1915

Nietzsche and the problem of democracy

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Nietzsche and the Problem of Democracy

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A thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the Graduate College of the State University of Iowa
June 1915

Reprinted from THE MONIST, July, 1932
NIETZSCHE AND THE PROBLEM OF DEMOCRACY

I. NIETZSCHE, THE PERSONALITY AND THE WRITER

A PERSONALITY as complex as that of Nietzsche presents an interesting, though a puzzling problem. In this personality we find the characteristic traits of a philologist, a musician, a poet, a mystic, a critic, a prophet, and a philosopher; and all these so closely, so inextricably interwoven as to render its analysis very difficult. His sensitive nature, his love of refinement and taste, his courage and sincerity, his devotion to a tragic idealism, his passion for exuberant and overflowing life, his friendships and affections, and their subsequent wreckage, the frailty of his health—in a word, all the tendencies of his nature, and all the bitter experiences of life—have left their marks on his writings. In fact, they have so moulded these that we cannot evaluate his philosophy of life and conduct without knowing the peculiarities of his dynamic personality and genius. "We should be committing a grave error," writes G. Chatterton-Hill, "if, in studying Nietzsche, we should make abstraction of the personality of the author. That personality reveals itself in every line, in every aphorism."\(^1\)

Even as a student, Nietzsche was a unique personality. He showed marked excellence in his studies, and commanded the respect of those around him. He was affa-

\(^1\)The Philosophy of Nietzsche, p. 11.
ble, sympathetic, exceedingly sensitive, and of remarkable self-control. He early accustomed himself to hours of seclusion. His devotion to serious studies, his earnest and unusual sincerity, his vague, yet pretentious ambitions for future greatness marked him off from others. He was proud, honest, assertive, critical, careful of his prestige and dignity, and always ready to defend himself against any insult. The desire for creative work was early awakened in him, seeking expression in the composition of melodies, fantasies, and poems. Even in the earliest stages of his philosophy, he began to question the existence of God, the authority of the Bible, revelation, and the like. These earliest efforts foreshadowed the future thinker. He was at once courageous, sincere, doubting and daring; not only did he refuse to say 'yea' to all that he heard, but also insisted on being the measure of his own convictions. As an ardent follower of Humanism and a child of the Renaissance, he felt that preceding values were nothing more than human creations, that they were, after all, only human, 'all too human' to be worshipped in abject admiration. He cherished the passion of being independent, a 'creator' himself. Thus very early he began his critical evaluation of the moral, religious, social, and political ideals of the day.

Nietzsche was a great believer in aristocracy. He hated everything that was vulgar, he abhorred the mob. Neither had he any desire to go into the crowd with a view to transforming the social environment that had its share in the making of the crowd. On the contrary, he fled from it as from a pestilence. His scorn for the masses was so marked that he often sought refuge in solitude. Away from the 'madding crowd', to the open fields, to the mountains, to the pure, white snow, to the sunny heights

of nature, to the glorious morning and to the rising sun; away, even if it meant to retire to his own self, to his inner solitudes, shutting his gates against mankind, against the tumult and noise of decadent humanity! He did not even write for the crowd, but for the higher men as he dreamed of them in order to save them from utter contamination! What had the crowd to do with philosophy, art, or even truth, he thought. He denounced the democratic morality of the day, condemning it as a distortion of nature, and a revolt against ascending life, leading to a state of mediocrity and degeneracy. He admired whatever was noble and beautiful in thought as well as in life, in taste as well as in manners.

Had Nietzsche believed in virtues, we should ascribe to him, first of all, the virtue of sincerity. No matter how widely we may differ from him in his evaluation of cultural, ethical and social values, we must admire the man, who scarcely permitted himself to be moved by fear, or by motives of self-interest in the expression of his convictions. No social repression was able to confine him; no external considerations could modify the tone of his affirmations and negations. He was a ‘free spirit,’ beyond tradition and custom, “beyond good and evil,” bound to speak every new thought, every new idea, every impulsive prompting and every intuitive insight, without respect or regard for the kind of reception that awaited them. Thus, although in childhood a devoted Christian, when doubt crept into his life, it extinguished the light of his faith. His whole nature revolted against the trusting of faith. Would this not be the repudiation of that inner necessity which required incontestable proofs? Besides, why devote so much time to the solution of transcendental riddles when there were infinitely more vital problems to be attacked in human life? Thus Nietzsche
discarded every old value as soon as he conceived of a new revelation, remaining sincere to himself from beginning to end, in spite of the fact that such a position would often place him in sharp opposition to the accepted values of his generation. But he cared nothing for this. He believed in a tragic life, and he dared to accept the consequences of his sincerity. He felt that there was too much deception among men as well as depravity, too much that was unchristian in professed Christianity, too much hypocrisy in religion and morals, too great a divergence between dogma and life, too much external refinement covering inner degradation, too much conformity with established customs and traditions; and his whole personality revolted against this spirit of abject complacency. He saw everywhere 'actors,' 'apes,' 'rope-dancers,' 'imitators,' masqueraders and charlatans; but men of a higher order were lacking. Hence his revolt. True to his instincts, true to every new and strange intuition that revealed itself to him, he carried on his task of revaluation, destructive as well as constructive, with utmost courage. He was determined to assert himself above and beyond all external influences. "He was determined to be sincere to himself at all and every cost," writes Prof. Chatterton-Hill,3 "to examine every ideal, however ancient, however sacred its traditions, however universal its acceptance; to examine it to the bottom, to reject it, if necessary, at whatever cost of friendship or suffering to himself; to affirm and reaffirm it in the face of the whole world if necessary, without compromise," and "to do this requires courage above the ordinary; it requires heroism."

Closely interwoven with these traits of sincerity and courage is Nietzsche's devotion to ideals. How tragic and passionate, how overpowering is his allegiance to the

ideals of his creation. They are inseparable parts of his being; he has stamped upon them something of his personality, something of his love, something of his life. He is a poet, a prophet, wrapped in his dreams, ever thinking of making it possible for life to surpass itself, to transcend itself, to ascend to higher possibilities, to realize more sublime and superlative stages of development, forgetting the past with its record of superstition, prejudice and lethargy. "Oh, my brethren," he writes, "not backward shall your nobility gaze, but forward! Expelled ye shall be from all fathers' and forefathers' lands. Your children's land ye shall love. Be this your new nobility." 4

Nietzsche's writings are all permeated with this romantic spirit. The vividness of his descriptive passages, the buoyant rush of his aphorisms, and the glowing rhetoric with which he formulates his thoughts into strange, fantastic, and beautiful expressions, reveal the spirit of the author in a very striking way. Not only is he a unique romanticist, but also an ardent idealist, aspiring to overcome a thousand dangers and to realize a thousand possibilities in a flash of intuition. The heroic is his fascination. His dreams for the future are so intense and dramatic that they fascinate him, yet he cannot define them; nor can he hope for their attainment; for, once attained, they would lose their attraction, since they would cease to be ideals. That which has been realized must be destroyed, giving way to the new and the 'beyond.' He is ever looking for new adventures, new ways and new 'stairs,' new loves and new objects of devotion. Lost in his dreams and his enthusiasm, he often finds himself living in a different world, and, though at times he is conscious of the tragic deception of his illusions, conscious also of the dangerousness of his attempts at complete emancipa-

4 Thus Spake Zarathustra, p. 295.
vision from the realities of life, he still clings to his mad desire of living out his dreams, enjoying the pleasure and also the pain of his nameless tomorrow.

Nietzsche is not a cool and logical intellectualist. All that issues from within comes in a rush, in torrents, as it were. He is an artist under the sway of great impulses, who enjoys intoxications, and loves them with all the influence of his passions. “Oh that I were dark and like the night, how would I suck at the breasts of light,” he sighs. It is an invincible yearning in him, this madness for more of joy and more of abundant life. He sings in musical tones and with irresistible force the ebbing and flowing of his inmost experiences of will. How often he has desired the ‘tempestuous surging of the tides of his soul,’ a glorious play of waves in his bosom!

Intuition, instinct, will, passion, these are the elements of his life. What is a premeditated life worth? A rational life? Is it not cold, dry and dreary? Thought that is calculated and premeditated is but a phenomenon of degeneration. It destroys the freedom of life, it suppresses the tragic efforts of the ‘free spirit,’ it impedes the creative flight of imagination, it freezes ‘the genial current of the soul.’

This surrender to the tragic and the heroic makes Nietzsche an enemy of rationalism in philosophy, science and morals. “All perfect action,” he writes, “is precisely unconscious and not deliberate; consciousness is often the expression of an imperfect and often morbid constitution. Personal perfection as determined by will, as an act of consciousness, as reason with dialectics is a caricature, a sort of self-contradiction; any degree of consciousness renders perfection impossible.”\(^6\) To set reason above the senses, above the immediate intuitions of the soul, above

\(^6\)The Will to Power, Vol. I, p. 239.
all that is instinctive and spontaneous is for Nietzsche a sign of decadence. This is why he regards Socrates as the corruptor of Greek culture, "the tool of Grecian dissolution." Hence also his admiration for the ancient ideals of Athens and Sparta, before the so-called systematic philosophers had come to destroy them. Those subjective thinkers, those falsifiers of life and truth. How he hates them; he, the poet, the artist, the dreamer, who is the true child of nature, and in whose heart is the passion for life more abundant!

This free and unrestrained idealism, together with his passion for the heroic, nurtured by exaggerated emotionality, make Nietzsche a self-deceived man. With almost conscious determination to be recognized as a great creator of values, he attempts to destroy everything that belongs to the past. Few are the philosophers he can approve of, fewer the moralists (or, perhaps, immoralists) he can admire. "Socrates is of the mob" and for the mob; Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Comte, Spencer, Mill, and many of the great of ancient and modern times, are treated by him as though they were mere toys or playthings that one might destroy with a single stroke. This ambition, naive and uncritical, which aims to banish all the accepted values and set his own in their place, reveals Nietzsche's exaggerated conceit, if not vanity; and the overestimation of his genius drives him to glorify his own ego, a task that could have been left to others. He imagines himself to be the solitary Zarathustra, the greatest sage of the time, the prophet of a new resurrection for mankind. He is in fact a creator of superior values. His merits cannot be questioned; his ways cannot be criticised. "Ye ask me why? I am not one of those who may be asked for their whys," he proclaims defiantly. He considers himself independent and irresponsible, bound by
no social obligations, he himself his own ideal, himself the goal of his ambitions, himself the master of his destiny. Future generations are not to estimate his worth; he himself must dictate it. In a dangerous moment of grandiose delusion, he does not hesitate to say that he has “given to the Germans the profoundest books they at all possess.”

This same romantic, (shall we perhaps say egocentric?), spirit is revealed even in his friendships. Nietzsche feels the need of friends and their intellectual companionship. He seeks men who can understand the significance of his cause and encourage him in his efforts. He makes friends and loves them passionately. But he loves his own personality in them, his own image. In his friends he wishes to find other Nietzsches, the reflections of his own self. He dreams of a very intimate likeness if not identity, between himself and the friends he chooses. They, too, must be noble, aristocratic, spontaneous and creative in thought and conduct, emancipated from the tyranny of established values, beyond the bounds of recognized dogmas, doctrines, and institutions. As long as the illusion lasts, he is happy and satisfied; but sooner or later he must discover that the real man is other than what he has fancied. Then comes disillusionment and separation follows, and Nietzsche is left alone in his desolation.

His friendship with Wagner was particularly tragic. He dreamt of finding in him a creative artist, one who would restore the spirit and substance of Grecian art. In him he hoped for the renaissance of Dionysus, the rebirth of Hellenism at its best. But soon he discovered that Wagner was also a decadent! Some admirers idealize Nietzsche in his friendships; and though confessing that to be led by illusions and then to break all ties of affection is a mistake, they try to justify him, saying that “the mistake is

7The Case of Wagner, p. 49.
of a noble soul."8 One must, by the same logic, justify Brutus for nobly thrusting the dagger into Caesar's body. Divergence of opinion may be an excuse for breaking friendships; but can one excuse the personal invective to which Nietzsche descends in *The Case of Wagner* and *Nietzsche Against Wagner*?

Such tragic wreckages of his friendships, accompanied by ill health and physical and mental suffering, together with his temperamentalism, his romantic and idealistic tendencies, made Nietzsche's career more or less pathological. The task that he had undertaken was an enormous one, was an impossibility itself, and his reckless clinging to it would cost him more than he himself could imagine. His health gave way; his works were attacked from every side, or sometimes answered only by the insult of silence. Men could not understand him, or rather would not understand him. His task was the unusual struggle of a pigmy against the titanic current of the times. The world was more than ever becoming democratic, leveling down the remains of every form of aristocracy. Fames and fortunes were being scattered to the winds. What he considered unnatural or sub-natural, was taking the place of the "natural" of which he dreamt. And to fight against this "degeneration" of society would wreck his brain. "He waged war against the moral ideas of his generation and ruined his intellect in the unequal conflict. He turned on himself and rended his soul into shreds rather than join in the affirmation of recognized faith."9 It is not necessary, then, to ascribe his future insanity to inheritance, or make him a mad man from birth, as Max Nordau has attempted to do.10 That would be gross injustice to the man. Whether he had any inherited ten-

9 Huneker, *Egotists*, chapter on Nietzsche.
10 In *Degeneration*, chapter on Nietzsche.
dencies of the sort is very questionable. He was brought up in a healthy and noble family, and his eye aches and other ailments cannot be regarded, with safety, as suggestive of any hereditary tendency toward insanity. His pathological condition was rather the natural consequence of his tragic undertakings; his heroic but unequal conflict with the spirit of the age was strenuous enough to wreck any intellect.

Sympathize as we may with the sufferings and the tragic ending of this truly remarkable personality, we must confess that traces of mental disintegration are not lacking in his writings. They do not originate from a clear source, not from a lucid mind. We are not, speaking paradoxically, reading the works of a "normal" genius. The many contradictions, mystical expressions, and utterly incoherent words and sentences we often find in his writings leave no doubt as to the influence of his sad experiences upon his literary productions. Nietzsche loved life, but he loved it more because he was ill. And this pathology went so far as to assert that "the falseness of an opinion is not an objection to it; the question is how far it is life-furthering, life-preserving, species-preserving and perhaps species-rearing."¹¹ This longing for life, this supplication of a desperate soul, was a passion which cared neither for philosophy nor for truth. All that it wished for was to save and preserve the flickering life at all cost. We could not understand Nietzsche's passion for, and desperate appeal to exuberant life, and his making of it the dominant ideal of his philosophy, unless we knew that he was ill, and that he needed life, an excellent case of over-compensation, perhaps, speaking in terms of Adlerian psychology. He clung to life at the cost of all values hitherto acknowledged. What was truth to him,

¹¹*Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 8.
if he only had life! For, once assured of abundant life, he could create all other human values.

Nearly all critics divide Nietzsche's philosophical career into three distinct periods. Arbitrary as it may seem to divide into parts what in itself is a unity, it is not without justification. There is, of course, a thread of unity through the whole, yet there are periods in Nietzsche's thinking when his divergence from preceding interests becomes so marked as to place him on a different plateau.

The first, or the esthetic period, includes, among other works, *The Birth of Tragedy* and the *Thoughts Out of Season*. The second, or the intellectual period, is marked by the two volumes of *Human, All-Too-Human*, and *The Joyful Wisdom*. It was in the third, or the ethical, period, however, that Nietzsche produced his best works, among which *Thus Spake Zarathustra* stands out as a great literary achievement. In his *Beyond Good and Evil* and *The Genealogy of Morals*, his philosophy is crystallized into more definite and systematic form. Other products of this period are *The Case of Wagner, The Twilight of the Idols, The Antichrist*, and *The Will to Power*, which Nietzsche had hoped to make his *magnum opus*, mainly composed of sketches and notes, posthumously collected and published by his sister, Madame Elizabeth Förster-Nietzsche.

In the first period, the *esthetic* ideal controls Nietzsche's thought. His studies in Greek art and literature make the beautiful the object of his admiration. He asserts that all existence, life, the world itself, can be justified only as esthetic phenomena. And even philosophy and science should be approached from the point of view of art. Somewhat superficial as Nietzsche may be considered in

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12 *The Birth of Tragedy*, p. 56.
this period, his aim is unmistakably constructive in its attempt at reviving the rich heritage of the glory that was Greece. He is not as yet a thorough-going Dionysian. On the contrary, he seems to fear the thought of tragic life, and therefore clings to art as to a "saving enchantress from the extreme danger of Will." The maxim of "Will to Power" has not yet enslaved him (or liberated him, as he would have it). He is neither so skeptical, nor dogmatically critical in his negations; and, with all his admiration for the Dionysian spirit, he makes room for the Apollonian, "designed as deliverance from the extreme dangers of becoming."

In the second period, Nietzsche is more intellectual and strongly critical. He is no longer predominantly an artist, but has rather become a critic of ethical and social theories and culture in general. It is here that he gives free expression to his affirmations and negations, and his passions lead him to ambitious creativeness. Yet the period is one of transition, and as such, full of doubts, hesitations, and contradictions. No longer does he maintain that "art is the highest task and the properly metaphysical activity of this life." For a short time the problem of knowledge comes into prominence. What is truth? Is there truth? Where is truth? These questions provoke him. But Nietzsche has no definite answers to these questions. It appears as though he sincerely attempts to ascertain the nature of these problems; but, not having the patience of a Socrates, he assumes the attitude of the Sophists, and starts to make a plaything of the problem of truth. Eventually he despises epistemology as the most useless and thankless discipline in philosophy.

In Nietzsche's third period, ethical and social questions are uppermost. His criticisms of and complete opposition

14Ibid., p. 62.
to moral, religious, and social ideals, as hitherto recognized, are more radical and extreme; but at the same time he sets forth some new and positive values. His opposition to the democratic way of life takes definite form and the gospel of his social philosophy becomes definitely crystallized. In this connection, particular emphasis is placed upon the ideal of the Superman. The Superman is not only the symbol but also the ideal of Nietzsche's social philosophy, which he evolved in opposition to the philosophy of democracy with all its implications within the fields of religion, art, morals, and government.

II. THE DEMOCRATIC WAY OF LIFE

Fruitful criticism implies a standard of evaluation; similarly any estimation of ethical and social values requires a criterion of good or of worths. What is the measure, then, we would ask, which Nietzsche employs in his criticism of the spirit and program of democracy? What is the ground of his evaluations? Moreover, some knowledge of his general approach to the problems of life, of the world and of reality will serve as a suitable background to the problem of society which is central in Nietzsche's philosophy.

A concept uppermost in Nietzsche's thought is that of the Will to Power. Every problem is approached from this point of view. The world itself, the universe, is conceived of as an embodiment of Will, as an expression of the “Will to Power.” "This universe," writes Nietzsche, "is a monster of energy, without beginning or end, a fixed and brazen quantity of energy which grows neither bigger nor smaller, which does not consume itself, but only alters its face;—it is rather energy everywhere, the play of forces and force-waves—agglomerating here, and diminishing there, a sea of forces storming and raging in
itself, forever changing,—producing the most complicated things out of the most simple structures.—This my Dionysian world of eternal self-creation, of eternal self-destruction, this mysterious world of two-fold voluptuousness,—would you have a name for my world? A solution of all our riddles? This world is the Will to Power—and nothing else! And even ye yourselves are this will to power—and nothing else!”

As in the case of reality, so also in that of knowledge, Will is the essential fact. Nietzsche claims that man must believe in his senses, instincts, and the demands of his intuitive nature. He must not allow himself to be controlled by "reason"; for to have to combat the instincts is the formula for decadence, and rationality is a life-undermining force. From this viewpoint Nietzsche denies the validity of law, freedom, end, soul, God, immortality, etc. All these concepts of reason are merely subjective; if any significance can be attributed to them, this can be only pragmatic in character. These concepts must not be so idealized as to tyrannize over man's volitional life. Will is the greatest thing in man, as it is the dynamic force of life in all its expressions.

The Will to Power manifests itself in particular centers of expression, in individual points, or things, or persons, each striving for ascendancy. The universal is an empty abstraction for Nietzsche; it is the particular, the unique, that is real and important. Human progress consists in a continuous effort in which the individual endeavors to increase his own power, and not that of everyone else. Nietzsche defines "value" as "the highest amount of power that a man can assimilate—a man, not man-

16 The Twilight of Idols, p. 8.
17 The Birth of Tragedy, p. 191.
kind." Thus, for him the index of all values, including moral and social evaluations, is Power. He means to overcome the pessimism of the age, and to make life "worthier of living." His general attitude towards the problem of life is well expressed in the following sentences. "I can not say whether it would have been better for me not to have existed or to have existed; but from the moment I live, I will that life shall be as exuberant, luxuriant, and tropical as possible, within and without myself. I shall therefore say 'yea' to all that makes life more beautiful, more worthy of living, more intense. If it be proved to me that error and illusion can serve for the development of life, I will say 'yea' to error and illusion; if it be proved that cruelty, deceit, bold daring, etc. are likely to increase the vitality of man, I will say 'yea' to sin and evil. On the contrary if I find that truth, virtue, goodness, in a word, all the values hitherto worshipped by mankind are harmful to life, then I will say 'nay' to science and morals." Neither knowledge nor truth, neither morality nor virtue, are aims in themselves; they are only instruments in the service of Life. They can be justified only in so far as they affirm Life and its infinite possibilities.

Nietzsche finds that there have been two types of approach to the problem of Life, in opposition to each other and in constant conflict for ascendency. There has been proposed, on the one hand, the Aristocratic Way of Life, with its "morals of the masters," lived by the "higher men," the "few," the "noble," the "aristocrats," in a word, by those, whose very instincts impel them to rule; and side by side with this, on the other hand, the Democratic Way of Life has flourished with its "morals of the slaves," lived and preserved by the common people, the "crowd,"

19 The Twilight of Idols.
the "rabble," the "superfluous," in a word, by those whose incapacity for self-activity and self-rule results in their being ruled by others. The first of these types, Nietzsche maintains, has always believed in a strenuous life, endeavored to intensify human activity and creativeness, and made existence more agreeable, tragic, novel, and fruitful. The second, with its characteristic complacency, has impoverished life, thwarted its potentialities, and made of it a creeping existence.

The cultural values of the day Nietzsche finds to be those of the slaves. All influences tend in the direction of extending the democratic way of life and reinforcing the reaction of the masses against the ruling classes. The greatest good of the greatest number is the watchword of modern ethics; the "rights" of the common citizen are being recognized everywhere. To Nietzsche this ultimately involves the loss of true personality and the dissolution of the individual in the state. Moreover, the domination of the common people over the higher classes and the subsequent abolition of the principle of self-assertion fosters social stagnation, and leads to the total demoralization of life itself.

A psychological analysis of the spirit of moral and social democracy reveals as basal elements, fear and cowardice. This inimical approach to life is, Nietzsche thinks, the creation of those who lack courage, initiative, personality. Fearing to face life individually, such persons take refuge in group life, and invent a "gregarious morality, the morality of fear." Henceforth everything that elevates the individual above the "herd" is a source of fear, and branded as evil. Moreover, this "slave insurrection in morals" which defiantly proclaims "I am morality itself, and nothing else is morality," extends its dominion over the higher spirits also. It wages war against everything
rare, everything noble, everything that bears upon itself the mark of distinction. It denounces the "beast of prey" and the "man of prey," as it "seeks 'morbidity' in the constitution of these healthiest of all tropical monsters and growths." It calumniates everything that dares to distinguish itself as a happy exception to the rule, and condemns it to extinction, so that "some time or other there may be nothing more to fear."

Closely related to fear and cowardice are impotency and envy, and these too are primary factors in the development of the morality of the slaves. It is men of inferior quality, of weak and vacillating will, the spiritually poor and the disinherited ones, who create and propagate this morbid morality; "these half-and-half ones, who spoil every whole," and with their "tyrant insanity of impotency" cry for equality. Unable to make masters of themselves, they have a consuming envy of all that is strong, strenuous, and resourceful. Their hatred and jealousy incite them to conspire for the complete abolition of all gradations of rank and distinction.

Nietzsche strongly emphasizes also the pity, love and sympathy of the modern man as indicative of degeneration. Pity, although regarded as one of the greatest of modern virtues, is for Nietzsche one of the most important elements of social pathology. Pity is alien to the moral code of nobility, for not only does it kill all self-respect in the sufferer, but it also makes suffering contagious and universal. Moreover, it is in complete opposition to the law of natural selection. For the same reason, Christianity, as the religion of love, "is the reverse of the principle of selection." It condemns the struggle for existence and strife for ascendency, and raises a general ex-

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20 *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 118.
21 *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, p. 137.
pectation of a kingdom of peace to come. For Nietzsche, on the other hand, suffering is a necessary condition for progress of any kind. "We would rather have it (i.e., suffering) increased and made worse than it has ever been."23 "The discipline of suffering, of great suffering—know ye not that it is only this discipline that has produced all the elevations of humanity?"24 It is only through difficult adventures and experimentations that progress can be assured. Self-assertion and mastery, courage and heroism, daring and adventure need the opposition of difficult situations, if they are to remain dynamic and creative.

That the morality of the slaves has been disastrous in its effect is evident from the fact that parasitism, lack of individuality and of will power are characteristic traits of all under its spell. The man of today is a typical slave, has no personality and character of his own, neither has he any respect for, nor interest in the supreme task of developing a unique individuality. The "will to power" has ceased to be a living passion in him. His ambitions do not go beyond the narrow limits of mere existence. If he seeks joys, they are not the joys of greatness and grandeur, of nobility and superabundance, of achievement and conquest, but only the satisfactions of vulgar cravings and cheap contentment. He has no daring courage, no buoyant passions, no incentives and animating motives. His will has lost its hardness, its tension and freedom, so much so that it takes delight in negating life with its strife and aggressiveness, its exploits and conquests, and takes refuge in philosophies of defeat or in religions of surrender.

But what of progress? The philosophy of the slaves does not believe in progress; it does not desire progress,

23Beyond Good and Evil, p. 170.
24Ibid., p. 171.
It clings to the more comfortable traditions and customs of the past. Not only does it not dare to doubt the authority of the past; it even stoops down to worship it. Men dominated by such a perverted conception of values lack control over the realities of living; nor are they successful in the building of their own individualities. Some saint, or prophet, or priest must accomplish this for them. Such moral and intellectual depravity ultimately leads to "The decline of organizing power, the abuse of traditional means, without the justifying capacity, that of attaining the end; the false coinage in the imitation of great forms, for which at present nobody is sufficiently strong, sufficiently proud, sufficiently self-confident, or sufficiently healthy."\(^{25}\) The man of today is an inferior type of man, as he is satisfied to live on the values dictated by the crowd. Centuries of so-called progress have really resulted in complete failure, as the culture of the slaves has created no values that could even be compared with those bequeathed by the aristocracies of the past.

The moral and social philosophy of the slaves is identified by Nietzsche with the spirit and program of democracy. That is why he defines democracy not only as "a degenerating form of political organization," but as "equivalent to a degenerating, a waning type of man, as involving his mediocrizing and depreciation."\(^{26}\) Is it not evident, asks he, that democracy is a perversion of the fundamental laws of nature? Everywhere in the world there are evidences of unequal distribution. Man cannot be an exception to the rule. No society has ever existed without its hierarchy. The strong is superior to the weak by his very nature. That is why Nietzsche abhors "the universal degeneration of mankind to the level of 'the man

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\(^{25}\)The Case of Wagner, p. 50.  
\(^{26}\)Beyond Good and Evil, p. 128.
of the future' as idealized by the socialistic fools and shallow pates”; he deplores “this brutalizing of man into a pigmy with equal rights and claims,”27 this “tenacious opposition to every special claim, every special right and privilege.” Democracy, whatever form it may take,—republicanism, socialism, communism, anarchism,—is a nihilistic theory of morals and of the state, threatening human progress with dire results. It wishes all men to serve the universal, the general, the common, and does not hesitate to suppress all expression of individuality, that is, initiative and freedom of action.

It is clear that Nietzsche's criticism is directed squarely against the democratic ideal, and the democratic way of life. He is the uncompromising aristocrat who cannot think of a democratic commonwealth without a feeling of indignation. He has an unspeakable aversion for all forces and agencies which make for the realization of this end. Now he holds that “the democratic movement is the inheritance of the Christian movement,”28 and he undertakes to show that organized religion has been a formidable force in the service of the values of the slaves.

By ascribing its origin to revelation and divine authority, religion commands the respect of the slaves, brings them to the shelter of a common fold, and lends sanction to their morality. But at bottom religion is a great falsehood. It is founded neither on science, nor on philosophy, nor on common sense. It is a means of escape inspired by fear and created by the imagination in the face of overwhelming realities. It is the fiction of the disinherited classes, who, because of lack of self-reliance, cling to supernatural illusions for deliverance from the difficulties of life. "Thy cowardly devil within thee, who would fain

27Beyond Good and Evil, pp. 130-131.
28Ibid., p. 127.
fold his hands in his lap and have things easier, this cowardly devil persuadeth thee 'there is a God'.”

It is this lack of self-reliance that gives birth to religion, and by common sympathy brings all the afflicted to the shelter and protection of faith. Then the priest assumes charge of the affairs of the fold, leading the people to their final goal, which is contentment, peace, security, salvation. He formulates new standards for the estimation of conduct, whereby the aristocratic conceptions of good are abolished and replaced by a servile evaluation. Good, which originally stood for whatever was noble, exuberant, happy, healthy, and strong, changes its meaning, and becomes equivalent to wretched, poor, weak, lowly, needy, sickly and loathsome; and all forms of excellence are condemned as evil, horrible, covetous, insatiable, and godless.

In order to make the illusion complete, religion grossly underestimates the importance of worldly existence, and affirms a 'beyond' with promises of eternal happiness. People begin to place the center of gravity of life in “the other world,” in “nothingness”; they begin to misunderstand the body. Not only do they regard the soul as a separate entity, they think of it as the only entity worthy of recognition. They therefore despise their physical nature and favor the “starvation” of the body as a necessary condition “for the glorification of the soul.”

Thus religion embodies and represents the crowd spirit, and leads the “revolt of all that creeps on the ground against what is elevated.” Its virtues are love of one's neighbor, kindness, sympathy, trust, devotion, patience, etc., all of which encourage the spirit of contentment and mediocrity. The spirit of indolence excuses itself by trying to see the will of God operating in all things for a

29 *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, p. 260.
30 See *The Genealogy of Morals*, p. 31; *The Antichrist*, p. 323.
31 *The Antichrist*, p. 303.
supreme good, the exact nature of which is veiled from man. This abiding in "the religious mood" Nietzsche regards as extremely dangerous to life—nay, even the negation of life itself. He plainly writes that "life is at an end where the kingdom of God begins." When human interest is detached from the immediate realities of life and is directed to the illusions of the supernatural, autohypnosis goes so far as to divorce man from his very personality. He ceases to use his best efforts for the promulgation of individualistic, cultural aims, and becomes a "God-intoxicated" dreamer. Losing all interest in "physiology," he turns into a degenerate, and rejoices in the "ideal of a silly, renouncing, humble, selfless humanity."

Not content with its dominion over the ethical, social, and religious life of mankind, the democratic way of life has extended its influence even into the field of philosophy, science, art and literature, and subjected them to its domination. What is the philosophy of today, writes Nietzsche, but a discipline reduced to a "theory of knowledge"; "a philosophy that never even gets beyond the threshold, and rigorously denies itself the right to enter—that is philosophy in its last throes, an end, an agony; something that awakens pity. How could such a philosophy rule!"

The real function of philosophy, as conceived by Nietzsche, is not searching, but willing, creating; moreover, it is law-giving, commanding, and ruling. Evidently, such a philosophy we have not as yet had. The past has contented itself with a mere inquiry into abstract truths, and with what results? Metaphysics, having vainly attempted to mould reality into the mechanisms of the intellect, or express life in rationalistic terms, has ended either in agnosticism or in complete skepticism. Philosophy based

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32 *The Twilight of Idols*, p. 129.
33 *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 136.
on intellectualistic principles, asserts Nietzsche, not only misrepresents the nature of external reality, but also the nature of man. By denying the evidence of the senses and suppressing the spontaneity of the instincts, it destroys freedom of action and makes of man the slave of subjective "truths." That is why the philosophers of today have neither desire nor ability to rule. They have come to rank themselves with common mortals. It is the "humanness, all-too-humanness of the modern philosophers themselves, in short, their contemptibleness which has injured most radically the reverence for philosophy and opened the doors to the instincts of the populace." The ambition of modern philosophy is to get at a systematized world, finished and ready for interpretation. To this end it schematizes rules, classifications, categories and abstractions of every sort, which represent its very "prejudices," and which make of philosophy a more complex riddle than the problems it attempts to solve. Moreover, unable to attain its purposes, it ultimately ends in desperate confusion or extreme pessimism. All the different schools of skepticism, agnosticism, pessimism, nihilism, together with other allied movements, are signs of general pathology in philosophy; they have no conclusions, because they have no real goals. Philosophy has overlooked such important problems as the promotion of life, the creation and utilization of power in man, the cultivation and affirmation of will, and, instead of making itself the ally of nature, it has set itself apart from it for the purpose of arriving at an intellectualistic description of it. True philosophy, however, should be objective in character, one with external reality; it should affirm the will to surpass in things, and promote freedom and creativeness.

A similar characterization holds true also of all that

34Ibid., p. 135.
we call science, art and literature. The scientist of today is no worthier than the philosopher. His ambition also is to serve the "people." He does not know how to keep science sacred; on the contrary, he allows it to be profaned and desecrated by the populace of the streets. "Nobody had yet harbored the notion of psychology as the Morphology and Development-doctrine of the Will to Power as I conceive it,"\textsuperscript{35} writes Nietzsche. This point of view demands that science seek its \textit{raison d'être} in the attempt to produce higher planes of existence, making the will to power not only a motive but also an ideal of research. The present day scientist, however, does not even know what his mission is. He is "a commonplace type of man, with commonplace virtues; that is to say a non-ruling, non-authoritative, and non-self-sufficient type of man."\textsuperscript{38} He shares the general inherited instincts of mediocrity; he is an academician, a pedant. He has no ambition to go beyond and above the masses; he is like one who "lets himself go, but does not flow." Moreover, any discoveries and inventions that he makes are immediately placed at the service of the masses. Technological improvements of every description have made life easier; but, having destroyed all tragic situations, they have at the same time destroyed the very conditions for the future development of life.

The same can be said about art. Its typical representative is Wagner; and it must be noticed that "there is nothing fatigued, nothing decrepit, nothing dangerous to life and derogatory to the world in spiritual matters which would not be secretly taken under protection by his art." "He flatters every nihilistic (Buddhistic) instinct and disguises it in music; he flatters every kind of Chris-

\textsuperscript{35}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 33.
\textsuperscript{36}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 138.
tianity, and every religious form of decadence." Thus what men call art today is but an appeal to decadent sentimentality, intoxication, revery and nihilism. The misfortune here is that this same spirit of despair and resignation, this same philosophy of defeat characterizes all the departments of modern culture. And this general trend of degeneration, claims Nietzsche, has not only corrupted man, but it has also made woman its victim. Feminism, under whatever form expressed, is the fruit of the spirit democracy, whose aim is the "emancipation" of women. Repudiating the mastery of man, it has raised the same impudent cry for equality with man, and "this is one of the worst developments of the general uglifying of Europe." Woman is not, and cannot be equal to man, because she is inferior to man by her very constitution. "To be mistaken in the fundamental problem of 'man and woman,' to deny here the profoundest antagonism and the necessity for an eternally hostile tension, to dream here, perhaps, of equal rights, equal claims, and obligations, that is a typical sign of shallow-mindedness." Nature has made a wide distinction between man and woman, making the former the stronger of the two. Woman's first and last function is to bear robust children. Leaving home in search of social and political rights, she loses her feminine as well as maternal characteristics, which may ultimately mean race suicide. It must be noticed that it is man's own repudiation of sovereignty that has been encouraging woman to lose her modesty and look for wider privileges. A sensible man, one who believes in his mastery, and unquestionable right to govern, says Nietzsche, "can only think of women as Orientals do; he must conceive of her as a possession, as confinable

37The Case of Wagner, pp. 45-46.
38Beyond Good and Evil, p. 186.
property, as a being predestined for service and accomplishing her mission therein—he must take his stand in this matter upon the immense rationality of Asia, upon the superiority of the instinct of Asia, as the Greeks did formerly."

Thus, Nietzsche concludes that the democratic ideal of the modern state, Christianity as the religion of love and universal peace, utilitarian ethics with its maxim of "the greatest good of the greatest number," the philosophy, science, art, and literature, and the general culture of the age—all of these—are dominated by the moral and social values of the slaves, under the sway of which the aristocratic way of life and all its major objectives have all but vanished. In opposition hereto he proposes a Morality of the Masters, of which the Superman is both the symbol and the ideal. In the concept of the Superman we may read Nietzsche's ideal of the new morality.

III. THE SUPERMAN AND THE GOSPEL OF ARISTOCRACY

All living beings, Nietzsche insists, survive on the principle of appropriation at the expense of the weak. Human progress and development of any kind is achieved by continued exploitation of the masses. The survival of the fittest is the rule.) The Morals of the Masters follows the example of nature, and insists that "life itself is essentially appropriation, injury, conquest of the strange and weak, suppression, severity, obstrusion of peculiar forms, incorporation, and at the least, putting it mildest, exploitation." It reveals an effort of segregation, an inner tendency toward individuation and self-destinction. It is this principle that underlies the process of evolution "in a world whose essence is Will to Power." And this same

89 Beyond Good and Evil, p. 187.
40 Beyond Good and Evil, p. 226.
principle must be recognized and affirmed by society if further advancement is to be hoped for.

With all the enthusiasm of an artist, Nietzsche feels the necessity of creating an ideal to embody his social philosophy, and he does this by giving to the world the "superman." With respect to this ideal, however, certain questions arise. Does the superman represent a type that can and will be realized sometime in the future, or is it rather a mathematical limit, a goal, constantly to be approached and yet ever beyond the reach of man? Is it to be understood as a symbol or a reality? Or does it perhaps stand for a synthetic image reflecting such human qualities as were most admired by Nietzsche? If it is difficult to answer these questions, it is not because the subject matter is abstract in a metaphysical sense, but rather for the reason that Nietzsche's literature is so unique, so personal, and metaphorical in character as to make any strict interpretation of language impossible. Moreover, Nietzsche's own conceptions, and therefore descriptions, of the superman underwent such changes as to make him appear inconsistent. Perhaps, however, we should not expect consistency from one who had very little respect for what was coldly logical and for whom reality itself was nothing more than a perpetual change.

It is therefore not strange that various interpretations have been given of Nietzsche's doctrine of the superman. Thus, Paul Carus characterizes the superman as "not superior (to the man of today) by intellect, wisdom, or nobility of character, but by vigor, by strength, by an unbending desire for power, and an unscrupulous determination";41 he is "the tyrant who tramples underfoot his fellowmen."42 Dr. H. Goebel and Mr. E. Antrim in-

\[^{41}\text{Nietzsche and Other Exponents of Individualism, p. 42.}\]
\[^{42}\text{Ibid., p. 28.}\]
interpret him as "a full-blooded, highly bred man, with sound and healthy instincts, and impulses which he obeys absolutely, regardless of everything—the development of regnant will is the high purpose of this magnificent specimen of the genus homo." Professor Lichtenberger describes the superman as "the state to which man will attain when he has renounced the present historical values, the Christian, democratic or ascetic ideal which has today overrun all modern Europe, to return to the table of values drawn up by the noble races, by the Masters, who themselves create the values which they recognize instead of receiving them from an outside source." Mr. H. L. Stewart defines the ideal of the superman as the "assertion of the worth of physical well-being and the fierce joy of physical life; it is a protest against the notion of sainthood which makes every thing earthly seem valueless or worse." Mr. Daniel Halevy proposes a symbolical interpretation of the superman, as the "dream and falsehood of a lyrical poet," and repudiates any interpretation of the word superman as a new species, saying that "every species has its limits which it cannot transgress; Nietzsche knows this and writes it." Mr. Henry L. Mencken observes that Nietzsche "was unable to give any very definite picture of this proud, heaven-kissing superman," adding that "the Superman's thesis will be this: that he has been put into the world without his consent, that he must live in the world, that he owes nothing to the other people there, and that he knows nothing whatever of existence beyond the grave. Therefore it will be his effort to attain the highest possible measure of satisfaction for the only unmistakable and genuinely healthy in-

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44 The Gospel of Superman, p. 169.
46 The Life of F. Nietzsche.
distinct within him: the yearning to live—to attain power—to meet and overcome the influences which would weaken or destroy him." Mr. Paul Elmer More writes that "the image of the Superman is, in fact, left in the hazy uncertainty of the future; the only thing certain about him is his complete immersion in nature, and his office to raise the level of society, by rising on the shoulders of those who do the menial work of the world. At the last analysis, the Superman is merely a negation of humanitarian sympathy and the socialistic state of equality." Professor Georges Chatterton-Hill defines the superman as "the philosophy of a class, and of a very small and limited class," which believes that "the state is not an end in itself, any more than society is an end in itself; both are justified only as substructures on which the superstructure of the Over-man may found itself. The superior race, the race of masters, is itself its own justification." Mr. M. Adams thinks that Nietzsche dreamed, at least for a time, of "a noble, and heroic race, which should surpass man as man has surpassed the ape"; but he states that this dream gradually faded away from Nietzsche's mind, and the problem came to be as stated in the Antichrist: "not what is to replace mankind in the chain of being, but what type of man we are to cultivate, we are to will as the more valuable, the more worthy of life." Mr. Alfred W. Benn treats this subject quite exhaustively in an article entitled "The Morals of an Immoralist," showing how "it has been disputed whether Nietzsche's Superman was intended by his prophet to stand for a new animal species, or for a new and improved variety of human being, or finally, for

47 *The Philosophy of Nietzsche*, p. 110.
48 *Nietzsche*, pp. 70-71.
49 *The Philosophy of Nietzsche*, p. 221.
51 *International Journal of Ethics*, XIX, 1908-9, pp. 192-211.
a sporadic type of individual excellence, cropping up occasionally in the existing state of civilization.” In presenting his own interpretation, he writes: “to my mind at least, there cannot be the faintest doubt that when he wrote Zarathustra his wish was to represent the Superman as a new animal species to be evolved by artificial selection from man.” He later adds, however, that “if Nietzsche ever contemplated the idea of evolving a higher animal species than man, he soon gave it up. His last work, the Antichrist, puts the problem quite clearly, as not ‘what is to succeed man,’ but what kind of man ought to be desired and bred as the more valuable, the more worthy of life, the more certain of a future.” With these interpretations in view let us consider for a moment the development of the conception of the superman in Nietzsche’s writings.

The doctrine of the superman was first elaborated in Thus Spake Zarathustra, and thus represents a creation of Nietzsche’s last period. But it was his studies in Greek art and literature that gave birth to the conception of the ideal of the superman. What were the influences then, we would ask, that paved the way to this ideal?

As a direct result of his studies in Greek literature, especially in pre-Socratic tragedies, we find Nietzsche greatly impressed by Hellenic ideals. Greek virtues, such as nobility and pride, courage and heroism, love of danger and tragic life, bold daring and adventure had strongly appealed to his imagination and fascinated him. He had learned to think of the ancient civilization of Greece as far superior to our own. And while his interests were, at this time, esthetic, rather than ethical, he even then was concerned with the problem of the improvement of the race, and especially with the cultivation of genius. He maintained, however, that art should be the ideal of mankind,
"for only as an esthetic phenomenon is existence and the world justified."752 We must also notice that Nietzsche was opposed to individualism at this time, as he believed in "the fundamental knowledge of the oneness of all existing things, the consideration of individuation as the primal cause of evil, and Art as the joyous hope that the spell of individuation may be broken, as the augury of a restored oneness."753 He thought that great art required not only the conquest of the subjective but also the "redemption from the Ego and the cessation of individual will and desire."754 At this time Nietzsche was still a disciple of Schopenhauer; he was very far from being an individualist. It seems that he was contemplating the general improvement of the human race, with the ultimate aim of developing a strong and healthy type of man, and this from an artist's point of view. For the realization of this aim, as he thought, it would be necessary to introduce the conception of the tragic into modern life.

In The Birth of Tragedy Nietzsche attempts to disclose the secret of the greatness of Greek art, as well as of its influence over the Greeks. He distinguishes between two apparently opposing principles in Greek tragedy, the Dionysian and the Apollonian. As defined by himself, "the word Apollonian stands for that state of rapt repose in the presence of the world of beautiful appearance, designed as a deliverance from becoming"; while "the word Dionysian stands for strenuous becoming, grown self-conscious in the form of rampant voluptuousness of the creator, who is also perfectly conscious of the violent anger of the destroyer."755 These two ideals, although apparently opposed to each other, were so har-

752 The Birth of Tragedy, p. 50.
753 Ibid., p. 83.
754 Ibid., p. 44.
755 Ibid., p. 25.
monized in Greek thought as to produce the most favorable conditions for the maintenance of the highest quality of life and culture. The Dionysian spirit signified creativeness; it represented the activity of a "dissatisfied being, overflowing with wealth, and living with high tension and high pressure." Nietzsche admired this spirit and advocated its acceptance by modern society as a dynamic force capable of imparting life to mankind and insuring it against the danger of dissolution and decay. The tragedy of Dionysian morality, however, was alleviated in Hellenism by the Apollonian element of quietude, tranquility and eternal vision. This element, at first recognized as essential, was discarded by Nietzsche in his later works as too compromising and harmful. In the Dionysian spirit, as Nietzsche interpreted it in Hellenism, we find the source of his later ethical teachings. Here, too, is the inspiration for the concept of the superman.

With the appearance of *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Nietzsche's ideas seem to have assumed a new form. The superman is now preached with zealous fervor and with a meaning that is new. If we take the words literally, Zarathustra represents man as a means and a stepping stone to a higher creation in the biological series. Here is what Zarathustra preaches to the people: "I teach you the Superman. Man is something that is to be surpassed. What have ye done to surpass man? All beings hitherto have created something beyond themselves: and ye want to be the ebb of that great tide, and would rather revert to the animal than surpass man? What with man is the ape? A laughing stock, a thing of shame. Man shall be the same to the Superman, a laughing stock, a thing of shame. Ye have made your way from worm to man, and much within you is still worm. Once ye were apes, even now man is
more of an ape than any of the apes.” Continuing his sermon, Zarathustra further asserts that “man is a rope connecting animal and Superman, a rope over a precipice.” Again, “what is great in man is that he is a bridge and not a goal: what can be loved in man is that he is a \textit{transition} and a \textit{destruction}.”\textsuperscript{56} These and other similar statements are in harmony with Nietzsche’s contention that “human society is an attempt” and not an end in itself.

While the highly poetical and allegorical character of \textit{Thus Spake Zarathustra} does not allow one to speak dogmatically, it seems unjustifiable to explain away these sentences, as some critics have attempted to do, as mere literary exaggerations. At least in the first book of the work, Nietzsche seems to have thought of a higher species of being than man. He seems at this time to have been fascinated with Darwin’s theory of evolution, and this undoubtedly gave him the suggestion of a future species, possibly to be achieved by artificial selection. In this connection, it is well to remember, however, that Nietzsche employed many terms rather loosely, and this is true also of the word “species.” Thus in many instances he spoke of the artist, the scientist, the philosopher, the priest, etc., as representing a higher or lower “species,” as the case might be. He even imagined a “divine species of love!”

It is very evident that the word species can have no biological meaning as used in such cases, where the desired word is “kind,” “sort,” or “type.” But with all this, we find also other instances where the meaning conveyed by the word “species” seems to be strictly biological. Thus, when Nietzsche writes that his thoughts are concerned “more especially with the question to what extent a sacrifice of freedom, or even enslavement, may afford the basis for the cultivation of a \textit{superior} type—in plain words:

\textsuperscript{56}\textit{Thus Spake Zarathustra, pp. 5-8.}
how could one sacrifice the development of mankind in order to assist a higher species than man to come into being," the use of the word "species" seems to be strictly biological. There seems to be no doubt that Nietzsche thought, at certain times, at least, that it was possible to produce a higher species surpassing the present type of man. But the fact that Nietzsche speaks of the superman as an ideal to be realized only in the future, may also explain in part his inability to form a definite conception of the exact character and nature of the superman. If the superman stood for a higher species, how could Nietzsche attempt to characterize a stage which (granting its possibility) was not yet attained? How could an explorer describe an undiscovered land, even though he might predict its existence? Nietzsche seems to have experienced the same difficulty. He might have projected the theory of evolution beyond the human race and prophesied the coming of a higher species, knowing, however, that he could not characterize definitely and with precision what had to be achieved in the distant future. Thus understood, the superman was, even for Nietzsche, "the nameless one for whom future songs only will find names." He was, in a way, a mystical being, the image of which was veiled in the uncertainty of the future.

In passing to Nietzsche's later works, such as Beyond Good and Evil, The Genealogy of Morals, and The Antichrist, Nietzsche's idea of the superman seems to have undergone a radical change. No longer does the superman seem to signify a new creation in the animal series, nor an accidental genius that appears sporadically in the course of history. It represents a well defined order of aristocracy. "The problem which I here put," writes Nietzsche, "is not what is to replace mankind in the chain

of beings (man is an end), but what type of man we are to cultivate, we are to will, as the more valuable, the more worthy of life, the more certain of future.” He also adds that “this more valuable type has often enough existed already: but as a happy accident, as an exception, never as willed. It has rather been the most feared; it has hitherto been almost the terror; and out of that terror the reverse type has been willed, cultivated, attained; the domestic animal, the herding animal, the sickly animal, man.”58 Nietzsche arduously attempts to reverse the situation. Enough that the higher exceptions have been suppressed, almost exterminated. It is time that the select few be chosen, set apart, and cultivated as the highest goal of mankind, as the justification of human existence itself. The fact that the word superman is generally avoided in Nietzsche’s latest works and “the noble,” “the higher men,” and similar expressions are used instead, indicates that Nietzsche regarded the word as misleading; and, as by that term he no longer wished to convey a biological meaning, he preferred the above expressions as more adequate for his purposes.

We may observe here that the conception of aristocracy had always swayed Nietzsche’s thoughts. In his later works, however, we find him more strongly settled in his views, and more insistently on the necessity of creating an aristocratic order as a “counter-movement” against the levelling tendencies of the times. And this, because “every elevation of the type man has hitherto been the work of an aristocratic society, a society believing in a long scale of gradations of rank and differences of worth among human beings, and requiring slavery in some form or other.” These are the opening words of the chapter

that bears the significant title "What is Noble,"⁵⁹ and which throws much light on the meaning of the gospel of the superman. Similarly, in The Antichrist, Nietzsche has formulated a theory of the state which divides society into well-defined castes, each having its special function to perform. We read that "a high civilization is a pyramid," and that a broad base is therefore necessary to uphold the social structure. Men who are to form this broad base are those engaged "in handicraft, trade, agriculture, science, the greater part of art, in a word, the whole compass of business activity which is exclusively compatible with an average amount of ability and pretension."⁶⁰ The work that this class is called upon to perform will be to yield the resources from which the higher men will derive their sustenance. Speaking in plain words, it constitutes a large army of slaves, whose existence is justified on the sole ground that they are needed as a foundation upon which the superstructure of the higher classes may be raised. This duty must be performed with blind obedience and discipline, ever ready to bear all kinds of privation and exploitation for the sake of the nobility. Established upon this broad base, and forming a higher social class are "the guardians of right, the keepers of order and security, the noble warriors, the king, as the highest formula of warrior, judge and keeper of the law."⁶¹ The third or the highest class forms the "summit" of the pyramid. It consists of supermen, who stand as the supreme justification as well as the goal of mankind. They are the noblest and best creations of nature, who invent and transmit laws, taking for their principle their own "surmounting," and therefore directing all laws and values to serve their own purposes. There is a rule of

⁵⁹ In Beyond Good and Evil, pp. 223-264.
⁶⁰ The Antichrist, p. 338.
⁶¹ Ibid., p. 337.
mutual rights and obligations within their own circle, but this rule can never be extended to the other castes. The superman can act towards the inferior “as the heart desires.” He believes that “in every healthy society, three types, mutually conditioning and differently gravitating, physiologically separate themselves, each of which has its own domain of labor, its own special sentiment of perfection, its own special mastership.” The superman is the crown of society, its significance, its justification.

It will be observed that Nietzsche’s aristocratic state bears some formal resemblance to that of Plato. But we must not be misled. There is a fundamental difference between the two which must not escape our attention. Platonic aristocracy is essentially democratic in spirit, as the rulers of Plato’s state seek the justification of their leadership not in separation from, and opposition to society, but rather in the task of elevating and emancipating them from ignorance, and protecting them against moral and social degeneracy. In Nietzschean aristocracy, however, we find that not only does the superman have no obligations towards the masses, but allows himself to utilize, exploit, and suppress the majority of mankind for the satisfaction and glorification of his instincts. Thus, the moral code of the superman is based on the principle of the Will to Power, of self-assertion, and of rampant individuation, if not of individualism.

If we seek to know the “virtues” or the attributes, with which Nietzsche clothes the superman, we learn that he is first of all a “free spirit.” He never permits himself to be conditioned by the past, the present, or the future. He has no “prejudices”; and only values of his own creation can claim any authority over him. This does not necessarily mean a complete negation of the past; but with “an

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independence of decision” he will see that “he boil every chance in his own pot, and not until it has been boiled properly will he accept it as his meat.” He is not willing to accept any given dictum without thoroughly assimilating its meaning, and making it his own. He is a creative spirit, believing in his greatness and “his will to stand alone.” He recognizes that in the very essence of his nature, in the very soul of his being, there is “a feeling of plenitude, of power, which seeks to everflow, the happiness of high tension, the consciousness of wealth.”

He has no dogmatic rules of conduct. His views of philosophy, morals, and politics are all indicative of a regnant Will, his “Will to Power.” They are not formulated under the rigid dictates of reason, but rather “flow” from his nature. He does not even have a fixed goal, in the strict sense of the word; for what is now a goal must be a stepping stone tomorrow. To those who ask “for the way” he frankly admits: “No good, no bad, but my taste, for which I have neither shame nor concealment. This is my way, where is yours?” and adds “for the way existeth not.” He is governed by high instincts, and impelled by “the feeling of growth, the feeling of increased power.” He has a passion for great achievements, yet the impetus comes from within rather than from without. He finds his motives, as well as his ideals within his own soul. They are his own creations; and as such no permanency is attributed to them. They are stages in the development of the individual or the race which must ever be surpassed.

The superman is a philosopher, and as such he is a “creator and determiner of values.” Moreover, he is also a “commander and a law-giver.” He is characterized

83Thus Spake Zarathustra, p. 284.
84Beyond Good and Evil, p. 157.
by “the readiness for great responsibilities, the majesty of ruling glance, and contemning look, the feeling of separation from the multitude with their duties and virtues, the kindly patronage and defence of whatever is misunderstood and calumniated, be it God or devil, the delight and practice of supreme justice, the art of commanding, the amplitude of will, the lingering eye which rarely admires, rarely looks up, rarely loves...” The world is for him a vast field of experimentation, where his genius seeks the realization of the highest possibilities of life. To do this, the superman, with “some divine hammer in his hand,” does not shrink from destroying any table of values that does not please him, even though it may be regarded very sacred by others. For him nothing is holy, or divine, or good, or beautiful, in and of itself. These must all serve a purpose, and this in its highest form is the plenitude and progress of life, which implies the assurance of man’s future itself, and which depends on human will. The superman sees at a glance all that can be made out of man, and “knows with all the knowledge of his conviction how unexhausted man still is for the greatest possibilities.” With this conviction the superman, “the philosopher of the future,” seeks “daring and painful attempts,” “dangerous voyages of discovery,” and even “expeditions under barren and dangerous skies,” in order that ways and means be found for a great future.

The moral code of the superman is essentially individualistic in spirit, substance and form, involving the constant suppression of the many in favor of the magnificent few. Nietzsche goes so far in his affirmation of individualism as to assert that “the essential thing, however, in a good and healthy aristocracy is that it should not regard itself as a function either of the kingship or the commonwealth, but as the significance thereof—that
it should therefore accept with a good conscience the sacrifice of a legion of individuals, who, for its sake must be suppressed and reduced to imperfect men, to slaves and instruments. Its fundamental belief must be precisely that society is not allowed to exist for its own sake but only as a foundation and scaffolding by means of which a select class of beings may be able to elevate themselves to their higher duties, and in general to a higher existence.\footnote{Beyond Good and Evil, p. 225.} He insists that "in a person created and destined for command, self-denial and modest retirement, instead of being virtues, would be the waste of virtues." This "virtue" of egoism is of vital importance in the ethics of natural aristocracy; for, as Nietzsche writes, "egoism belongs to the essence of a noble soul." Moreover, "the noble soul accepts the fact of his egoism without question," and "as something that may have its basis in the primary law of things." As a corollary to this conviction it can easily be demonstrated that to a being such as the superman "other beings must naturally be in subjection, and have to sacrifice themselves." Is it not true that the majority live for service? Is it not true that their very existence is tolerated for the sake of utility? Therefore, not only does the assertive instinct of the superman force him to suppress all of his sympathetic feelings, but even commands him to be capable of inflicting suffering upon others whenever it may be to his advantage to do so. He is the "blond beast of prey" who feels great satisfaction in the sacrifice of the multitude, suffice it that with their destruction something is gained. In other words, the strongest "find their happiness in that in which others would find their ruin."\footnote{The Antichrist, p. 337.}

The superman is hard and unyielding both to himself
and to others. Sympathy and tenderness have no place in his nature. The reason why a diamond is more precious than charcoal is that it is hard. "All creators are hard"; and they must be hard, otherwise how can they face the eventualities of life and push their destiny forward with unerring precision? They must know "how to handle the knife surely and deftly, even when the heart bleeds." They must, if they mean to be the builders of their generation, "write upon the will of milleniums as upon brass—harder than brass, nobler than brass." Their new commandment reads; "Become hard!" Their thesis is that almost everything that goes by the name of "higher culture" is "based upon the spiritualizing and intensifying of cruelty."

It is readily seen that the superman believes in strife and war as necessary to life, and regards as demoralizing the harboring of ideas of peace. He often throws himself into unequal battles and loves peace only "as a means to new wars." His career is a fight and his peace the fruit of victory. The belief that a good cause justifies war is too tame for him, because he believes that "a good war sanctifies every cause." Struggle against unfavorable conditions makes the type fitter, more stable, enduring and mighty. "We opposite ones, however," writes Nietzsche, "who have opened our eyes and conscience to the question how and where the plant 'man' has hitherto grown most vigorously, believe that this has always taken place under the opposite conditions, that for this end the dangerousness of his situation had to be increased enormously, his inventive faculty and disseminating power (his 'spirit') had to develop into subtlety and daring under long oppression and compulsion, and his Will to Life had to be increased to the unconditioned Will to Power."67 Not only does the superman justify con-

67 *Beyond Good and Evil*, p. 59.
flict and struggle, but he claims that "severity, violence, slavery, danger in the street and in the heart, secrecy, stoicism, tempter's art and devilry of every kind—that everything wicked, terrible, tyrannical, predatory and serpentine in man, serves as well for the elevation of the human species as its opposite."88

The superman is optimistic and voluptuous. He believes in pleasure and happiness and in joyful adventures. He gratifies his instincts to the full, believing that "an action to which the instinct of life impels has in its pleasure the proof that it is right action. With all his tragic conception of life he believes in laughter and dance; his mind is light and free from cares, and no 'spirit of gravity' clouds the horizon of his ambitions. Embracing optimism, he denounces pessimism, once for all, as a life-destroying principle. He affirms life at every step. He has long learned "to fly beyond himself, to dance beyond himself"; and is "capable of golden laughter." Even the most difficult tasks of life have no power to destroy his confidence and delight in his "greatness." To meet hardships is a privilege; to play with burdens, which crush others to death, is for him but "recreation."

It is clear that the cultural values connected with the Morals of the Masters and symbolized by the ideal of the superman, are in their last analysis, the denunciation of most, if not all, of the Christian and democratic virtues, replacing them by opposite valuations, the valuations of the "noble," thus to establish the order of "natural aristocracy."

IV. NIETZSCHE'S SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY IN THE LIGHT OF EVOLUTIONARY THOUGHT

"Naturalism" is the term by which Nietzsche's moral and social philosophy has often been described. Evident-

88 Ibid., p. 59.
ly, however, Nietzsche is very far from following in the footsteps of Rousseau. The “naturalism” of Rousseau is considered by Nietzsche a “perversion of nature.” The author of *Emile*, recognizing love and sympathy as fundamental to his naturalism, arrives at a social conception of morals and of the state; the prophet of the superman connects his naturalism with a theory of ethical individualism and political aristocracy. By reference to the biological, psychological and ethical significance of social behavior in evolution, we now undertake to show the fallacies upon which Nietzsche’s proposed “morals of the masters” ultimately rest.

Nietzsche’s critique of the function of the social instincts has been made sufficiently clear. He contends that sympathy, sociality, mutual aid and support are factors in evolution whose primary aim is to maintain and protect the weaker types against the assertive instincts of the stronger. In other words, social behavior is an instrument that the weaker creatures have devised in order to maintain themselves against the mastery of the strong few. “The weakness of the gregarious animal,” writes Nietzsche, “gives rise to a morality which is precisely similar to that resulting from the weakness of the decadent man: they understand each other; they associate with each other.” Thus, gregarious association is in itself a sign of degeneracy. Being individually incapable of surviving, the “weak” and the “botched” resort to group life, make up in mutual care and support what they lack in individual strength, and manage to survive. Moreover, through social solidarity the weak flourish while the strong perish. “Sympathy,” writes Nietzsche, “thwarts on the whole, in general, the law of development, which is the law of selection. It preserves what is ripe for extinction, it re-
sists in favor of life's disinherited and condemned ones.”
He further asserts that this instinct thwarts those instincts which strive for the maintenance and elevation and the value of life; that it is a “principal tool for the advancement of decadence.”

This interpretation of the nature and significance of social behavior in evolution is not shared by the biological sciences. In reality, the importance of social behavior has never been foreign to evolutionary thought. Darwin himself had acknowledged its place, in the formulation of his theory of descent, but owing to his greater emphasis on the struggle for existence (understood in the individualistic sense), some evolutionists, with Huxley as their leader, had overlooked the fact.

Adam Smith and Herbert Spencer were the first to bring clearly into the forefront of social philosophy the importance of the social instincts. They perceived that struggle for individual existence could in no way insure the stability and progress of any living species, were it not accompanied, from the beginning, with other-regarding instincts. “From the dawn of life,” writes Spencer, “altruism has been no less essential than egoism.” Haeckel also makes a similar statement when he writes that “of all the relations that determine the existence of the species, the chief are those which bind the individual to other individuals of the same species. Moreover, the association of individuals is a great advantage in the struggle for existence.” Sutherland speaks of morality as “not a thing exclusively human,” and maintains that the moral, as well as the social characteristics of man are the out-

70 The Antichrist, p. 242. For a vivid example of Nietzsche's psychological and biological representation of sympathy, read paragraph 7, pp. 241-244.
71 The Descent of Man, pp. 100-103.
72 Principles of Ethics, p. 201.
73 The Wonders of Life, pp. 418-9.
growth of animal sociability, the distinction between the
two being of degree rather than of kind."74

That many animals live in social groups, and that gre­
gariousness is of primary importance in the preserva­
tion and progress of species, is brought into clear relief
also by Kropotkin. In his *Mutual Aid a Factor of Evolu­
tion*, he gives numerous instances of sociability and mu­
tual aid in the animal world, and shows to what a great
extent these have influenced evolution. Thomson and Ged­
des rate Kropotkin's services highly, and not only symp­
pathize with his general conclusions, but also attach a vi­
tal importance to other-regarding instincts.75 Henry
Drummond, in the *Ascent of Man*, makes a strong plea
for a second factor in evolution, which he terms "The
Struggle for the Life of Others." "Throughout ages be­
fore man," he writes, "association was zoogenic. It was
causing variation and determining survival. It was dif­
ferentiating animal life into kinds and was bringing to a
high perfection the kinds that were best equipped with so­
cial nature, with habits of mutual aid and with elemen­
tary forms of social organization."76 Professor Ellwood
makes the life process "essentially social from the start,"
and writes that "life involves from the first the interac­
tion of individual organisms." "This interaction, while
in the lowest phases purely physical," he adds, "gives
rise in its higher stages to that psychic interaction which
we call association or society."77 Thus, it is generally con­
ceded by representative thinkers that the function of other­
regarding instincts has not been to "thwart" the progress
of organic evolution, as Nietzsche wishes to maintain, but
rather to serve as an invaluable aid in the evolutionary

76 Principles of Sociology, p. 296.
77 Sociology in its Psychological Aspect, p. 125.
process. Nature must have found it necessary to create a certain solidarity among the members of the same species in their constant struggle against the many difficulties of the environment. And it is probably more through this organized solidarity than through any other one factor that species have been preserved. Sympathy, gregariousness, affinity of kind, or sociability, by whatever name we designate this natural tendency to group-life and solidarity, has been that bond of cohesion which has brought the living organisms together, has prevented diffusion and consequent weakening of the species, and has established it on a sounder basis by preventing the unnecessary waste of disintegrated activity. "While fully admitting," writes Kropotkin, "that force, swiftness, protective colors, cunningness, and endurance to hunger, which are mentioned by Darwin and Wallace, are so many qualities making the individual or the species the fittest under certain circumstances, we maintain that under any circumstances, sociability is the greatest advantage in the struggle for life."\textsuperscript{78}

It may be objected that Nietzsche is not concerned with the species as such, but with the select few of the species. We may argue, however, that the life of the species is fundamental for the select few, and that there can exist no select few without the existence of a select species. Furthermore, the progress of the select few is largely conditioned by the progress of the latter. Life and progress are fundamentally social. It is the group, the nation, and society in general that give birth and value to the unique and the exceptional. Apart from the first, the latter lose their means of preservation and progress. Moreover, we may assume that through association not only are native instincts, capacities, and behavior patterns constantly exercised, but also modified. The process of interaction creates

\textsuperscript{78}Mutual Aid a Factor in Evolution, p. 57.
a decided change in the organisms living in aggregation. Professor Giddings shows quite convincingly how through association native susceptibility to suggestion, capacity to imitation, sympathies and antipathies, power of discrimination and coordination are greatly improved; how these positive improvements result in the accumulation of superior knowledge; and how all these acquisitions are further developed through new associations and combinations.\(^79\)

He further tells how these modifications react on nerve and brain, and these in their turn react physiologically and morphologically upon the whole organism. Association affects variation also directly "through superior nutrition, and relative security, through reproduction and through natural and sexual selection."\(^80\) Again, association has undoubtedly affected environment, and in this way also influenced variation. It has often completely altered situations. It has had its share in the migration of birds and beasts, in the insuring of collective food supply for winter (as by ants and bees), in combined chasing and defense, etc., all of which have in their turn affected variation. In a word, association, by influencing environment, intermixture, natural and sexual selection, organic adaptation and other factors, has played a very significant part in the development of variations. One must take into consideration the influence of association on human intelligence. Language, spoken and written, can arise only in society; and it is language that stimulates and maintains the higher functions of intelligence. Curiosity, interest in new things, imitation, thinking, in fact all rational and ideational processes, all abstraction, invention and creation are due, to a large extent, to the influence of human association. Thus "sociability appears as the chief factor

\(^79\)Cf. his *Principles of Sociology*.

\(^80\)Ibid., p. 201.
of evolution, both directly, by securing the well being of the species while diminishing the waste of energy, and indirectly by favoring the growth of intelligence."

In considering sociability, we cannot neglect its rich influence on life in its pleasurable and recreational aspects. Not only is life in society more efficient from an economical point of view, but it is also happier, more joyful and more pleasant. How much this has reflexly contributed towards making life "more beautiful and worthy of living" Nietzsche has failed to see. Creatures that live in constant fear, and are always in search of safety and protection, cannot have the same advantages of station and progress that they have when their energies are free from negative activities of escape and defence, and are directed, instead, to the accomplishment of positive attainments. The stability of any species once established through mutual help and protection, there comes a higher appreciation of the joy of life. Nietzsche ignores these facts and asserts that "a species originates and a type becomes established in the long struggle with essentially constant unfavorable conditions." We have already seen the absurdity of this position. Here we may add that some biologists even deny that struggle against unfavorable conditions is a factor of evolution. Thus Korschinsky claims that "the origin of new forms can only occur under conditions favorable for them, and the more favorable such conditions are, that is, the less severe the struggle for existence is, the more energetic is their development. Under severe external conditions new forms do not arise, or if they appear they are extinguished," and he adds that struggle for existence "is indeed an inimical factor in evolution." Studies in biology, in genetic and social psychology, in
anthropology and sociology, have established the fact that it is impossible to make a sharp contrast between egoism and altruism. These must be regarded as mutually inter-dependent and supplementary. Both have existed in nature, and both have had their respective rôles to play in the evolutionary process. If egoism has served to preserve the individual, altruism has served to maintain the continuity of the species. Even their respective stages of advance have been simultaneous. "Neither can evolve without the evolution of the other," writes Spencer, "and the highest evolutions of the two must be reached simultaneously." Haeckel also emphasizes the same thought when he writes that "both these concurrent impulses are natural laws of equal importance and necessity for the preservation of the family and society; egoism secures the self-preservation of the individual, altruism that of the species which is made up of the chain of perishable individuals." Hobhouse rightly observes that "the conception of a primitive egoism on which sociability is somehow overlaid is without foundation either in biology or in psychology." Thus we must conclude that the struggle for existence is not a struggle for the maintenance of the individual alone, but also for that of the species. There is no ground, then, for making an antithesis between "struggle for self" and "struggle for others." Both are involved in the struggle of living organisms against the oppositions of nature. With Thomson we wish to defend the thesis "that progress depends on much more than a squabble around the platter, that the struggle for existence is far more than an internecine competition at the margin of subsistence; that it includes all the multitudinous ef-

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84 Principles of Ethics, p. 17.
85 The Riddle of the Universe, p. 351.
forts for self and others, between the poles of love and hunger.

Nietzsche falls into another gross error when he asserts that all altruism is only a mask to cover human egoism. "What is Christian altruism," he writes, "if it is not the mob egotism of the weak, which divines that if everybody looks after everybody else, every individual will be preserved for a longer period of time." All altruism, he avers, springs from the need of satisfying the self in some way or other, hence it is primarily selfish; and in its last analysis it is for the good of the agent practising it. Thus Nietzsche concludes that what men call altruism is only egoism in disguise.

The fact that altruism involves the satisfaction of the self does not make it "selfish" in the sense that Nietzsche and his school understand the term. Certainly all action is "selfish," if the implication of the term is that the self is involved in all our activities. But this cannot mean that the satisfaction or the pleasure of the self is made the end or goal of all conduct. On the contrary, human impulses and drives aim at objects, situations, or persons which evoke them to activity without necessarily having any conscious reference to the self from which they spring. The psychological situation which stimulates certain specific tendencies is the "target" upon which a corresponding response is "discharged" long before our selfhood is referred to. In other words, in but few situations, if any, do we consciously make ourselves the ends of our reactions. In strictness, neither so-called self-regarding nor other-regarding tendencies are, in their original nature, what the terms literally mean. The words are misnomers if we take them to mean that they consciously aim to satisfy either

87This position is well defended by Thorndike in his *The Original Nature of Man.* See also Dewey and Tufts, *Ethics,* pp. 377-384.
the "ego" or the "alter." As forms of behavior they are man's fundamental and primary ways of functioning evoked by specific situations and not by a conscious desire to gratify either the self or others. That the mask of altruism may be used for the purpose of covering selfish aims and ulterior motives is very true, but this cannot be an argument against altruism that is native and spontaneous. We are in complete accord with Professor Dewey when he states that "any given individual is naturally an erratic mixture of fierce insistence upon his own welfare and of profound susceptibility to the happiness of others—different individuals varying in the respective proportions of the two tendencies."

Besides these biological and psychological difficulties, we must also note that Nietzsche contradicts his own favorite maxim in denying it universal application. Once granting that the Will to Power is the very essence of life, by what right can one confine its expression to a few strong individuals or small groups, and ignore its legitimacy in the so-called superfluous majority, and that, especially, when they exercise it for the purpose of protecting themselves against the few aggressors? If Will to Power is the very essence of every living creature, the lack of which would be "unnatural" in "nature," by what logic can one justify its expression as natural among "select" individuals and "chosen" minorities, and condemn it in its collective expression by the masses? Once having admitted that "wherever I found a living thing, there found I a will to power, and even in the will of the servant, found I the will to be Master," is it not contradictory from Nietzsche's viewpoint to deny the "servant" his right to power if he can secure it by whatever means at his disposal? Thus, in strict logic, the refutation of Nietzsche's viewpoint to deny the "servant" his right to power if he can secure it by whatever means at his disposal? Thus, in strict logic, the refutation of Nietzsche's viewpoint to deny the "servant" his right to power if he can secure it by whatever means at his disposal?

88Dewey and Tufts, Ethics, p. 386.
schen individualism is furnished by its very assumptions. If the strong few have a desire for power, so have the weak majority. What should prevent them from making a collective resistance, nay, even a collective attack on the dangerous assailers, and aim at their subjection or even their annihilation? If the will to power is their very nature, how can they deny it for the sake of the few? Would this not be the denial of nature itself, which Nietzsche so ardently wishes to escape? This contradictory nature of Nietzsche's doctrine appears when he is compelled ultimately to introduce the principle of self-renunciation when he desires that the superfluous majority be willing to be sacrificed to the higher few.

Nietzsche has likewise misunderstood and greatly distorted the real nature of democracy. His contention that the ultimate aim of democracy, as in the case of gregarious association, is the submersion of individuality in favor of the triumphant rule of the mob, has no logical foundation. Democracy, in its ideal meaning, implies neither the extinction of individuality nor the exploitation of the higher types, but only their socialization and moralization. It means the intelligent co-operation of all, high and low, rich and poor, master and servant, with their maximum of capacities, to the cause of human advancement, based on such socio-economic principles as sympathy and mutual regard, integration and co-operation of abilities, co-adaptation of human energies and resources, for the upbuilding of one and all. Here once more the objection may be raised that Nietzsche is not concerned with humanity at large, but only with a class of supermen. Our answer is that there can be no supermen unless there is a higher humanity to give birth to, sustain, and appreciate the existence of supermen. In order that a genius or a superman may survive and grow to the fullness of his abilities, he must have
a social environment capable of appreciating his significance. No Homer, or Dante, or Shakespeare, or Napoleon could have survived in a desert island or in the midst of barbarians. Genius is inborn, without doubt, yet in a sense it is the product of the social and cultural environment in which it happens to be born. The environment contributes a great deal to its making, just as genius itself contributes a great deal to the making of its environment. It is clear then that the higher society in general rises in every aspect of culture, the higher the standard of genius and of superman will be. The raising of the level of society is not only far from being an obstacle to the development of the unique and the exceptional, but is even its necessary condition. Democracy, rightly defined, sanctions the necessity of leadership, and avails itself of its invaluable contributions to mankind. In its ideal interpretation, democracy is not so much the rule of the people as it is the rule and leadership of high minded men for the people. Its fundamental distinction from Nietzschean aristocracy consists not in the alleged fact that it has no leaders, but rather in the fact that while in the aristocracy of Nietzsche the rulers regard the people as mere tools for their lordly existence, in democracy the leaders aim at the elevation of all; and in doing so they by no means sacrifice their own superiority. Rightly does Professor Ross point out that "the healthy democratic spirit does not deny that there are important worth differences among people, nor does it frown upon the passion for self-individualization. Its point of insistence is that the worth degrees recognized by society ought to relate primarily to intellect, character and achievement, rather than to apparel and equipage."

By teaching the unity of individual and social inter-

ests, and by emphasizing their parallel development, democracy in no way obstructs the course of progress. On the contrary, it opens before men a vaster field of activity and a maximum realization of possibilities, through division of labor, co-operation, concentration of energy, and utilization of genius. If competition is needed for development, democracy sanctions and supplies it; if conflicts and conquests are conditions of growth, there are innumerable hidden forces in nature to be conquered, and their conquest will be nobler and more advantageous to man than the exploitation of other human beings. No positive value is gained in perpetuating a forced "distance between man and man." Even sympathy for the poor, the weak, and the afflicted, which is so strongly condemned by Nietzsche as detrimental to the best interests of healthy life, can be demonstrated to be of more value than is generally admitted. Those who read in sympathy both symptoms and factors of degeneration "wholly ignore," as Professor Dewey puts it, "the reflex effect of interest in those who are ill and defective in strengthening social solidarity—in promoting those ties and reciprocal interests which are as much the prerequisites of strong individual character as they are of a strong social group, and they fail to take into consideration the stimulus to foresight, to scientific discovery and practical invention which has proceeded from interest in the helpless, the weak, the sick, the disabled, blind, deaf and insane. Taking the most coldly scientific view, the gains in these two respects have, through the growth of social pity, of care for the unfortunate, been purchased more cheaply than we can imagine their being bought in any other way."

We cannot fail to see at this point that Nietzsche's ideal of aristocracy can only be the impossible dream of a soul

90Dewey and Tufts, Ethics, p. 372.
yearning for glory and grandeur. There can exist no form of society without some basic elements of justice pervading it and these are lacking in his social philosophy. Sociability presupposes justice in some form or other. "If every individual were constantly abusing his personal advantages without the others interfering in favor of the wronged, no society would be possible." The aristocratic order which Nietzsche hopes to realize without referring to any element of justice whatsoever, can, therefore, only remain an egoist's delusion. To create a society of castes, with a sharply defined "cleft" between them; to break all the common ties that bind them together, attaching all significance to a chosen few and condemning the vast majority of men as worthless automatons, deprived of all initiative and will power; to think of using them as mere tools and instruments for the elite, is absurd and impossible as a theory of social organization. Even Machiavelli's state shows more healthy elements. A society such as Nietzsche advocates can be a reality only when humanity as a whole is reduced to a senseless and will-less mass of beings, so as to be blindly played upon by every caprice of an approaching master. The cure for the evils of democracy is not to be found in the re-establishment of a barbarian aristocracy, but in further conquests upon the untrodden paths of democracy.\(^92\)

\(^91\)Kropotkin, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

\(^92\)In this connection, we wish to quote from Dr. A. R. Wallace's interesting volume entitled *Social Environment and Moral Progress* (pp. 190-1) to show that even a leading representative of evolutionary thought ascribes the evils of the present social order not to moral and political democracy but to the lack of it, asserting that the glaring inequalities created by aristocracy of capital and of rank are the root causes of decadence. He writes: "If we review with care the long train of social evils which have grown up during the nineteenth century, we shall find that every one of them however diverse in their nature and results, is due to the same general cause, which may be defined or stated in a variety of different ways.

"(1) They are due, broadly and generally, to our living under a system of *competition* for the means of existence, the remedy for which is equally universal cooperation.

"(2) It may also be defined as *economic antagonism*, as of enemies, the
And what is the moral ideal that Nietzsche, after attempting to destroy all the values hitherto regarded as sacred, sets before the super-race which he wishes to create? What does his "Transvaluation of all Values" signify? "Will to Power" is Nietzsche's answer to these questions. He teaches that the superman attains the highest degree of power and enjoys the fullest satisfaction of existence by eternally affirming the instincts of life, by eternally reenforcing all that most passionately aspires for acquisition, dominion and conquest. It makes no difference to Nietzsche how such a state of affairs is brought about. He is more than willing to go beyond all good and evil, beyond all values of right and wrong, destroying all gods and idols, and even enslaving what is commonly called modern culture, the state and civilization.

What makes this ideal more objectionable is the fact that Nietzsche generally identifies "power" with physical strength and exuberance. We may recall his statement that "our most sacred convictions, those which are permanent in us concerning the highest values, are judgments emanating from our muscles." Thus it is not so much spiritual, ethical or intellectual power that he points to as the ideal, as power that emanates from the muscles!

But power as the highest virtue and the ultimate index of life, as the standard of conduct, and the measure of all that we call good and evil, cannot make a strong ap-

remedy being a system of economic brotherhood, as of a great family or of friends.

"(3) Our system is also one of monopoly by a few of all the means of existence: the land without access to which no life is possible; and capital or the results of stored up labor, which is now in the possession of a limited number of capitalists and therefore is also a monopoly. The remedy is a freedom of access to land and capital for all.

"(4) Also it may be defined as social injustice, inasmuch as the few in each generation are allowed to inherit the stored up wealth of all preceding generations, while the many inherit nothing. The remedy is to adopt the principle of equality of opportunity for all, or the universal inheritance by the State in trust for the community."

peal to a "clean conscience." Such an ideal is very nar-
row and one-sided; when carried into practice, extremely
dangerous. In making itself the index of all values it
tyrranizes over them and subordinates them in impor-
tance to itself. In the light of this standard of evaluation
such values as truth, justice, goodness, beauty of soul and
mind, love and charity lose their significance. The fallacy
of the doctrine lies primarily in the fact that it mistakes
one of the many values of life for the end of life, and com-
mits the error of subordinating every worth, to power or
mere physical force, which sounds almost brutal when
Nietzsche depicts it. We are very far from minimizing
the importance of efficiency and power, as valuable fac-
tors in the realization of human values; but when they are
taken for the highest ideals of life, we fail to acquiesce.
Power is rather a means which individual and society
seek for, and depend upon, in their creative efforts towards
self-realization in the Aristotelian sense of the word. And
when we speak of human progress, it is not progress in
health or wealth or power, taken singly and to the ex-
clusion of others, but rather, the progress of intelligence,
of morals, of art and culture in general; in a word, the
progress of mankind in all its inner tendencies and capa-
cities. No moral ideal can be complete which, ignoring the
manifold character of human nature, fails to recognize
the plurality of values which must be realized if life is
to be something of real worth. In idealizing power as the
index and ultimate standard of life, other values have lost
much of their significance, because they have been placed
in a false perspective.

V. SOME POSITIVE ASPECTS OF NIETZSCHE'S
"MORALS OF THE MASTERS"

It must, however, be admitted that Nietzsche's writ-
ings exhibit also a constructive aim and an undercurrent
of voluntaristic idealism which is unmistakably optimistic. One who has the courage of asserting himself in the face of a world of oppositions and of insisting on his mission as a “creator of values” must certainly have possessed the spirit of a hero which we must admire, and the fervor of a religious nature which must claim our respect. Such an one was Nietzsche. His genius has given to the world, or insisted upon, values of vital importance. And the tragic martyrdom of his fruitful mind for the ideals which he so passionately worshipped is itself an example of high moral value. In fact “the value of Nietzsche,” as Professor Chatterton-Hill insists, “is in Nietzsche’s personality,” and in the firm attitude with which he put into life his ethical and social concepts. These he attempted to make living issues for the philosophy of the age.

In whatever manner the philosophy of the superman be understood and judged, one fact is certain, namely, that it aims at a fuller, richer and healthier life. Here we may note that from the view point of life, the theory of the superman is only an instrument, a device for the fullest realization of life. The superman is one who affirms life and wills to make it richer and fuller in content, more beautiful and exuberant in its expressions. The superman is one who loves life and rejoices in it, who justifies it by constantly striving towards the actualization of all the possibilities that it promises to man. Through such an affirmation of life, Nietzsche wishes to destroy the influence of so-called decadent thought. He teaches that life is not to be dreaded as something tragic, miserable and evil; but rather to be affirmed with full optimism, for it is only by affirming it that it can be made better.

Nietzsche’s ideal of life was only a more pronounced restatement of that of the ancient Greeks; it was a thor-

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94 The Philosophy of Nietzsche, p. 280.
oughly Dionysian conception of life, a life that was not a mere concept or illusion, but was actually lived and experienced by the people of Hellas, with fulness of vigor and vitality, exuberant with optimism, and joyous with wisdom. The typical Athenian did not make a sharp opposition between the mental and the physical, between soul and body, between good and evil, but aimed to live a life of balance. Dionysus and Apollo were not sharply opposed to each other. This whole-minded view of life was strongly adhered to by all Greek institutions. It was reflected in Greek literature, expressed in Greek religion, and sanctioned by the state. It was comprehensive and wholesome. Nietzsche's admiration and sympathy for whatever was Greek had no bounds. In his view the Greeks were the only race that had found the secret of making the best of life by affirming it even in the face of the most tragic circumstances. In advocating the Greek view of life, and in marshalling his strong affirmations of "life in power" against all forms of pessimism and nihilism in philosophy, religion, ethics and art, Nietzsche has done a real service to the cause of cultural progress. He has stirred and stimulated the age with his storming prose, and has insisted upon activity, achievement and creativeness. He has shown to mankind, with his over-flowing optimism and with all the magic of his pen, that "a thousand paths there are which have never yet been walked, a thousand healths and hidden islands of life," and he has arduously taught us to "remain faithful to the earth."

The considerations upon which Nietzsche aimed to build his idealization of life were neither rationalistic nor metaphysical in nature; they were, what we should term today, chiefly pragmatic. Nietzsche did not seek to justify his philosophy of life on other than practical grounds. He believed that the more one affirmed the "will to live,"
the more certain would he be of his future. An optimistic affirmation of the "will to live," coupled with a "will to believe" in the vast possibilities of existence are not theoretical values alone, he taught, but possess all the magical intoxication, power and beauty to inspire men to spontaneity and creativeness. Nietzsche insisted that human life, earthly life, should be idealized and affirmed; for this is the inheritance of which we are most certain.

The spirit of Nietzsche's philosophy is voluntaristic. Reality reduced to a "Will to Power," being a metaphysical assumption, may not have the sanction of strict science, yet its pragmatic value is unmistakable. This assumption is in accord with the spirit of the developmental conception of life as given to the world by Darwin and in Bergson's doctrine of "creative evolution." A similar note permeates also the philosophies of Wundt and of Eucken. Conation, activity, will is the very nature of life; it expresses itself strenuously, grows, pulsates with warmth, glows and radiates with energy, because it is energy and fullness and power. "Upwards it striveth to build itself with pillars and stairs, life itself; into far distances it longeth to gaze and outwards after blessed beauties—therefore it needeth height."95 Thus life, as Nietzsche understands it, is not content with dead levels and commonplaces; it seeks after heights and glories. Being originally creative, it justifies itself in endless creations. If life is a "will to power," it is also will to beauty, will to plenitude, exuberance and health. Life includes impulses of growth, acquisition, aggression, and conquest. Wherever there is life, there is also will and activity. This same will is operative also in man. "A thing invulnerable, unburiable is within me," writes Nietzsche, "a thing that blasteth rocks, it is called my will.96

95Thus Spake Zarathustra, p. 139.
96Ibid., p. 157.
Though containing certain fatalistic tendencies, Nietzsche's philosophy is nevertheless undeniably idealistic in character and in tone. One who has devoted his whole career to the "transvaluation of values" and has had the unbounded ambition of creating new ideals is certainly an idealist of an extreme type whether he himself believes it or not. His ideals may not be ours, yet the underlying spirit is the same. In his vision of the superman, Nietzsche was dreaming of, and striving for the realization of a higher humanity. He was waiting and working patiently for the coming of a "great noon." His idealism was so far-reaching that nothing could satisfy his imagination short of the complete transformation of all things around him. "And if it be mine Alpha and Omega," writes Nietzsche, "that all that is heavy should become light, all that is body become a dancer, all that is a spirit become a bird, and verily that is mine A and mine O!" Such an idealism is the rich revelation of a creative personality which prophecies, sees dreams, and strives, with all the passion of his being, toward their realization.

We may also note that Nietzsche's philosophy is neither materialistic nor spiritualistic; it espouses neither mechanism nor teleology. In matters of metaphysics Nietzsche should perhaps be called an agnostic. Even his voluntarism must be taken in a pragmatic rather than a metaphysical sense. If he asserts that reality is in its ultimate nature a "will to power," his purpose is not to express a metaphysical truth so much as it is to propose a pragmatic hypothesis, a working principle for life. He seeks expediency and fruitful experiences. By ascribing universality to the principle of the "will to power" he wishes more fully to emphasize that man must grow, that he must in some way surpass his past. He does not propose fixed and immuta-

\[97\text{Ibid.}, \text{p. 337.}\]
ble standards or ideals. Ideals will grow with man, by man, for man. All that Nietzsche wishes to establish is that life is a constant surpassing, a constant "creation" as Bergson would have it, an everlasting ascent, and that man also, as one who partakes of the nature of this cosmic principle, must bring his best efforts to the highest realization of life and its values.

Nietzsche ranks high among the humanists of the age. In his works we find the exaltation of individuality, an individuality which is neither borrowed nor copied from others. Nietzsche wishes to see real men, higher men, supermen around him. He writes that "in man creature and creator are united. In man there is not only matter, shred, excess, clay, mire, folly, chaos, but there is also the creator, the sculptor, the hardness of the hammer, the divinity of the spectator and the seventh day." The philosophy of the superman is the affirmation of all that is intensely personal and unique in man. The superman insists with the sophists that man is the measure of all things. He insists that all values whether philosophical, religious, moral, or social find their source in the creative nature of the human mind, that they are only provisional means or instruments for better existence and more power.

It has already been pointed out that for Nietzsche truth-in-itself does not exist. Whatever is called true (and good and beautiful) by man has served a purpose, has carried with it a survival value. Thus, by making truth an instrument of life and power, Nietzsche anticipates modern pragmatism. Nay, he even goes farther when he writes that "the falseness of an opinion is not for us an objection to it, the question is how far an opinion is life-furthering, life-preserving, species-preserving, perhaps species-rearing." Again, "good and evil, rich and poor, high
and low, and all the names of values, they shall be weapons and clashing signs that life always hath to surpass again."\(^{100}\) How far this thorough-going pragmatism can be justified from a philosophical view-point is debatable. We may venture to say, however, that such a pragmatic attitude toward truth is, from the standpoint of practical utility, more satisfactory than an absolute one, in that it escapes many metaphysical complications from which the latter cannot free itself. And it also gives a developmental, dynamic perspective to the problem. Stripped from its sophistications and its individualistic interpretations of truth, Nietzsche's position is quite modern and convincing. In making truth relative and assigning to it only an instrumental rôle, Nietzsche has attempted to destroy the tyranny of so-called "absolute truths" and "categorical imperatives." Here, also, in the problem of truth, as in the problem of humanism, it is Nietzsche's extreme individualism that we must guard against. The fallacy of his position consists mainly in the fact that he forgets the "universal" in man, a point which Socrates insisted upon as against the sophists.

As a faithful apostle of humanism, Nietzsche is also a great believer in courage and heroism. His superman believes that life is a struggle, that it is full of misfortunes and reverses. Yet he does not shrink from them, but regards them as the very conditions that give life its meaning. In this matter Nietzsche is a thorough-going Hegelian, in that he makes opposition a necessary factor in the fullest development of life. He insists that there be obstacles, hardships, tragic circumstances and adversities of every kind in order that life may have something to oppose and conquer. The superman takes it for granted that there can be no conquests where there are no obstacles

\(^{100}\) *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, p. 139.
to overcome; that suffering is not as inimical to life as is generally maintained. On the contrary, it is a genuine stimulant which invigorates the life of the organism and the race. It is in the school of suffering that character and personality are tempered. The superman, the hero, the noble, who partake of the Dionysian spirit and have something Olympian in their nature, face the world with majestic courage, and assert their “will to live” even in the face of calamities. They believe that “the secret of a joyful life is to live dangerously”; hence they take an active part, a warrior’s part in life. We cannot, however, share Nietzsche’s extreme admiration for the Heraclitean principle of conflict and opposition. We may well appreciate that a moderate amount of opposition may be stimulating in the life of the individual as well as of the race; but we cannot forget that opposition becomes destructive as soon as it transcends the limits of moderation.

It thus appears that the more positive aspects of Nietzsche’s philosophy are not, in strictness, scientific or philosophical contributions. Of these, Nietzsche had few to offer. Some critics refuse to call him a philosopher. Whether this be justifiable or not, it is true that Nietzsche’s real merit is to be sought not so much in his ethics as in his art, not so much in his philosophy as in his poetry. To the problem of reality, Nietzsche has added nothing new. The problem of knowledge was, from his viewpoint, altogether beneath the dignity of philosophy. His criticisms and evaluations of religion and morals, although full of rich material, stimulating suggestions, and inspiring thoughts, have in reality no exact contributions to offer. The real merit of Nietzsche, then, must be sought elsewhere, namely, in the field of art, literature and criticism. In this conviction we are confirmed by the judgment of
such scholars as Riehl and Külpe. Unless he is treated primarily as an artist, Nietzsche will always remain a misleading genius. “However much we may wish,” writes Külpe, “that Nietzsche should be understood and enjoyed in the field in which he has excelled, nevertheless, it is true that his influence has not taken those quiet paths where such admiration and understanding would be harmless. His influence tends always to lead astray the immature crowds of his followers, exulting in his phrases and catchwords, which they only half understand. It seems as if it was not for the wise that he wrote his mysterious parables, his pensive poetry, his glittering paradoxes, but for the credulous fools who revel in his speeches and absurd attempts to realize his dream of the superman.”

But we are not pessimistic. We believe with Külpe that Nietzsche’s own time will come, if it is not already here, “when we shall revere him as a poet, whose original pictures and comparisons, whose enchanting pathos and vital warmth of expression, whose complete mastery over a certain music of language will give him a place of honor upon the German Parnassus. Then we shall welcome his criticisms just so far as they point to actual evils and in his fantasies we hear the noble song of the rights and the value of personality. Then we shall recognize in his judg-

101 Writes the latter: “Nietzsche’s greatest and most enduring fame is as an artist and as a highly gifted musical poet. Long after his unjust warfare against Christianity, his contradictory theories which do violence to facts, his clumsy constructions and exaggerations, have been forgotten, he will be remembered as one of the greatest German stylists, as a poet of powerful diction, as a master of diction, as a master of language and musical declamation in words; and as such we shall admire him and enjoy him. ....His aphorisms, sure of aim and rich in meaning, stride in pomp and splendour with effective and surpassing turns. And the truth which lives in all poetry thrills us here also. But art solves the problems of reality as little as it does the problems of science. The saga of the Superman, of the eternally recurring cycle of events, of the morals of the slaves and the morals of the masters have power to stir us and thrill us when we place ourselves under the spell of his art. But for a revaluation of all values something more is necessary than prophetic words and personal moods.” The Philosophy of the Present in Germany, pp. 128-130.

102 The Philosophy of the Present in Germany, pp. 130-1.
ments and descriptions the direct expression of an original and significant sensibility, a proud ideal of heroic thought and noble independence, and a stern protest against a barren levelling process and an inward lack of freedom. But in view of the wild eruptions of his unbri­dled spirit, the cry will be wrung from us, as in Hamlet, ‘What a noble mind is here overthrown.’”\(^{103}\)

This viewpoint, we believe, is the only one from which Nietzsche can, to use his own words, “be justified and redeemed.” It is only by accepting such a standpoint of evaluation that we shall be able to forget all the objectionable issues connected with his philosophy in general and his doctrine of the superman in particular. Thus, not only shall we more fully admire the positive and constructive issues of his teachings, as isolated from those that are destructive, but his personality, too, will have a purer and deeper charm. We shall view him as one of the most passionate lovers of life, a poet of high qualities, (though lacking in balance and proportion, and much given to exaggeration), whose prophetic intuitions and idealistic insights, clothed as they are in virile and picturesque expressions of language, will always remain for us sources of inspiration and delight.

\(^{103}\)ibid. pp. 130-1.

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