-overcoming.

D. CONCLUSION

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that Meteion in *Final Fantasy XIV: Endwalker* provides an expansive narrative canvas for exploring Nietzsche's concept of the Übermensch. Meteion's quotation in *Final Fantasy XIV: Endwalker* reflects Nietzsche's philosophical ideas, particularly the concept of the Übermensch. Her transformation from despair to hope mirrors the Übermensch's journey of overcoming nihilism and creating new values. Meteion's realization that the answers are within their own world all along illustrates the inward journey and self-discovery that Nietzsche's Übermensch embodies. Through Meteion, the game explores the creation of meaning and the affirmation of life, central themes in Nietzsche's work.

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The story of Endwalker expansion thus serves as a modern representation of Nietzsche's philosophy, with Meteion representing the Übermensch principles. It shows how Nietzsche's ideas are still relevant and can inspire and connect with modern narratives, especially in the digital era and electronic literature.

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