A Brief Introduction for Psychotherapists to the Genius of Nietzsche

Richard D. Chessick

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This book is dedicated to all my students, and to university students everywhere—our hope for the future.

Philosophy's question . . . is the question as to what we ourselves are.

. . . Michel Foucault

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PROLOGUE

The purpose of this book is to introduce intelligent general readers, college students, graduate students in psychology and other mental health disciplines, and especially residents in psychiatry, to the dazzling genius of Nietzsche. This genius is so haunting and seminal that it has profoundly affected the fields of literature, philosophy, psychology, religion, history, and the arts. Yet in our era there is a curious neglect of our debt to Nietzsche. Most typically, as in publications on philosophical psychology and grammatical analysis in philosophy, and on psychodynamics and psychoanalysis in psychology and psychiatry, ideas first put forth by Nietzsche are re-presented in many instances without citation from Nietzsche's original writings or even mention of Nietzsche at all.

Part of this is the fault of Nietzsche himself. His rhetorical and declaratory style is elusive at first glance, inimical to the hasty modern reader, and often deliberately offensive—which contributes to our "forgetting" of his contributions. Also, his writings are those of a dazzling genius rather than a "philosophical laborer," replete with sudden insights and intuitions—without the usual accompanying scholarly arguments and appeals to previous publications that are the mark of "ordinary science."

Although it is unfair that Nietzsche is not given the credit for his original ideas, this is hardly a justification to introduce him to a wide audience of thoughtful people. Even the fact that he was badly misunderstood and his work was crudely distorted by his evil sister to sound like Nazi propaganda does not justify a further monograph, since the late Walter Kaufmann has done enormous service to reverse this trend in recent years, along with a number of other scholars. What *does* justify this study of Nietzsche by a psychiatrist and philosopher, is that of all philosophers in this age of science, Nietzsche—once studied—is the hardest to shake off. He magnificently accomplished what he set out to do—become a Socrates who makes music. Many thinkers in every discipline have discovered and reported that acquaintance with Nietzsche's work profoundly affected their thought and communicative style, enhanced their appreciation of the arts and the natural world, and often led to a "revaluation of values" that, as Nietzsche insisted, each individual must do for himself.

Nietzsche is disturbing and exciting; he is, as the Danish writer Brandes—the first critic who

appreciated him—said, "dynamite." Once encountered, he runs ever after through one's mental life like the music of Wagner haunts one's artistic sensibilities. As Nietzsche himself recognized about the true genius of *Tristan* and the *Ring* operatic cycle, who can ever shake off this music once they have been immersed in it?

This is not all. The sparks of Nietzsche's genius strike into the origins of every modern philosophical movement; about each new idea it may be said he suggested it first and he also was its first critic. One cannot philosophize today without Nietzsche looking over his shoulder, if one wishes to be honest. The degeneration of philosophy in our time into a sterile academic exercise in logical symbols was first predicted and then successfully attacked by Nietzsche; "Philosophy reduced to 'theory of knowledge', in fact no more than a timid epochism and doctrine of abstinence—a philosophy that never gets beyond the threshold and takes pains to *deny* itself the right to enter—that is philosophy in its last throes, an end, an agony, something inspiring pity" (*Beyond Good and Evil* [Nietzsche, 1968a] p. 313). Nietzsche, "the last great metaphysician of the west," as Heidegger named him, also calls us to a renewal of philosophy and gives us the tools to examine every claim to "truth." So many people have needlessly suffered and died for such "truth!"

In a previous book (Chessick 1980) I attempted to interest intellectuals, philosophers, psychologists, and psychiatrists in a return to the study of Freud. How much more difficult a task to interest them in Nietzsche, who Freud called, "next to Shakespeare the greatest psychologist." How strange it is that mental health professionals, especially psychologists and psychiatrists, even those who spend a considerable amount of their professional time doing psychotherapy, have only a passing direct acquaintance with Freud's writing and practically none at all with either that of Nietzsche or Goethe or even with Shakespeare? Is this not the supreme *hubris* of the age of science? It ignores those who use a different method; it does not just devalue them, it ignores them entirely, robbing itself of priceless insights, sparks struck from intuitive geniuses who, as Nietzsche put it in the first sentence of *The Birth of Tragedy*, "perceive not merely by logical inference, but with the immediate certainty of vision." And who better than Nietzsche, the philologist and expert on classical Greece, can warn us of the consequences of *hubris*, as the clouds of a new dark age descend upon us?

In this monograph I hope to introduce you to the spirit of Nietzsche and to stimulate you to study

him yourself; remember that he called himself "a teacher of slow reading." I acknowledge my debt to the many authors in the bibliography and have cited them where necessary, but on the whole I have avoided long quotations and scholarly nit-picking in the interest of readability—for there is already an exceptional amount of nonsense written about Nietzsche.

The beginning reader may wish to turn first to the *Epilogue* of the present book where I summarize and dramatize Nietzsche's position, and to one of my previous books, *Great Ideas in Psychotherapy* (Chessick 1977) for a preliminary discussion.

If the reader emerges from the present book with a sense of what it is to have philosophized to music, with a sense of what Nietzsche called *Rausch* tempered by serious thought, this book will have achieved its aim.

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Evanston, Illinois, June 2, 1983.

> Reading Nietzsche is not merely an exposure to new ideas. His writings constitute an intrusion deliberately designed to challenge the reader's values and sense of self . . . . Nietzsche as an author has done everything possible to make it difficult for his readers to master the disturbing effects of his writings in a gradual manner. Instead, he creates a sense of urgency which threatens the readers' internal psychological balance and cohesion. If this balance is to be restored, Nietzsche must be "understood"; if his philosophy is beyond reach, at least his personal life must become meaningful to the reader. This "understanding of his personality" will bring author and reader closer together and bridge the gap created by the intrusion of philosophical position.
>
> . . . G. Moriatis
> (1979 pp. 314-315)

ACT I:

OVERVIEW

SCENE 1: WHO WAS NIETZSCHE?

Nietzsche was the great questioner. He was an experimenter with the art of calling into question all our cherished assumptions and presuppositions. He immersed himself in philosophical problems and he tried to examine the limits of the sayable and thinkable. Heidegger (1979) claims,

> The confrontation with Nietzsche has not yet begun nor have the prerequisites for it been established. For a long time Nietzsche has been either celebrated and imitated or reviled and exploited. Nietzsche's thought and speech are still too contemporary for us. He and we have not yet been sufficiently separated in history; we lack the distance necessary for a sound appreciation of the thinker's strength (p. 4).

Heidegger goes on to say: "Confrontation is genuine criticism" and this is the supreme way—the only way—to the true estimation of a thinker. In this confrontation, undertake to reflect on his thinking and to trace it in its effective force, not in its weaknesses, as Heidegger suggests, "in order that through the confrontation we ourselves may become free for the supreme exertion of thinking."

Nietzsche the man presents himself as a person who wears many masks. Nietzsche's assumption of masks is no accident; in the Greek tragedies the actors deliberately always wore masks. One must contend with the Nietzsche who is ambivalent toward Socrates and keeps changing his mind about him, Nietzsche the syphilitic or possible syphilitic, Nietzsche the educator, Nietzsche the great prose writer, Nietzsche the poet, Nietzsche the metaphysician, Nietzsche the psychologist, Nietzsche the helpless tool of his Nazi sister, Nietzsche the scientist and positivist, Nietzsche the humanist and drama critic, Nietzsche the philologist, Nietzsche the European citizen, Nietzsche the philosopher who tried to reorient philosophy, Nietzsche the musician, and Nietzsche the shrill megalomaniac. *All* of these are masks that one will encounter as one studies and reads Nietzsche; I urge the reader to try a sympathetic approach and to recognize that his ultimate insanity was a great loss and a tragedy to the intellectual history of the world.

Thomas Mann's famous novel *Doctor Faustus* is modeled on Nietzsche's life. In it, Nietzsche's view of philosophy is expressed as follows: Philosophy surveys the sciences, it combines them intellectually, it orders and refines the issues of all fields of research into a universal picture, it makes an overriding decisive synthesis attempting to comprehend the meaning of life, and it offers a scrutinizing determination of man's place in the cosmos.

Nietzsche's motto might be taken from Aeschylus' *Agamemmon*: separate from others I think my own thoughts. Nietzsche has been called *άίνίγμα δυόλυτον*—an enigma that is hard to solve. Nietzsche himself compares the life of an academic scholar who is adjusted to society with the life of a lonely ignored outsider. He is the embodiment of Dostoevsky's underground man and he lived out a self-imposed existentialist alienation.

Among the masks of Nietzsche is also Nietzsche the clown, the clown who experiments with various belief systems. He says, "People do not know where my center is" (Morgan 1965). At the other extreme there is the Nietzsche who is starved for human—especially female—love, and he defends his shrill style by saying, "How can a starving animal attack its prey gracefully?" He was constantly called "eccentric," "pathological," and "psychiatric," and yet he was convinced that he was the greatest German writer. Some argue that the clown is a final mask—a mask of self-control hiding a profoundly serious philosophy, a form of overcoming for a philosopher.

The essential point is that Nietzsche thought *all* truths are adaptive conventions. There is no such, thing as absolute truth but all so-called truths that human beings develop in their philosophies and their sciences are nothing but inventions, inventions made for the purpose of adaptation. Thus the clown presents a parody of world history, an idiocy, a mockery parallel to Aristophanes' comedy *The Clouds*, where he cruelly mocks the so-called transcendental heights of the philosopher. Remember that Nietzsche was by profession a philologist, and so deeply immersed in Greek classical literature.

Keeping in mind these masks or foregrounds will make it easier to read Nietzsche. Remember that many of his statements are meant to be jokes on the reader and deliberately meant to stir him up; they don't necessarily represent what he means, and often are contradicted by other of his statements. These show his denial of the absolute unity of the personality and of the eternal or transcendental "soul" or "I."

Nietzsche did not believe that anybody was ultimately any one thing. This is where Jaspers (1954) found his famous notion that man is always more than we can know.

Nietzsche's *perspectivism* means there is a fundamental logical paradox in Nietzsche's thought, because if all thought is only an instrument to adaptation and power then also Nietzsche's thought is only an instrument to adaptation and power and is similarly nothing but a mythology. It is in such paradoxes, antinomies, and ironies that Nietzsche abounds; some of it is lost in translation from the German. Nietzsche is considered one of the great German prose writers; perhaps the greatest since Goethe. But Nietzsche could not bear to be caricatured or misunderstood, so he wrote deliberately to make fools out of unworthy readers; he tries to get even with you for misunderstanding him before you even read him.

Nietzsche started out his academic career by an attack on professional philologists. He was appalled by their indifference to the true and urgent problems of life. He claimed, "No entirely radical truth is possible in a university" (Stern 1979). There is a curious back and forth movement in Nietzsche between the intimately personal and the significantly philosophical which makes him impossible to classify. Thinking for Nietzsche is a series of experiments which he himself lived. He was a man of tremendous intellectual energy; he keeps starting over; he experienced the world as fragmented and in his writing he conveys it to us as fragmented. He tried to unmask all metaphysical systems, all descriptions of being and "transcendence," as myths.

He argued there is no purpose and no progress in Hegel's sense, to history, *except to provide occasions for the emergence of individual great men*. Here we are back with one of his favorites, the Greek poet Pindar, who stated that the goal of history is the improvement of man, but "improvement" in the sense of producing supermen, aristocratic men, the glory of the species.

Nietzsche described himself as "searching into myself and other men." In this sense he displays the spirit of Socrates in his writings. Indeed, much of his writing is talking to himself; writing for him as he jotted notes on his walks was a compulsion, a form of self-overcoming of his innumerable physical ailments.

He has been misinterpreted, misunderstood, and attacked by innumerable authors. For instance, a

typical *ad hominem* interpretation of Nietzsche is given by Windelband *(1958)*, in one of the most popular histories of philosophy written around the turn of this century. Windelband said flatly that Nietzsche's Dionysus is power and his Apollo is knowing. For Nietzsche, claimed Windelband, the only two enjoyments were power and knowing. He insisted Nietzsche could never participate in sensual enjoyment; indeed, his lack of sensual enjoyment and his lack of participation with women are reasons many have argued that it seems very questionable he could have contracted syphilis. Windelband *(1958)* concluded,

> His is a case of a nervous professor who would fain be a wild tyrant, and who is tossed back and forth between the quiet enjoyment of the goods of the highest culture on the one hand, and that mysterious burning demand for a life of passion on the other (p. 677).

This is a typical example of how Nietzsche was and still is mocked and scorned by academic philosophers.

Others stress the artistic expression of a nature which is rent and torn. Nietzsche was a philosophic poet; yet he was a gentle professor, a regular simple man. He had unfrenzied habits; he was not a wild man, and even when he suffered his ultimate mental collapse in 1888 it manifested itself when he threw himself over a horse which was being beaten by a cruel coachman. He is taken seriously today largely because above all his contemporaries he is the philosopher who anticipated the world wars and the collapse and destruction of the value systems of the past in the twentieth century.

A British analytic philosopher of great repute, C. D. Broad, described Nietzsche simply as a "crackpot" or a mad philosopher, and it is very instructive to compare Nietzsche's philosophizing with that of C. D. Broad. Broad's basic approach is described by R. Brown in the *Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Edwards 1967) as follows:

> Broad had no "philosophy" in the sense of a deeply original way of interpreting and dealing with the issues of his field. He was a scientist manqué who took up philosophical problems much as he found them, leaving them classified and more manageable but not transformed. His impressive ability to understand and recast the most difficult arguments, the elegance of his writing, and his unrivaled thoroughness and lucidity, were placed at the service of other people's questions rather than his own (Vol. 1, p. 399).

One may easily see how a philosopher who approaches philosophy that way would consider Nietzsche a crackpot. This is again the debate between edifying philosophers and systematic

philosophers (Rorty 1979) who often not only do not understand each other, but do not read each other, and do not respect each other. Rorty has identified a *very* important contemporary issue in philosophy.

Nietzsche objected to *all* philosophizing up to his time. He thought philosophy was not objective but rather each philosopher was imposing a "world structure" on the world that was nothing but a projection of the tacit moral prejudices of the philosopher. Because he used a poetic vocabulary and a difficult style he was taken up by many causes. Actually he made important philosophical and psychological advances buried in all this flamboyance. One encounters a startling mental powerhouse under Nietzsche's writing, just as he (1968a) in turn said of Socrates,

> Anyone who, through the Platonic writings, has experienced even a breath of the divine naiveté and sureness of the Socratic way of life, will also feel how the enormous driving-wheel of logical Socratism is in motion, as it were, behind Socrates, and that it must be viewed through Socrates as through a shadow (pp. 88-89).

It is important to view his attack on morals not as the work of a moral philosopher at all, but as a special case of his attack on both worlds of the so-called two-world philosophies. For Nietzsche *both* worlds are nothing but inventions; even the world of our everyday experience is constructed by us not in terms of the truth or in terms of reality, but simply as a way of achieving the maximum of power. We experience reality in whatever way is the most useful to help us to adapt to and control nature and other people around us.

Nietzsche's focus was not on morality at all, although he is constantly ranting and raving about the subject, but rather on the man who achieves self-perfection. Under this category at various times he puts the saint, the artist, and the philosopher. The point of the self-perfected man is that such a man has no thought of tomorrow and wants *the eternal recurrence of the present moment*. This is one of Nietzsche's most important philosophical tenets. The self-perfected man, the man who overcomes himself, has what Nietzsche called *amor fati*. Such a person embraces everything in his life—good and bad—with a feeling of exaltation and power rather than either with Schopenhauer's pessimism, or waiting for a reward in heaven—the other of the two worlds man has invented.

The Nietzsche legend began in 1889 with his insanity, and it was basically fashioned by his demonic sister. When Nietzsche became insane he was taken care of first by his mother and then his sister. He was completely helpless and his manuscripts ultimately became the property of his sister. Much

of his work was unpublished. He himself, at the time he was still sane, had characterized his sister as "an anti- Semitic goose." She married a virulent Nazi and actually tried to found a Nazi colony in Paraguay, which failed. She was a great admirer of Hitler and finally induced Hitler to visit the Nazi "Nietzsche shrine" which she had established.

Nietzsche's doctrine is clearly nonpolitical, nonracist, and non-nationalistic, in spite of what Nietzsche's sister tried to make of it, but Nietzsche is partly to blame for the distortion of his doctrines. He is deliberately ambiguous, he is deliberately self-contradictory, and he writes in "aphorisms." Much of his later writing is simple declaration; that is, he does not give reasons or arguments. He wrote in aphorisms because, as mentioned before, he claimed that he was a teacher of slow reading. He wanted to torture the reader who was in a hurry! Each aphorism is a thought experiment or a sequence of thought experiments, and therefore, some of them contradict each other. One will not find orderly presentation of philosophy in Nietzsche.

Nietzsche was a great intuitive psychologist. He emphasized not the sexual but the aggressive and self-destructive drives in man. He was the one who first emphasized—by attacking--the term ego, later used so much by Freud. Sublimation, repression, and the turning of the instincts on one's self—famous conceptions of Freud—were all first described by Nietzsche. His focus was on the crisis in human affairs at the start of the twentieth century, and he felt that this crisis arose primarily from Darwin's theory of evolution, which implied that man evolved naturally from animals so therefore the appearance of man has no particular meaning in the universe. Man in this view is just another species evolved accidentally. Freud also recognized what a catastrophic blow this was to the narcissism of man (Chessick 1980).

Nietzsche is often characterized as an existentialist and his very life style, as Jaspers (1966) points out, is a form of philosophical communication—a primal kind of self-analysis with a series of phases through which he lived, and masks which were searches for his authentic self. The idea of this was to seek a purpose to life and a foundation for values without God and without religion. The basic question he asked was, can man ground his values out of his own life or does he have to seek God; does he have to ground it on the supernatural? Some have argued that he was actually desperately seeking God himself, and others have argued that much of Nietzsche's work and his concentration on self-overcoming was an attempt to ward off his intuitive knowledge of his own mental collapse. It is all this that makes Nietzsche

a matter of tremendous interest to psychologists, philosophers, poets, artists, and German language scholars, as well as indispensable reading for anyone interested in western culture and civilization.

SCENE 2: PHASES OF NIETZSCHE'S LIFE

The first phase of Nietzsche's life, as a child and a student, was from 1844 to about 1868. He was born in Prussia in a very nationalistic pro-German area. His father was a 31 year old strict musically talented Lutheran minister. His mother was the daughter of another Lutheran minister; she was only 18 years old and he was their first child. When he was 2 years old his sister, Elizabeth, was born. When he was about 5 years old his mother lost her youngest son (who had been born the year before), and his father died of madness, definitely due to syphilis.

This is generally believed to be the crucial event in the life of Nietzsche, and after that he became in a sense, as he described it, essentially a homeless wanderer. His early household from the age of five consisted of his mother, his sister, his father's mother, and two maiden aunts; living in this extremely female atmosphere is sometimes blamed for his subsequent disparaging remarks about women. However, there is a method and a reason for *some* of Nietzsche's disparaging and hostile comments about women which have nothing to do with sexism, as I shall explain later.

Nietzsche was at a total loss for what to do about the company of women. He never had girl friends or any known intimate relationships with women as a student, but he was considered very gentle and considerate in his behavior toward women—the very opposite of his philosophical rhetoric and sexist statements—often to the surprise of new acquaintances.

The onset of puberty for Nietzsche at the age of 12 was heralded by migraine headaches and terrific eyestrain, and from the time he was pubescent he was always sick and constantly complaining of various illnesses. As a young student he already wrote an essay on Hölderlin, who subsequently has been recognized as probably the greatest German poet since Goethe, but who at that time was unrecognized and unappreciated.

Nietzsche was an incredibly brilliant student. When he was 24 he was given his Ph.D. without thesis or examination on the basis of his obvious genius, and he was appointed at that age as an associate

professor at the University of Basel in Switzerland. At the age of 30 in 1870 he was made a full professor of philology (the study of classical language and literature). During that period, between ages 24 and 30, he had some military service and this is when he may have contracted syphilis, but there is no good evidence for it.

The most important event that happened to him in this phase as a student, as it came to an end between ages 24 and 30, is that he met Richard Wagner; he became a wild enthusiast of Wagner. All the while he was suffering from hypochondriasis, sinus trouble, gastrointestinal complaints, bad eyes, headaches and morbid introspection.

At the time he was infatuated with Wagner he was also infatuated with the philosophy of Schopenhauer; the philosophy of blind Will. Schopenhauer argued that no God, or heaven or "other world" exists; there is only blind Will behind the phenomena of life, driving meaninglessly onward. The consequences of this doctrine were argued as a justification of Schopenhauer's famous pessimism.

The second phase of Nietzsche's life began around 1870 when, as mentioned above, he was appointed a full professor of philology at Basel. He battled with increasingly ill health during this period. He was adopted in the Wagner household as a son but ended this phase by a break with Wagner, a break with Schopenhauer's philosophy, a liberation and becoming of himself in developing his own philosophy.

This second phase of his life was as a university professor for a decade, the 10 years from about 1869 to 1879. In 1872 he wrote *The Birth of Tragedy*— his first original book—and from 1873 to 1876 he wrote the *Untimely Meditations* (or *Untimely Reflections*) . During this decade of phase two, the crucial word to keep in mind is the word *veneration*. Indeed, Jaspers (1966) calls it “the veneration phase," during which time Nietzsche had faith in genus and faith in culture, and he correspondingly venerated Wagner and Schopenhauer. This phase can be thought of as ending in 1878 or 1879 with both the break from Wagner and Schopenhauer and his resignation from the University.

In the next or third phase, he spent a decade from 1879 to 1889 as an isolated philosopher and literally a homeless wanderer. I have arbitrarily divided that decade into three parts, although one may divide it or subdivide it in any way one wishes. Of the three parts, the first is that of his early philosophy,

from 1879 to 1882. This is often called the "positivistic phase" of Nietzsche's thought. During that time he believed that science would be the answer to all man's problems and questions. The important works of that period were *Human All Too Human*, a series of five aphoristic books written from 1879 to 1881, and *The Gay Science* (*The Joyful Wisdom*), published in 1882. All these publications were entirely ignored.

Shortly after this came his one and only love affair, following which he wrote in a frenzy in 1883 the first three sections of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, making the second part of this third phase—from 1883 to 1887—the time of his original philosophy. The two books published immediately after he finished *Zarathustra*, *Beyond Good and Evil* in 1886 and the *Genealogy of Morals* in 1887, are essentially an attempt to explain *Zarathustra*, which is very symbolic and poetic and without philosophical argument.

He was then poised in 1888, at the age of 44, to write out his own mature philosophy, to develop it at length like a good philosopher should. But for reasons that are very interesting to speculate about, he suddenly shifted and spent his last sane year, 1888, in writing six short shrill books. Of the group of six, *Ecce Homo* is considered by some his greatest masterpiece and by others a work of insanity. Those who are religious will find these short books exceedingly offensive: they are vigorously anti-Christian and apparently anti-Christ, and parts of them seem overtly insane. This output in 1888 represents the third and final part of the third phase of Nietzsche's life.

One might identify a fourth phase, from the point where he broke down in January 1889 at 45 until he died in 1900. This is a period of 11 years, during which he was essentially a vegetable, and his sister made a good deal of money fostering the Nietzsche legend. Also during that time she "edited" a number of his works, especially his posthumous work, *Will to Power*, which consists of a his anticipatory unpublished notes for his mature philosophy. These are *very* important towards understanding Nietzsche as a metaphysician and Nietzsche as an evolving thinker.

SCENE 3: SOCRATES

One cannot understand Nietzsche without *considerable* knowledge of Socrates, with whom he carried on a lifetime of running debate. What follows here is to provide the reader with essential

background knowledge of Socrates, absolutely indispensable to reading Nietzsche. I have also discussed Socrates in previous publications (Chessick 1977, 1982). Dannhauser (1974) devotes an entire book to the subject of Nietzsche's view of Socrates, illustrating how every phase of Nietzsche's thought can only be understood against the background image of Socrates that Nietzsche has constantly in mind. A careful examination of Socrates runs throughout Nietzsche's writing.

For the Greeks themselves, Socrates formed a turning point in the history of philosophy. "He turned men's eyes from the speculations about the nature of the physical world which had been characteristic of the pre-Socratic period, and concentrated attention on the problems of human life" (Guthrie 1975), to understand what it meant to be a human being and to examine for what purpose one was in the world. He alone brought philosophy into human life, in order to discover what was the right way to live. In Plato's *Gorgias* (Hamilton and Cairns 1973) Socrates asks, "What ought the character of a man be, and what his pursuits, and how far is he to go, both in maturer years and in youth?"

The great historical difficulty in distinguishing between Socrates and Plato has obscured the fact that they really were quite unlike and played entirely different roles in the intellectual history of mankind. We have four main sources (Guthrie 1975) of knowledge about Socrates (469-399 B.C.). The first of these is Xenophon, a contemporary of Plato, who is relatively pedestrian and unimaginative in his reports. Second, we have a brutal and completely wrongheaded caricature of Socrates at about forty-seven (423 B.C.) in Aristophanes' *Clouds*, which is still useful because it does lend some historical verification to the description of others. Aristotle, who is the only one of the four who personally did not know Socrates, makes some scattered dry technical comments about his contribution to philosophy. Finally, there are two schools of thought (Guthrie 1975) about the Socrates who is described by Plato. Authorities such as Burnet and Taylor insist that Socrates held all the views that Plato says he did, whereas most other scholars see a very different Socrates especially from the "Socrates" who emerges and changes as the dialogues of Plato progress in their composition over Plato's long life.

The most extreme view of this problem of depicting the real Socrates is presented by the famous twentieth century philosopher and psychiatrist Jaspers (1962), who described Socrates as a sort of projection figure for men of each epoch. Albert Schweitzer once said that it is easier to get a historical picture of Jesus than of Socrates because the descriptions of Jesus were made by men of simple learning

and were clear cut, whereas our sources about Socrates as mentioned above are educated and imaginative authors, each of whom adds his own twist to the description. Thus Jaspers feels that to get a true historical picture of Socrates is impossible; one gets only conflicting images. He (1962) writes:

> After studying the tradition, each of us retains an image of Socrates . . . . Though our picture of him may lack scientific precision, he stands compellingly before our eyes with all the captivating power of his human personality. It is impossible not to form an image of the historic Socrates. What is more, some image of Socrates is indispensable to our philosophical thinking. Perhaps we may say that today no philosophical thought is possible unless Socrates is present, if only as a pale shadow. The way in which a man experiences Socrates is fundamental to his thinking (p. 30).

I disagree with Jaspers' pessimism about the possibility of getting a clear view of the historical Socrates and knowing what he believed. Jaeger (1960) in an outstanding essay on Socrates, points out that "He was really a doctor," a "doctor of the soul," and he held that, "The only important thing was the relation between the word and the living man to whom it was, at one particular moment, addressed." There is no one else in the whole history of Europe who has changed the direction of thought simply by what he was; "for Socrates's thought springs directly and inevitably in a very special way from the whole character and make-up of the man" (Armstrong 1959, p. 25).

The encounter with Socrates was what even Jaspers (1970) would call a "boundary situation"—an existential collision. He had charisma in spite of being ugly, pop-eyed, with a pot belly and a shrewish wife. His appearance, life style, and integrity—especially the consistency with which he followed his own conscience—combined with his deliberate questioning method, challenged *all* faith, authority, and values. Whoever met Socrates reacted to him, either with rage, like, or transfixed fascination. In this sense he did corrupt the youth and undermine the dogmas of the church and the state. Never underestimate the power of the personal encounter with Socrates, which could shake an individual to his foundations.

In spite of undermining all beliefs that formed the dogmas of state and religion, Socrates displayed religious-like faith in two areas. First, he believed in what he called his daimonion (δαιμόνιον) or divine sign, or voice—which in practice led him to his death and second, he believed that his maieutic method (from μαιευαι, to serve as a midwife) could discover certain truths—which he never found. The nature of Socrates' daimonion—a power within himself—is a mystery that has never been clarified and remains a matter of considerable dispute. Arguments range all the way from Schopenhauer's insistence that the daimonion was a ghost, to Friedlander's (1964) more learned contention that the notion of daimonion or

mysterious force in a personality was more generally accepted among the Greeks than it is today. This curious voice never told Socrates what to do—it told him what *not* to do. Something akin to it also came to him in a repetitive dream apparition which always said the same thing to him:" Socrates, practice music," which to the Greeks included poetry. Finally in prison he consented to do so; perhaps, as Nietzsche (1968a) says, this represented his misgivings about the limits of logic.

More important is Socrates' most treasured conviction that since human nature is constant, ethical values are also constant and timeless, and may be found if the proper method of investigation is used (Copleston 1946). Thus Socrates re-focused those who were influenced by him, away from practical affairs aimed at money, power, and amorous conquests, and toward one's inner vision and self-exploration. Considering himself to have a divine mission, he searched unceasingly for the unchanged and unchanging essences behind the chaotic world of appearances. Consequently he turned away in despair from natural sciences of the time such as physics and biology, which were stalemated due to the lack of any experimentation. The question "What is virtue?" assumes that there is an essence common to *all* the virtues; it is built into the nature of the question. Also built into Socrates' method is the postulate of an inner soul where the truth *can* be found.

This approach was developed to combat the skepticism and relativism of the sophists, especially with respect to morals. Their skepticism was an outgrowth of the impasse reached by natural sciences of the time (Cornford 1978, Taylor 1953). Men were asked to choose between monistic theories that violated common sense and atomic theories postulating invisible entities that seemed impossible to verify.

Socrates introduced the Pythagorean notion of the soul as a central concept. For Socrates a man's business is to take care of his soul; this represents the first clear notion of soul as the responsible agent in knowing and acting rightly or wrongly. The soul makes a man good, or bad, happy or unhappy, and the personalization of this soul is a turning point in Western thought. He separates the soul from Being for the first time. For example, for the pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus, soul was part of fire, and fire was Logos, and Logos was the principle of all Being. For Socrates the soul is personal but it must be made clear that his notion of soul is closer to Freud's notion of the ego than to the current religious idea of the soul; the latter is closer to Plato's subsequent mystical elaboration.

Knowledge for Socrates is a real personal conviction, a direct and compelling inner vision of the good (Taylor 1953). Thus the function of the teacher is to persuade the pupil by discussion and example so as to turn the pupil himself to his own personal inner vision of objective universal unchanging good. This for Socrates is how excellence or virtue is taught. The assumption is that every human soul possesses the necessary power of immediate insight or perception of good and evil. A man is perfect in self-knowledge if he can see his own vision but he cannot see another's vision of good and evil (Cornford 1978); this notion again clearly undermines authority, "corrupts" the youth, and encourages questioning, personal identity, and autonomy. It would be just as much out of place in today's society as it was in the Athens that executed Socrates, and just as misunderstood.

The "soul" of Socrates, resembling Freud's "ego," functions to know good and evil *and* to direct a man's acts so they lead to a good life; thus the soul does not just know but also directs and motivates a person.

To understand Socrates it is important first to understand the Greek notion of *arête* (άρετή) which is sometimes translated as "virtue". However, virtue, as we use it today, implies more what society approves of; what the Greeks meant by *arête* is the art of good living, the supreme craft, the development of excellence in the craft of doing what is most appropriate to human beings (Guthrie 1960).

To talk about unqualified virtue or excellence as a function most characteristic of a man one must know first what the function of a man is. This is because in the Greek notion virtue involved both what was a man's characteristic activity and what was the *aim* of this activity; that is to say, Greek philosophy was teleological, a quasi-religious faith that there is an appropriate and natural end for all movement and endeavor. So one cannot achieve excellence until one has the proper understanding of the end that must be achieved, a knowledge of what one is setting out to do.

The extraordinary step forward taken by Socrates is evident if one examines the notion of the soul in Homer (Armstrong 1959). For Homer the soul was a ghost or breath of life not even related to the mental life of man. The mental life for Homer resided in the heart or the diaphragm; thus, for Homer, the body is the crux of human identity, and the soul (ψϋχή) is simply a breath which animates the body with life and leaves at death, but has no basic importance. Socrates turned this around. For him, scholars agree

(Taylor 1953), the soul was the equivalent of what we might with Cornford (1978) call the true self, the living individual man of intelligence and in command. Thus the Socratic mandate that a man's main business is to care for or tend his soul focusses for the first time on the notion that human happiness and a good life are the function of a well-cared for soul or true self in charge of a man's body. For Socrates the body is the tool of the soul, and spiritual or self-perfection is man's highest and proper concern; it is a responsibility no one can escape (Cornford 1978) .

The notion of excellence in human living as a function of the well cared for and strong commanding true self of the individual lays Socrates open to the same complaint that psychoanalytic psychotherapists endure today; that such an approach emphasizes autonomy and individuality at the expense of obedience to the state and following social convention, and it separates man from other-worldly religion and the mystic flow of Being—which was Heidegger's (Steiner 1979) complaint. *It makes each individual autonomous human self something precious and special*.

Socrates equated knowledge with goodness, allowing no room for conflict or compromise. The notion that one would act contrary to what he knows is best to Socrates was a contradiction in terms. This is because "knows" for Socrates means real personal conviction, which only comes from one's own efforts. In the strength of Socrates' character lies the weakness of his philosophy. For Socrates' deepest conviction was that virtue is knowledge and vice is ignorance and no one does wrong willingly.

This conviction of Socrates leads to what is known as the Socratic paradox (Vlastos 1971) . If wickedness is due to ignorance it is therefore involuntary—the person would behave better if he knew better. But Socrates repeatedly emphasized self-control and he repeatedly attacked what the Greeks called *akrasia* (ἀκρασία)—the lack of mastery over one's passions or lower nature, an incontinent yielding to the temptations of sensuality, greed, and ambition—as the greatest obstacle to wisdom. If however, one never does wrong willingly but only out of ignorance there is no such thing as *akrasia*, but only ignorance.

In a further paradox, Socrates is constantly insisting that he is ignorant and he knows nothing. By his own philosophy then he cannot be good and he cannot be sure even that his own method of achieving knowledge is good; at the same time, as I have already mentioned, he had a religious-like

fervor, believing in himself, his daimonion, and his approach to finding timeless and eternal values. As a matter of fact the personal bravery of Socrates was one of the outstanding characteristics that has made him engaging over the centuries, even to philosophers who had a deeply ambivalent and very personal attitude toward him, *especially* Nietzsche.

One of the ways that Socrates is so engaging is through encountering the Socratic paradox, and one of the ways that he shakes an individual to his foundations is through this curious double message that, he presents in which, on the one hand, he insists that he knows nothing and, on the other, he insists that he knows how to find the truth and he shows by his model that he indeed has found what most humans would consider to be virtue and wisdom.

This Socratic paradox fades away, I have suggested (Chessick 1982), if we recognize that we are often in the presence of the famous Socratic irony, introducing another issue of even greater interest to psychotherapists. Note that in the fifth century the term "irony" had a much more nasty and abusive connotation than it does today (Guthrie 1975). Clearly, the irony of Socrates is a very important aspect of his approach to people; all commentators have mentioned it along with their impression of his personal bravery and virtue. In fact, it was an integral part of his method, which must be described before examining this irony.

Socrates invented a method in which he attempted to find eternal values. The Socratic conversation gives hope, attempts to approach the truth through better and better definitions, and shows how everything is related to the soul's knowledge of good and evil (Guthrie 1975). It moves from less adequate to more adequate definitions, aiming at universal definitions. It attempts to discover the truth in the form of these definitions, which then could serve to answer the question of how to live. This maieutic method of Socrates is certainly the first practice of individual intensive psychotherapy (Chessick 1977, 1982); Socrates encounters and engages an individual in an attempt to make the individual look into himself.

Aristotle (Copleston 1946) credits Socrates for inventing or at least using "inductive arguments and general definitions." This involved collecting instances and sifting out their essential common quality, which gives the definition—a "leading-on" of the mind from individual instances, assembled and

regarded collectively, to a comprehension of their common definition (Guthrie 1960). This method of the soul to reach knowledge, the maieutic or hatching method, is a common principle of epistemology and ethics for Socrates. The notion of general definition assumes that a man does not fully know what a thing is until he gives an adequate definition. Sometimes a definition is used by Socrates as a distinguishing mark, but sometimes it seems to be thought of as revealing the essence of a thing (Huby 1964). If one follows the latter approach then the finding of a general definition of a thing at the same time gives us new knowledge of a thing. Remember that for the Greeks knowledge of a thing included understanding the purpose of function of that thing.

There is however a discrepancy between this Aristotelean philosophical description and what Socrates actually did in the marketplace (ἀγορά). His actual procedure is usually labelled (Vlastos 1971) the Socratic *elenchus*; cross-examination and refutation. This is from ἔλεγχος, a test or trial. In the *Apology* (Hamilton and Cairns 1973) he calls it ἔλεγον τοὺ βίου, an examination of men's lives. The net effect of an encounter with Socrates in which everything one said was cross-examined and refuted, along with being exposed to the Socratic irony, was frequently to make a bitter enemy for Socrates. People complained that his conversation had the numbing effect of an electric shock from a sting-ray (Guthrie 1960) , and a sense of no way out. Even Plato recognized this fact and his recognition represents the turning point between Socrates and Plato.

The purpose of the philosophy of Plato is twofold and is *sharply different* than the purpose of the philosophy of Socrates. Plato recognized that Socrates did not find a communicable answer for his vision of an inner knowledge of good and evil. Plato went on to ask, what is the real nature of goodness and of the soul which by knowing goodness makes a man good (Armstrong 1959, Taylor 1953). So Plato attempts to actually develop the premises of Socrates into a full-blown philosophical system, and as such it is fair to say that Plato is the first major systematizing philosopher.

In Plato there seemingly are three Socrates's (Hamilton and Cairns 1973)—with the early Platonic Socrates as in the *Apology* the closest to the real man. In the middle dialogues such as the *Meno* or *Phaedo*, Socrates becomes Plato's spokesman, and in the late dialogues he recedes into the background or drops out altogether; philosophy becomes ontology. When we see the effect of this shift we see the difference between Socrates and Plato. What happens as the humiliating irony and intensely personal nature of the

cross examination and refutation drop away in Plato is a far less personal philosophy, a far more poetic and beautiful system infused with hope of divine bliss, but a loss of immediate moral fervor of the encounter. This fact is sometimes obscured by the magnificence of Plato's writing style. Plato was not a psychotherapist, he was a poet and a visionary; we can appreciate the beauty and the rhapsody of Plato's myths and philosophy but we are not likely to be shaken to our inner foundations by it. Nietzsche in his style followed Socrates and opposed Plato.

Socrates, the "hard plain thinker" (Jaeger 1960) said: look inside yourself, admit your ignorance, take a good shaking-up from me, and reform your life here and now! By this emphasis on the immediate encounter and the demand for the immediate application of the discovery of one's ignorance into changes in behavior, Socrates brought down on himself much inevitable personal animosity which resulted in his execution. It is this moral fervor for immediate personal reform that marks Socrates almost more as a religious figure than a philosopher (Jaspers 1962). Socrates' invention of the crucial notion of the soul and his attempted refutation of the widespread cynicism of the sophists makes him an extremely important figure in the history of philosophy (of course in addition to his role as catalyst to the philosophical genius of Plato).

Why was it necessary for Socrates to humiliate his opponents by the use of his rapier-like intellect? One answer might be what psychotherapists call countertransference. My impression is that it arose from his frustration (Chessick 1982). In spite of his best efforts Socrates was a witness to the decline of Greece from its golden times to the total disaster of the Peloponnesian War, which broke out when he was about forty years old and already famous, in 430 B.C. It became increasingly clear that his fellow citizens were not hearing his message and indeed some of his most devoted followers such as Alcibiades were a total discredit to the Socratic notions of virtue, temperance, and courage.

One also wonders about the personal life of Socrates. Some scholars (Copleston 1946) have attempted to gallantly defend Xanthippe, but the overwhelming mass of evidence seems to point to the fact that she was a very unpleasant and shrewish wife (Guthrie 1975). Xenophon (Strauss 1972) reports Socrates as saying that if he can bear living with her he can stand anybody. Even her crying behavior in the *Crito*, when Socrates drinks the hemlock, is generally accepted to be a social form that was expected of all Greek wives and to have nothing to do with any real feelings for Socrates, whom she

clearly despised. In the eyes of the world as well as his wife Socrates was a failure and an eccentric, an unpleasant person who engaged you in a conversation, shook you up, made you angry, and implicitly challenged the authority of the state and the established religion. His main attraction was that of a spectacle; one went to watch him engage in cross-examination and refutation much as one went to a wrestling or boxing match. This is not what Socrates was hoping to achieve and I think the famous Socratic irony is the only instance we have of this man—who otherwise showed remarkable self-control —manifesting his true deep disappointment.

The impact of Socrates on generations of youths and thinkers who have followed has been one of the most astounding and inspiring phenomena of human history. It is also a tribute to the magnificent writing of Plato, especially in the dialogues portraying the trial and last days of Socrates. This impact seems to be most powerful on youths who are studying philosophy in their earlier years, and often leads to a lasting personal interaction with Socrates throughout one's lifetime. The most famous example of this is Nietzsche's (1968a, Chessick 1977) incredible running debate and intense pathological ambivalence with the figure of Socrates.

Nietzsche, in sharp contrast to his contemporaries, adopts Socrates' notion of "philosophize," which is to exhort and teach through discussion rather than to engage in abstract thought and produce a metaphysical system. At the same time he hated Socrates for bringing about a victory for reason, distorting the Apollonian element in the Greek mind, and thus destroying an essential harmony in the Athenian soul. This disruption, he believed, led eventually to the rigid intellectual academic philosophy of German Idealism, and to unnatural excessive rationalization and repression in modern life. Yet even in Socrates, "the typical *non-mystic*" as Nietzsche (1968a) calls him, one encounters a powerful feeling that Nietzsche labels "the enormous driving-wheel of logical Socratism" which "is in motion, as it were, *behind* Socrates." So much for the nineteenth century notion of Socrates as a dried-up theoretical man!

Socrates crops up everywhere in the writings of philosophers even in recent years. I believe this is true because no other thinker has so clearly pointed out the utter foolishness of typical materialistic human existence; a lifestyle that has produced the monstrous contemporary aberrations of Lee Harvey Oswald, John Hinkley, Jr., and others. In that sense the encounter with Socrates has a similar boundary function (Jaspers 1970) as the encounter with death. Ordinary human preoccupation with money,

power, and material goods shrinks into insignificance when one feels the cold whisper of death; nowhere has this been more magnificently portrayed as in Tolstoy's (1951) story *The Death of Ivan Ilyich.*

Once the encounter with Socrates has taken place and he gets a grip on one's soul, he does indeed function as the gadfly of a lifetime—just as he said he was—forming an inner voice perhaps similar to his own that never allows the individual complete comfort with dogma, convention, or sensual pleasures. Even his most narcissistic followers such as Alcibiades felt uncomfortable and ashamed in the presence of Socrates and experienced intense ambivalence toward him, as so dramatically displayed by Plato in the *Symposium*.

Socrates might have agreed with Bertrand Russell's (1964) argument that, although we may not reach permanent answers, since these answers are the most important determinants of human activity, seeking them should be a central intellectual preoccupation and can be a major source of goodness and happiness in a person's life. As Jaspers (1954) puts it,

> The essence of philosophy is not the possession of truth but the search for truth . . . . Philosophy means to be on the way. Its questions are more essential than its answers, and every answer becomes a new question (p. 12).

For Socrates, philosophy was supreme, and it was carried out not in academia but in gymnasia, the centers of leisure (Chessick 1971) and health in Athens.

What has become clear over the centuries however, is that only a small percentage of humanity can be gripped by Socrates and that most people now as then run away from him as fast as they can go. This is because he overemphasized the capacity of human reason to direct and control human activity; the great weakness of Socratic philosophy rests, as mentioned earlier, on his assumption that other people have the same strength of character that he did. He assumed that if he could persuade someone intellectually of what is right they would immediately do it—and this greatly overemphasized the strength of reason and underestimated the power of human emotions in conflict. He preached a gospel of the self-mastery and self-sufficiency of moral character, more like Nietzsche than like Christ.

One wonders how Socrates, if he had lived today, utilizing our far better understanding of human conflict and the unconscious forces that determine our behavior, would have approached humanity and the pressing problems of how to live—questions that are equally as important and unresolved in our era.

Surely he would have started with an ironic repetition of a famous phrase from his modern philosophical opponent, Heidegger (1968); "Most thought-provoking in our thought-provoking time is that we are still not thinking." He would have continued by stopping our young people wherever he could find them, just as he did centuries ago, and subjecting them to his elenchus with therapeutic intent whenever they would let him because, as human nature is constant, so he believed ethical values are constant. For this was his basic belief, as Guthrie (1975) paraphrased it from Plato's presentation in the *Republic* (518b-d):"The eye of the mind is not blind, but in most people it is looking the wrong way. To educate is to convert it or turn it around, so that it looks in the right direction" (p. 488).

ACT II:

NIETZSCHE'S AESTHETIC SOLUTION

SCENE 1:NIETZSCHE AND WAGNER

Nietzsche played the piano and all his life (until insanity) he improvised on it for hours; he wanted to be a composer and he composed. There is a huge book of his compositions available in university libraries, but nothing commercially available has been recorded. He also sang and composed songs. Probably his best known musical work is the *Manfred Meditation*. Nietzsche thought very highly of himself as a musician but he wrote music just like his prose; in other words he defied every rule of composition and tonal connection, he made many mistakes in harmonics, and so forth, and he never developed a consistent theme throughout his pieces; everything is variations and changes. In his music he reaches for *Rausch*, an untranslatable word, which means a kind of frenzy, an ecstasy, an intoxication. It is interesting that Nietzsche's father was also a musician and composed; both father and son would improvise for hours together on the piano.

Wagner, like Nietzsche's father, was 31 years older than Nietzsche. Wagner's mistress Cosima was a morally warped person wrapped in mystery. She was the wife of the famous conductor Von Bülow, but she lived with Wagner; eventually she actually was divorced by Von Bülow. She lived about 50 years after Wagner died.

Cosima was the daughter of Liszt, the famous composer and pianist, and she was 7 years older than Nietzsche. There was a curious relationship in the Wagner household. Nietzsche idolized Wagner, even though he himself was already recognized as a genius and was a full professor at a famous university. He behaved more like he was in the presence of a divine with Wagner. At the same time, Cosima played the role of trying to draw Nietzsche into German nationalism and antisemitism. She was a virulent anti-Semite and her slogan was, "burn Jews."

The first conflict between Nietzsche and Wagner took place on the subject of war; Wagner was for it and Nietzsche was against it. Wagner was very pro- German, very nationalistic, and—like Hegel—found Prussia to be the ideal state. Nietzsche said Prussia was "obnoxious and uncivilized." Nietzsche never shared Wagner's German emotionalism and German nationalistic ideas.

The appearance of *The Birth of Tragedy* in 1872 during this decade of his second phase (1869-1879) caused Nietzsche considerable ostracism; it was actually first understood mainly by musicians. *The Birth of Tragedy* stresses "the overpowering man of affect" (Fischer-Dieskau 1976) , and in it Nietzsche forecast the polyphony of Mahler and Schönberg which came later. He emphasized ecstasy and visionary exultation in music. He saw music as having as its purpose to bring forth spiritual excitement and processes that can be depicted only by music; Nietzsche was absolutely wild about Wagner's "*Ring*" operas (Chessick 1983) and Wagner's *Tristan and Isolde*.

Some readers were spellbound by *The Birth of Tragedy* but most of them ignored it and—worst insult of all—students refused to register for Nietzsche's classes. It was a great blow to him, but this great and arrogant work—in which he clearly depicts himself as the superior successor to Socrates—was published when Nietzsche was only 28. In the same year, 1872, Wagner established his own festival at Bayreuth; matters shifted between Nietzsche and Wagner from that time on. There was great public success for Wagner— he had his own place, his own festival, his own hall built to his own specification, and great honor—but Wagner demanded slavish obedience and adoration from all people around him and he did not like independent thought. He essentially tried to use Nietzsche as a propagandist for Wagner. The sections in *The Birth of Tragedy* from the sixteenth to the end—probably the worst thing Nietzsche ever wrote—are all Wagner propaganda added by Nietzsche after he produced the first 15 sections of *The Birth of Tragedy*; a kind of an afterthought to make Wagner feel pleased.

Nietzsche became increasingly ambivalent about Wagner. He began to develop all kinds of new and worse psychosomatic ailments, and began giving excuses to stay away from Wagner's home. He wrote a paper called "Richard Wagner in Bayreuth" in 1876; in this paper his first misgivings about Wagner appear. He visited Bayreuth and was very much disappointed. In his mind the composer of such exalted and magnificent music should attract a spiritual and cultural elite (remember he was still in the phase of veneration, with faith in culture and genius). When he came to the opera house in Bayreuth he saw the

traditional bourgeois middle aged matrons with their diamonds and fur coats—relatively well-to-people. He saw middle class Christians, not the Greek heroes he was hoping to see at Bayreuth, and it became clear to him that Wagner was interested in making money and was quite happy to open the place to such a public, because this was the public that could afford the prices! Nietzsche called these people "the fat matrons from Marianbad."

Nietzsche also became increasingly shocked by Wagner's antisemitism, which was much amplified in Bayreuth, becoming a kind of admission ticket to the "inner crowd." The last straw, however, was not antisemitism but Wagner's *Parsifal*. It is a Christian opera and goes back to Christian themes—yet Wagner was an avowed atheist. Nietzsche felt this was hypocritical and a "sell-out" because it was obviously written to attract the kind of audience that was attending the Bayreuth festival. He seemed unable to recognize that it is also a musical masterpiece of the very highest order.

SCENE 2: NIETZSCHE AND SOCRATES

The two themes of Nietzsche and Wagner, and Nietzsche and Socrates, run throughout all of Nietzsche's writings from beginning to end. In *The Birth of Tragedy* Socrates appears as almost a demigod, the father of logic and the exterminator of the Greek music drama, who took on two Greek gods and won. *The Birth of Tragedy* was written to overturn all the nineteenth century beliefs about Greek culture. Nietzsche blamed Socrates and his cool rationalism for throwing an uncomprehending wet blanket over the Dionysiac tragedies of the Greeks. He also praised Socrates because he felt that Socrates' passion for knowledge prevented complete race suicide of the Greeks, a theme that comes up over and over again. Socrates' scientific optimism was a holding action against the degeneration of Greek culture, and for this Nietzsche praised him.

Nietzsche admired many so-called great men, for example, Jesus, Schopenhauer, Wagner, and Socrates. He admired Jesus, he respectfully criticized Christianity in the German Protestant tradition, and he hated what he called decadence in Christ's followers—in this case organized Christianity. He admired Schopenhauer, he respectfully criticized Schopenhauer's philosophy, and he hated the decadence in those who claimed to be following Schopenhauer by putting on a false asceticism. He admired Wagner, he respectfully criticized Wagner's music, and he hated German nationalism and

German antisemitism. Finally, he admired Socrates, he respectfully criticized his rationality, and he hated Platonists and the later Greeks. He sometimes refers to the Platonists and the later Greeks using the term "Alexandrianism," an obvious reference to Alexander the Great, who represented the final flare-up of Greek dominance.

One of the most important, if not the most important, opposition in all Nietzsche's writing is between Christ and Socrates. For Nietzsche, Christ represents the next world, whereas Socrates represents man saving himself, the doctrine that man's salvation is himself. Christ represents the crucified; Socrates and Goethe represent joyful affirmation of this life. Thus Christ represents giving up on this life; Socrates and Goethe represent joyfully reaffirming this life through sublimated passion. Remember it was Nietzsche (not Freud) who invented the concept of sublimation—he sometimes called it "spiritualization."

Christ represents giving in to suffering, whereas Nietzsche saw Socrates as representing the overcoming of suffering in this world. Christ says the next world is what is important. Christ and Schopenhauer say life is intolerably evil and full of suffering, therefore concern yourself with the spiritual. In Schopenhauer's case the spiritual represented what Schopenhauer called Will, a wholly metaphysical concept.

Socrates in a sense was what Nietzsche unsuccessfully tried to be personally like, although he arrogantly thought of himself as superior to Socrates. Nietzsche wanted to be wild and drunken but under control. In the *Symposium* of Plato, all drink and all talk, but Socrates drinks them all under the table. He has the most control of all, whereas at the same time he is not an ascetic—he drinks along with them.

Nietzsche said, "Let's concern ourselves with this world." He scorned what he defined as "God," namely, other worlds, ultimate realities, Kant's things-in-themselves, Schopenhauer's Will. These were all dead, according to Nietzsche. When he wrote, "God is dead," what he meant was that we cannot know anything about the spiritual world, about the world behind the world of appearances. We can never get in touch with metaphysical reality according to Nietzsche, so all that is intelligible must be found within the world of appearances. These themes lead ultimately and paradoxically to Nietzsche's own

metaphysical position.

In order to understand Nietzsche one must be aware of his changing views of Socrates. In his second phase, as stated, he was unhappy with Socrates as a "wet blanket" rationalist but he praised him for preserving Greek culture. He exalted Socrates during his positivistic period (what I have called the first part of his third phase), when Nietzsche preferred science to poetry. Finally, in the rest of the third phase he broke with Socrates and presented his own views, but he was *always* arguing with Socrates.

SCENE 3: NIETZSCHE AND SCHOPENHAUER

There are 4 "books" which make up Nietzsche's *Untimely Meditations* (sometimes translated the *Untimely Reflections*). The first of these, published in is called *Thoughts out of Season*; it abandons German patriotism and it objects to Bayreuth.

The second of these is on history, published in *Of the Use and Disadvantage of History for Life*. This second "book" already shows how Nietzsche approached history as he will approach philosophy. He distinguished three types of history (see Nietzsche 1957):1) antiquarian history, which is practiced in universities where the scholars reverently consolidate their knowledge of the past, study the ancient scripts and so forth, 2) critical histories, which attempt to pass sentence on the past, and 3) monumentalistic history, which concentrates on past heroes in order to confront us with contemporary mediocrity and the possibility of greatness. Here is the main point: the person that Nietzsche was really talking about in this whole "untimely meditation" was Darwin. Nietzsche disagreed that the goals of humanity can be reached by some kind of evolution of the species. He argued—and this (after Pindar) is his first individual original point—that *the goal of humanity is the production of its highest specimens*.

The third of his "meditations" was called *Schopenhauer as Educator*, a beautiful little "book." In 1874 Nietzsche here first pronounced the theme "become yourself," also taken from Pindar. Actually it is an autobiography of Nietzsche and not about Schopenhauer at all, although it claims to be. It presents a highly idealized description of Schopenhauer (see Nietzsche 1965).

Richard Wagner in Bayreuth is the fourth "untimely meditation," written in 1876, detesting Wagner's nationalism and antisemitism. Wagner was anti-French, whereas Nietzsche was very pro-

Voltaire, especially after he visited Bayreuth. Nietzsche then moved to a French aphoristic style of writing; thus he even moved away from German prose for a while. Around 1878 he became extremely sick with psychosomatic ailments, probably because of the break with Wagner, and in 1879 he resigned his university position; it is this resignation from his university position that marks the end of his second phase. From that point he became a homeless wanderer for 10 years until he broke down, going from cheap unheated flats to cheap unheated flats, from one Italian or Swiss city to the other.

Nietzsche's entire early philosophy can be found in *The Birth of Tragedy* and *Untimely Meditations*. He distinguished in his early philosophy between man's true nature and man's animal nature. The representatives of man's highest or true nature, according to Nietzsche, are the artist, the saint, and the philosopher. Here Nietzsche followed Hegel. Man's animal nature is represented by the masses—the so-called ordinary or herd man. Nietzsche had nothing but scorn for the ordinary man, he called him lazy and filled with fear of social retaliation.

Hegel thought that the state was the highest culmination of social man, whereas Nietzsche thought the state was an enemy of man because it forced conformity and prevented man from reaching his true nature. Nietzsche also claimed that the Church was an "Antichrist"; by this he meant the organized church had "sold out" Christ and joined the state in compelling conformity.

How does one find his true self? Nietzsche (1965) addressed this question in *Schopenhauer as Educator*. He said, ask what you really loved until now and what are the traits you must admire in your chosen educators. He attempted to illustrate this by describing what he represents as the traits of his chosen educator, Schopenhauer. Clearly he had the example of Socrates in mind (as described in Act I, Scene 3, above).

He addressed himself to the issue of man's dignity, which he felt the Bible gave us and Darwin took away. He said we must remake our own nature, each man (women are ignored) single and alone, for himself. Notice that this Socratic point of view cuts across *all* racial, ethnic, and nationalistic boundaries! *All* values for Nietzsche derive from the individual; Nietzsche was not interested in any color or creed or ethnic group at all. He did have in mind an aristocracy however, but it is not the traditional kind of aristocracy, it is the aristocracy of the man who has overcome himself, found himself, and become what he

is. He believed that all men, regardless of color, race, and creed have the potential to be truly human. We must in our own lives do the same thing that Apollo does for Dionysus in *The Birth of Tragedy* (see below); we must give order to our passions to achieve and overcome these drives.

Nietzsche is commonly misunderstood in his unfortunate language exhorting to war, extolling the "blond beast,"[1] and so on. These political metaphors try to encourage us to make war on what is in ourselves, overcome what is in ourselves, and become what he thought of as aristocrats. He did not like the masses; he despised them because he felt that they have not made such an effort.

There are some interesting thoughts about an educator in *Schopenhauer as Educator*. He felt that an educator should help the student discover the fundamental laws of his own character. He believed like Socrates that an educator should help you to unchain something in yourself, enabling you to climb higher toward your true being.

He distinguished three kinds of men: a) the Rousseauian man who longs for something beyond himself, and reaches out to holy nature, b) the Goethian man who is contemplative, scientific, and neutral, and c) Nietzsche's hero, the Schopenhauerian man who faces truth squarely, accepts the pain of it, and who examines the consequence of the denial of all cherished beliefs. Such a man despises all thoughts of comfort or discomfort, and he lives an isolated heroic life. In fact, he has remarkable resemblance to professor Nietzsche, and of course, Nietzsche has been criticized for making his philosophical hero the model of himself.

Schopenhauer as Educator is a preliminary work which offers a picture of life as a whole and something you can live by. He stressed the uniqueness of each individual and argued that culture has to further the production of the Schopenhauerian man—artists, philosophers, and saints. In it he attacked the usual aims of education, which Nietzsche said are to help people make money, make good citizens of the state, and make them scholars, and he attacked the scholarly teaching of philosophy with its cramming for examinations. He insisted that the key test of a philosophy is whether one can live by it.

By the time he wrote *Ecce Homo* in 1888, he said Schopenhauer has "the peculiar bitter odor of corpses about him." That is quite a way from the former idealization! The somber picture of life that Schopenhauer gives first attracted Nietzsche, but. Nietzsche is too joyful a person; he is too life- affirming

to accept Schopenhauer's pessimism.

There were certain tremendous attractions Schopenhauer held for Nietzsche; in fact one could say that his basic philosophy comes from or rests on Schopenhauer. First of all there is the denial of the supernatural and the transcendental. Then there is Schopenhauer's stress on the irrational character of the universe. The greatest clash between Schopenhauer and Hegel was that Hegel insisted the universe was developing in an orderly fashion, while Schopenhauer declared it to be utterly irrational.

Also crucial was Schopenhauer's subordination of intellect to Will. Schopenhauer was the first philosopher who minimized the power of reason and saw it as a slave of something else. "Will" for Schopenhauer is a mysterious metaphysical driving force, deep in the psyche, never defined. The fundamental pessimism of Schopenhauer first attracted Nietzsche—the meaninglessness of it all, which is very strongly emphasized by Schopenhauer.

There are vital differences however, between Nietzsche and Schopenhauer. One of the most important is over the notion of Will. Schopenhauer's philosophy rests on a metaphysical concept called Will, a transcendental force which unites everything. It is the driving force of the universe. Nietzsche said this is nonsense, for there is no metaphysical reality beyond what we know. On the other hand, he said that individuals are "will points," individual unique centers of a driving for power. Nietzsche did not believe there is some transcendental reality that holds the world together. He did not think that any such force could ever be found. He also objected to Schopenhauer's proposed solution to withdraw from life, listen to music, and become an ascetic. Schopenhauer himself never followed this, and in fact lived just the other way, thus failing Nietzsche's true test of any philosophy.

He disagreed with Schopenhauer about pity. Schopenhauer had pity for everybody, whereas Nietzsche renounced pity in this sense, as we shall discuss later. Wagner was deliberately trying to express in his music the philosophy of Schopenhauer; just as Dante expressed in his poetry the metaphysics of Aquinas, Wagner especially in *Tristan and Isolde* attempts to express the metaphysics of Schopenhauer. Nietzsche broke finally with all of this, forming his truly original ideas in his last few sane years.

SCENE 4: THE BIRTH OF TRAGEDY

The Birth of Tragedy is a remarkable book; it has no footnotes and no quotations. It was his first book, it was sensational and scandalous, and it ruined him. His reputation as a scholar and philologist after that was tainted. Most people did not understand what the book was about. Only Wagnerians liked it. The academics called it sheer propaganda.

The two major concepts in the book are represented by the gods Apollo and Dionysus. Watch for these in the writings of Nietzsche because their meanings change as he goes on. In *The Birth of Tragedy* "Apollonian" stands for restraint, harmony, and measure, and "Dionysian" stands for drunken frenzy. At the end of his intellectual career (around 1888) Nietzsche no longer opposed the Apollonian and the Dionysian; he synthesized the Dionysian and Apollonian under Dionysus, and he contrasted Dionysus with the crucified Christ.

The Birth of Tragedy tried to reintroduce the spirit of Dionysus into dry, sterile, academic philosophy also, and he forecasted that if we continue to repress the Dionysian the twentieth century will see a terrible explosion. This was his important objection to the hypocritical Christian ethics of the Victorian era. Copleston (1965) explains,

> This means that the nineteenth century culture characterized by the domination of knowledge and science is exposed to the revenge, as it were of the vital forces, the explosion of which will produce a new barbarism. Beneath the surface of modern life Nietzsche sees vital forces which are wild, primitive, and completely merciless. One looks at them with a fearful expectancy as though at the cauldron in the witch's kitchen . . . for a century we have been ready for world-shaking convulsions (p. 173).

Nietzsche's work revolutionized the prevalent conception of the spirit of Greece. At the time of Nietzsche the Greeks were thought of as a kind of super-rational beings with computer-like minds. He argued for the first time that we cannot really appreciate the Greek Apollonian achievement--their balanced and disciplined achievements—unless we realize the kinds of power they had to harness in order to make these achievements possible. Nietzsche argued that it was the fusion of the Apollonian and the Dionysian that made the Greek achievements in tragedy supreme.

For Nietzsche as for modern psychotherapists, mental health is not something like the lack of an infection. Health is the ability to overcome disease—to overcome the forces of destruction or forces of

disintegration, what psychotherapists call "ego- strength."

He raised the question: how might we justify life if God is dead? The issue "God is dead" does not really come up until later in full force in Nietzsche, in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. His first answer to this problem in *The Birth of Tragedy* was to justify man as an aesthetic phenomenon, as something magnificent, the product of culture. Yet in spite of his anti-metaphysical stance, Nietzsche seemed unaware that "Apollo" and "Dionysus" are certainly metaphysical concepts. They are *disembodied principles*. Behind Nietzsche's anti-metaphysics there is at the very beginning in his first original work a metaphysics.

The Birth of Tragedy raised Nietzsche's key questions and problems: 1) What is the relationship between science, art, and life? 2) Can there be aesthetic as against moral meanings for existence? 3) What is the difference between strong pessimism and romantic pessimism? 4) How can we achieve the revaluation of values? and 5) How to launch an attack on the foolish scientific optimism of his time. In this book the phrase "Socratism" is ambivalently equated with rationalism, scienticism, and scientific optimism.

In *The Birth; of Tragedy* Nietzsche argued that neither science nor art can reach the truth; all are illusions. The illusions of science—which are based on language—make life possible, and the illusions of art make it bearable. This latter idea he borrowed from Schopenhauer. Quite unlike Kant, who believed that there were certain conceptual schemes built in to the human mind, Nietzsche argued that conceptual schemes *vary* from society to society. He conceived of himself as an outsider who is looking at the conceptual scheme of his society and examining possible other ones. This is an extremely dangerous thing to do, but it is the task of the true philosopher, who must question, revalue values, and create new ones. A society is shored up in its self-esteem by its conceptual scheme, so someone who challenges the whole underpinnings of it must end up isolated and an outsider. Thus, Nietzsche later said of himself "I am dynamite," echoing a phrase used to describe him by his first serious and appreciative critic, Brandes.

He viewed artistic intuition as the basic exploratory activity of man. Art for Nietzsche is a metaphysical activity and is the highest human task. Only later on do artistic conceptions become systematized, conceptualized, and made into science. He equated art and fantasy and dreaming as ways

we make life bearable. He considered dreaming to be interpreting life through images.

There is a confusion running through his distinction between Apollonian art and Dionysian art. Apollonian art is supposed to be individuating; examples of this are sculpture and painting and dreaming. Dionysian art is supposed to be disintegrating or dis-individuating by drunkenness—*Rausch*—ecstasy, transport, not literal alcoholic drunkenness. Examples of Dionysian art are lyric poetry, music, and religious ecstasy, but there are forms of painting which can be Dionysian and there are forms of music and poetry which are Apollonian . It is a vague metaphorical distinction and his critics even today attack this distinction because it is so vague. He saw first Homeric art and then later on the full-blown Apollonian art of the magnificent Greek statues as *transforming* the raw barbaric cruelty and destructiveness of the stone age—the barbaric Dionysian world—transforming it in order to make life possible and bearable, to counteract the pessimism and the nasty brutal shortness of barbaric life. At the same time, this barbarism in 1872 was seen by Nietzsche as always ready to explode from under the thin veil of the Apollonian rationalism.

Freud in *Civilization and Its Discontents* saw the unhappiness and the suffering of civilization as a necessity, because what Nietzsche would call the Dionysian elements have to be constantly transformed, kept under some kind of repression, and turned on ourselves—making it impossible to achieve the happiness of their full discharge and imbuing us with a sense of guilt (Chessick 1980).

The key thesis of *The Birth of Tragedy* was that the best Greek tragedy was a fusion, a finely tuned balance of these two forms of art, the Apollonian and Dionysian; an amalgam. The chorus in the Greek tragedy is a sublimation of the ancient Dionysian ecstatic rites, in which humans who represented Dionysius were literally torn to pieces.

Unfortunately, according to Nietzsche, along came Euripides and Socrates, who substituted explanation and discussion and dialectic for the chanting of lyric poetry and the chorus. This, according to Nietzsche, was an artistic catastrophe, "the death of tragedy through the spirit of reason." At the same time, he much admired the achievements of reason and science of Socrates, which gave hope to the declining Greek civilization.

1 By this frequently quoted term he meant not "Aryan" or Nazi, but simply a lion (see Act IV, Scene 1, of the present book).

ACT III:

FROM SCIENCE TO PHILOSOPHY

SCENE 1: HUMAN ALL TOO HUMAN

In his positivistic or scientific phase, as I have designated before to be the first part of the third phase of his life, from 1879 to 1882, Nietzsche wrote 5 books of aphorisms. The first of these, appearing already in 1878, was called *Human All Too Human*, a book which began emphasizing the irrational springs of human behavior and marked the transition of Nietzsche from a professional philologist to a maverick philosopher. This book is dedicated to Voltaire— a great insult to Wagner, who was violently anti- French. It abandoned all nationalism and introduced Nietzsche's idea of "the good European," which also was detested by Wagner.

Two short books followed in 1879 and 1880 called *Mixed Opinions and Aphorisms* and *The Wanderer and His Shadow*. Later these 3 books of aphorisms were then all subsumed under the one title *Human All Too Human*; today confusingly sometimes they are given by their individual titles and sometimes included underneath *Human All Too Human*.

The "shadow" in *The Wanderer and His Shadow* is the shadow of the God who has disappeared. All of these three books are made up of aphorisms less than a page long and the aphorisms are not connected; in other words they do not necessarily follow logically in any kind of order. They represent a kind of experimenting, the transitional period during which he was thinking about the will to power (sometimes he calls it here the striving for freedom), and they also represent his first fusion of philosophy and psychology.

It was an attempt to explain reality without metaphysics and to understand culture as having developed not through divine intervention or through God-given qualities, but through evolution. The influence of Darwin is tremendous. Nietzsche tried to explain how the lower qualities which men have

in common with the animals evolved into our higher qualities. For instance, the desire for power and our fear of the powerful is the reason we developed sympathy and empathy according to Nietzsche, because if we develop these qualities it allows us extra alertness to the motives of others and protects us against danger.

Recent work in psychoanalysis on empathy (Kohut 1971) especially has tended to agree with this. For example studies of people who are exceptionally empathic (and even people who make good psychiatrists) have indicated that many of them developed this capacity for empathy as a way of dealing with, for instance, a very intrusive or very nervous mother. Such parents require the child to develop a special signaling system that makes them very sensitive to what is going on in other people's minds, in order to anticipate intrusion or attack. Nietzsche's argument was that these so-called wonderful qualities in us—the "God-given" qualities like altruism, sympathy, empathy, and charity—are not given by the divine but rather are adaptational mechanisms that evolved as useful in the struggle for power and survival.

The fourth of the aphoristic books is called *Dawn of Day*, written in 1881, and available in a fine translation (Nietzsche, 1982). In this book he expressed his contempt for the German Empire and for those who worship strength. He argued that there must be reason in strength or strength is evil and destructive. Again he addressed the question of how all behavior can be explained in terms of fear and the struggle for power. In the final aphoristic book in 1882, which is sometimes translated *The Gay Science* and sometimes *The Joyful Wisdom*, and is considered one of the greatest models of German prose, he returned to Pindar's idea of living dangerously, of attaining satisfaction with yourself, and deriving happiness from the sense of overcoming yourself.

This important book (Nietzsche 1974) contained some of Nietzsche's germinal thoughts that were much developed later. He again called for an "artistic Socrates." He offered his first formulations about the death of God and the eternal recurrence. He predicted the coming catastrophe in Europe and denigrated "consciousness." Above all, he viewed science as based on a "prejudice," postulating a meaningless mechanistic world and missing all that is really important in the life of man.

The point of the five aphoristic books is to try to put the development and behavior of man on some

kind of a scientific foundation without appeal to religious or metaphysical grounding.

Up to the writing of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, which represented the dramatic turning point in Nietzsche's thought, there are important polarities we should be aware of in his conceptualizations. The first of these is between Dionysus and Apollo, the second is between the animal or materialistic self and the true self, and the third is between strength and reason. The integration by each individual of these polarities yields *greater* power than giving in to any one pole such as asceticism or brute strength. This is a new and fundamental idea of Nietzsche.

Human All Too Human (remember it was dedicated to Voltaire) stands between La Rochefoucald and Freud. La Rochefoucauld was the famous French skeptic who made many incisive and rather cynical observations about human psychology. Freud is also skeptical but he is a determinist; he argued that people are the way they are because they *have* to be that way. Nietzsche was somewhere between them in *Human All Too Human*; he was very skeptical about people but he did not feel that they are immutably made the way they are. He pointed out that German idealist philosophy—like so-called analytic philosophy today—seems to be concerned with problems irrelevant to everyday living, and he demanded the scientific study of human actions. This is in the tradition that La Rochefoucauld calls "observations," but for La Rochefoucauld, observations were done more for literary pleasure than for science. Freud's work on the other hand, represents the culmination of Nietzsche's suggestions—studying the human as he is instead of the ideal.

As previously explained, there are a number of Freudian concepts which can be found already in Nietzsche. For example, Nietzsche wrote that in dreams we resemble savages and we gratify our impulses (this is already in Plato). He said that cognition is always unreliable and is colored by wishes, and memory is similarly unreliable and colored by wishes. He observed that the mother loves herself in her son more than she loves him, and wrote, "The unresolved dissonances in personality and opinion between the parents go on echoing the child's character, forming the history of his inner sufferings" (Stern 1979). He came close to the idea of the unconscious but he did not actually postulate such a realm, as did Freud.

It is curious that he rejected Schopenhauer's simplistic doctrine of Will but he came up with an

equally simplistic doctrine to explain all mental actions and eventually to explain everything--the will to power. Dostoevsky's *Notes From Underground* left a tremendous impact on Nietzsche, and *The Brothers Karamazov* is a novel with the closest affinity to Nietzsche's thought.

SCENE 2: THE TURNING-POINT

The turning-point in Nietzsche's thought was heralded by a bizarre relationship between Lou Salome (1861-1937), Paul Reé (1849-1901)—another intellectual of the time and a friend of Nietzsche—and Nietzsche. There is a photograph of Lou Salome in a cart; in place of two donkeys pulling the cart there are Nietzsche and Paul Reé. Lou Salome is carrying a whip. She at this time was 21, and both Paul Reé and Nietzsche were contenders for her hand—although she later denied that Nietzsche ever specifically proposed to her. She rejected Nietzsche and immediately afterwards she went off with Paul Ree to Paris, leaving Nietzsche alone. Later this remarkable woman also became an admired friend of Freud.

Immediately afterwards, in 1883, in a frenzy he wrote the first 3 books of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* in 10 days each. He was now 40; it was a time marked by severe insomnia. He went on in 1884 to write a fourth book of *Zarathustra* which was supposed to be the first part of a second 3-part book, but it was inferior and he gave it up.

The first 3 books of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* are highly original and are considered Nietzsche's greatest work. It opens with the will to power and closes with the notion of eternal recurrence. *Zarathustra* is written as a dithyramb, which originally was a lyric poem in honor of Dionysus, a poem in a wild irregular strain. It only represents his major philosophy when it is supported by the two explanatory books which followed it, *Beyond Good and Evil* and *The Genealogy of Morals*. He recognized that *Zarathustra* was obscure and metaphorical, and contains no philosophical argument, so in order to explain it to the world he wrote the other two books. All contain many foolish remarks about women mainly copied from Schopenhauer, although his defenders remind us that no woman ever loved Nietzsche. That seems to be true.

Zarathustra (Nietzsche 1968b) repudiated *The Birth of Tragedy*, repudiated the dualism of Apollo

and Dionysus, or any dualism such as reason and the will to power, and made the will to power *the* basic and only urge of man. Later on in psychiatry Alfred Adler founded a school of psychoanalysis allegedly based on this theory. The will to power is a simplistic and monistic philosophy and it is undoubtedly wrong. Few critics or writers agree with it today, although some, like Michel Foucault, are profoundly influenced by it. Later on Nietzsche extended this notion to be the basis of the entire universe; even inanimate objects are power points in Nietzsche's metaphysics.

In *Zarathustra* the will to power means the will to overcome one's self. For example, he viewed the origin of morality and custom as a self-overcoming of the herd. The herd turns its desire for power against itself. Thus he concluded that the superman or overman is the person who achieves in himself what the herd has done. According to Nietzsche such a man is no longer an animal and he now has a positive value; he becomes the highest being.

Nietzsche's most important question, how in the absence of God do you justify the meaning of life, has now been given three answers. One in *The Birth of Tragedy* would be that life is justifiable and makes sense because it produces magnificent cultures and magnificent men as aesthetic phenomena. The second answer, during the positivistic phase, is that man is a creature which has evolved his higher qualities as the result of evolution and he can be understood scientifically without recourse to divine intervention. Now in *Zarathustra*, his final philosophy, he said that the justification of man, the meaning of life, and what makes life worthwhile is self-overcoming. What gives a person a positive value is to whatever extent he has overcome himself. We have here a substitute religion in which God is replaced by the superman or overman. Divine Grace is replaced by the will to power, and Eternal Life is replaced by eternal recurrence. His mature philosophy gives a new description of reality, attempting (unsuccessfully) to do so without metaphysics and drawn from a study of natural phenomena.

The key point is that the western intellectual ideals of philosophical contemplation involving a supra-sensory Reality, and the Christian other-worldly and saintly gospels, are all opposed by Nietzsche. He argued that the philosopher should not be a withdrawn introverted thinker but a "happy warrior," whose questions are meant to disturb us and alter the existing order of our lives.

It is possible to argue that Nietzsche is actually deeply religious. He seemed to be always grappling

with the issue of whether there is or is not a supra-sensory order and whether our life does or does not have a justifiable meaning, very much in the way historical religious figures grappled with such questions. Like them, he really appeared to be suffering with the intense and urgent process of seeking answers to religious-type questions.

In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, the work of an utterly lonely man, Part I introduces the final concept of the will to power. This will to power is seen in *Zarathustra* as the basic force underlying all human activities. Kaufmann (1968) points out that it is "a striving that cannot be accurately described either as a will to affect others or as a will to 'realize1 oneself; it is essentially a striving to transcend and perfect oneself."

Even from this brief description, it should be clear that the will to power is intimately connected with Nietzsche's second basic concept, that of the overman or *Übermensch*. Both Parts I and II of *Zarathustra* concentrate considerably on the concept of the will to power, the overman, and what we would call today "sublimation."

Kaufman (1967) wrote: "The overman is the type approximated by Goethe—the human being . . . who has organized the chaos of his passions, given style to his character, and become creative. Aware of life's terrors, he affirms life without resentment." As this concept developed later in Nietzsche's thought, he began to think of the overman as a superior individual who has the courage to revalue all values and respond with freedom to his will to power. Stumpf (1966) pointed out that, "Such an overman is not to be confused with a totalitarian bully." The overman would have to possess a balanced unity with Dionysian and Apollonian elements, the passionate man who has his passions under control. The passions, or the Dionysian element, are not to be repressed but rather harnessed or sublimated in the service of creative work.

It is probably already clear to the discerning reader that little information is really given in detail on how to *become* the overman, and that the wider the application of concepts such as the will to power or the overman to human psychology, the more indefinite does the whole matter become. Copleston (1965) rather uncharitably described the overman as, . . all that ailing, lonely, tormented, neglected Herr professor, Dr. Friedrich Nietzsche would like to be."

Nietzsche's intuitive psychological genius is revealed in his advice to the adolescent in Part I of *Zarathustra* where sublimation, self-healing, self-development, and overcoming are presented in poetic form.

The first two parts of *Zarathustra* also have something to say to those who would teach and to those who would heal others. Nietzsche (1968b) wrote: "Physician help yourself! Thus you help your patient too. Let this be his best help that he may behold with his eyes the man who heals himself." Nietzsche also pointed out, "it is by invisible hands that we are bent and tortured worst," and he presented what ought to be the working slogan of every practicing psychotherapist. "But the worst enemy you can encounter will always be you, yourself; you lie in wait for yourself in caves and woods."

All of *Zarathustra* is sprinkled with psychological insights. The section on the "pale criminal" anticipates modern psychodynamics by a hundred years; as does the comment, "What was silent in the father speaks in the son; and often I find the son the unveiled secret of the father" (1968b).

Part III deals with Nietzsche's concept of the eternal recurrence, which is presented as an explosive discovery of the most important magnitude, and which, to those trained in modern biology, evolutionary theory, and thermodynamics, appears to be completely unintelligible and out of date. Yet the doctrine of eternal recurrence is absolutely necessary to Nietzsche's thinking and must be understood as central to his heroic attempts to overcome modern day nihilism, which after all, is the whole point of his agony and philosophy. This is discussed at length by Heidegger (1982).

Morgan (1965) offered as reasoned a discussion of the eternal recurrence as one can possibly expect, although others such as Danto (1965) have attempted to present it as a more formal philosophical theory. Stambaugh (1972) made a brave attempt to rescue this muddled vision by distinguishing between "recurrence" and "return" to resolve the fantastic metaphysical and physical paradoxes it implies. Jaspers (1966) claimed that no one has taken this doctrine seriously since Nietzsche first proposed it—although it is the *decisive* point in his philosophizing! Attempts to explain or assimilate Nietzsche have usually sought to avoid it, and the reader can imagine the reaction that scientifically trained physicians or psychologists have when they are confronted with it.

Jaspers (1966) writes: "Stated simply, the doctrine is to the effect that being is not an endless

becoming of novelties, for everything recurs in extraordinarily great periods of time . . . . All that is has existed countless times and will return countless times." As Nietzsche (1968b) put it in *Zarathustra*:

> Everything goes, everything comes back; eternally rolls the wheels of being. Everything dies, everything blossoms again; eternally runs the year of being. Everything breaks, everything is joined anew; eternally the same house of being is built. Everything parts, everything greets every other thing again; eternally the ring of being remains faithful to itself. In every Now, being begins; round every Here rolls the sphere There. The center is everywhere. Bent is the path of eternity.

It should be noted that Zarathustra's immediate response to this doctrine as enunciated by his enemies is to criticize them for turning the doctrine into a "hurdy-gurdy song." In other words this doctrine is to be taken in a somewhat mystical fashion: ". . . that all things recur eternally, and we ourselves too; and that we have already existed an eternal number of times, and all beings with us" (1968b).

What are we to make of this? The conception of the eternal recurrence was the "ultimate fruit of his study of the Greeks," according to Hollingdale (1965) and it is "the fundamental idea" of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Later on in *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche described how it flashed into his consciousness and he regards the idea of the eternal recurrence as "the extremist formula of affirmation that can ever be attained." Morgan (1965) felt that this notion was developed by Nietzsche in order "to generate the greatest possible degree of energy." The purpose of generating this energy is to drive the individual *to live in such a way as he would be willing to have the life he has chosen recur again and again eternally*. It was Nietzsche's attempt to get the individual to overcome himself with the highest possible charge of energy —an exaltation of life—in which the individual attempts to become what he is to the fullest possible extent and which enables the individual to face the abyss and horror of the human predicament with "laughter" rather than despair, pessimism, and surrender. Thus Nietzsche introduced this important doctrine in an effort to stir the individual into a frenzy so as to aid him to affirm human life and live moment to moment.

This, of course, represents the starting point of much existential philosophy and existentially oriented psychotherapy. It suffers as one might expect from a certain mysticism and vagueness, and really offers little in the way of guidance for the individual who wishes to find out *how* to achieve overcoming, authenticity, and the condition of the overman. For Nietzsche it presents a more powerful

argument for his doctrine of the "revaluation of all values." Let us not forget that Nietzsche is tackling the question of what modern man must do in a situation where God is dead and, as Dostoevsky pointed out, thus anything is permitted. The revaluation of all values is Nietzsche's positive prescription for a critical analysis of modern man's ideals in order to develop a new approach to life that he may use, free of religious superstition, and leading to happiness, exaltation and a sense of the worthwhileness of existence.

The most impressive aspect of Nietzsche's life and thought has not been stressed yet in this book; his absolute integrity and sincere search for truth. It might be argued that such an integrity in our era almost *must* culminate in despair, since there are limits to truth beyond which humans cannot pass. Copleston (1965) suggested that what is really significant in Nietzsche "is not his proposed antidotes to nihilism but rather his existence and thought considered precisely as a dramatic expression of a lived spiritual crisis from which there is no issue in terms of his own philosophy."

In fact the best way to appreciate Nietzsche is to read Kaufmann's (1968) biography and follow this up with Middleton's excellent collection of Nietzsche's (1969) *Selected Letters*. As we read about Nietzsche's life and hear him speak in his letters, we can experience at least empathically the terrific agony of a man tearing himself away from middle class values and a secure professorship with a brilliant future, and forcing himself to look directly into the abyss of the truth and nihilism in our time. He warned us in *Beyond Good and Evil* "If you look upon monsters take care you do not become one yourself, for, should you gaze down into the abyss, the abyss may enter into you" (Nietzsche, 1968a). And indeed this is what happened to Nietzsche.

Jaspers (1966) described "the essential nature of the scholarly investigator: his incorruptibility, his ceaseless critical struggle with his own thinking, his simple and guileless passion." During the entire decade of Nietzsche's professorship, he lived in a state of tension, ceaselessly striving to preserve as much energy as possible from his rigorous professional duties to devote to the as yet indefinite calling which attracted and agitated him. Following Nietzsche's life and works as he attempts to become his authentic self and to pursue his philosophical star is an experience intensely personal and vital to anyone who sincerely wishes to live an honest life!

Morgan (1965) pointed out that the preponderant type of man in Nietzsche's day was "the Philistine," the "flock animal," who permitted himself occasional excursions into art or philosophy, but was careful to distinguish these amusements from the "serious business" of life, that is, making money. "Not so much his mediocrity as his shameless self-satisfaction in mediocrity, as if he were rightly the measure of all things aroused Nietzsche's ire." Perhaps when we recognize what Nietzsche had worked through in his own mind in contrast to the absolute indifference of the rest of the world to his writings, we can understand better the shrill tone of his 1888 writings.

What is most essential in Nietzsche is his unblinking honesty and personal integrity. His life depicts the abyss we all face, to which there is as yet no solution (a situation that Clark [1969] has called "the fallacy of hope"). Although personally he was a tragic and ironic failure, he was yet a man of great intellectual honesty and courage. Nietzsche's "lived spiritual crisis" reminds us intensely of his idea of living so that you want life repeated eternally. Thus it is Nietzsche's agony that has the great appeal, an agony which he compared to that of Christ's crucifixion.

Nietzsche anticipated his own problem, for he wrote in *Beyond Good and Evil*:

> Independence is for the very few; it is a privilege of the strong. And whoever attempts it even with the best right but without inner constraint proves that he is probably not only strong, but also daring to the point of recklessness. He enters into a labyrinth, he multiplies a thousand-fold the dangers which life brings with it in any case, not the least of which is that no one can see how and where he loses his way, becomes lonely, and is torn piecemeal by some minotaur of conscience. Supposing one like that comes to grief, this happens so far from the comprehension of men that they neither feel it nor sympathize. And he cannot go back any longer. Nor can he go back to the pity of men (Nietzsche, 1968a, pp. 231-2).

SCENE 3: NIETZSCHE'S HISTORICAL POSITION

Nietzsche had a great sense of historical consciousness; he wrote in that sense like Hegel. Some scholars have claimed that he was a moralist not an immoralist, for the reason that he was constantly asking how to live well. One of his crucial arguments was that a man is harmed if he is taught to be content with small pleasures, for this makes him unfit for enterprises requiring daring and independence. This was one of his big quarrels with the bourgeois morality that he was always writing about and complaining about.

One of the most important concepts in Nietzsche is expressed by "God is dead." Something that men

have lived on for centuries has vanished and so he predicted the catastrophes that are to come in the twentieth century; he announced that they will be unlike anything yet known. In his passion for integrity he tried to fashion a value system without God, based on the affirmation of man. He was absolutely obsessed in 1883 with the profound aloneness of modern man. Part of this was probably a reflection of his personal loneliness. His answer was that unless man becomes himself, unless we become ourselves, life is meaningless.

In *The Birth of Tragedy* life is given meaning through its aesthetic values, through art, through culture. In his *Zarathustra* phase, which is now two steps of thought later, he underplayed the importance of man as an aesthetic phenomenon and the importance of beauty, and he emphasized our responsibilities to ourselves for our own existence. This, of course, is where the philosophy of Sartre starts from.

For Nietzsche the highest ideal was the grand romantic artist or the philosopher or the genuine Christian. He asked us to conceive of life grandly and throw ourselves into it without reserve. He attacked certain characteristic individuals again and again, such as the "culture Philistine"—the hypocritical Christian, the man devoted to making money who just goes to sermons on Sunday morning.

He especially attacked Kant in that he disagreed with Kant's entire argument that philosophy should limit reason to make room for faith. The whole stated point of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* was to delineate the limitations of philosophy to make room for Kant's arbitrary pietistic other-worldly faith. Technically speaking, the philosophy of Nietzsche may in a sense be thought of primarily as an attempt to refute the philosophy of Kant.

He attacked Hegel, who attempted to read a divine process into history, reaching its culmination naturally in the philosophy of Hegel. Nietzsche was not a totalitarian, he was antinationalist, he detested the state, he was completely individualistic and in this sense he much disagreed with Hegel. He argued over and over again that all states inhibit and restrict, and the more totalitarian a state the more it inhibits and restricts. He called the state "a coldest of cold monsters." His burning desire was for a higher culture than has ever been before, what he called an ascending culture, and his problem was, how can this be accomplished without God or the state or Hegel's Absolute Ideal. Philosophy for Nietzsche was an earnest

and passionate struggle—which is characteristic of all existentialist philosophy. He was obsessed with these problems and wrote about them over and over again, exhausting himself and his readers. For the rest of his sane life he remained an eccentric, living only to write.

ACT IV:

NIETZSCHE'S MATURE PHILOSOPHY

SCENE 1: BEYOND GOOD AND EVIL

Beyond Good and Evil was published in 1886 for the ostensive purpose of explaining *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. *The Genealogy of Morals* was written a year later for the purpose of expanding on *Beyond Good and Evil*. The word genealogy means "a history of descent" and is a very important word in Nietzsche, even today (see Foucault 1981). He juxtaposed and contrasted something divinely given with something which evolved all by itself, has changing phases, and contains no fixed or eternal truth.

The word "revaluation" comes up repeatedly; for Nietzsche it represents internal criticism, an effort to find hypocrisy and mendacity. In this sense Nietzsche argues that Christianity was a revaluation of the values of antiquity. Early Christianity brought a freshness, honesty, and integrity to the decaying values of late antiquity. Now, Nietzsche said, a philosopher must come forward who gives a similar freshness and honesty to the decaying values of bourgeois organized Christianity.

For Nietzsche the philosophical will to truth, the intense search to find truth, comes out of the will to power. There is no Reality behind the world of appearances; Nietzsche argued that this Reality is an abstraction. What is actually Nietzsche's philosophy, as explained, is a monistic theory in which the concept of the will to power explains *everything* in the apparent world including the will to overcome yourself, the will to overcome other people, the will of nations to overcome other nations, and even the whole evolution of the universe.

He argued that if a herd of people is deprived of its external goals for the will to power, it will destroy itself—the will to power is so strong that if you block it in one direction it comes out in another; it will then will its own nothingness as a manifestation of the will to power!

Nietzsche can be thought of as having revolutionized ethics by asking new questions. His

predecessors assumed they *knew* what was good and what was evil; they assumed we all have a general sense of good and evil. They took for granted as eternal truths the cultural postulates of good and evil. Nietzsche turned that completely around. He assumed that the Judeo-Christian morality which underlies our culture and our ideals of good and evil were not given by God but rather were formed by what he calls resentment. Some translations of Nietzsche leave this in the French: *resentment*. It represents the hatred and the resentment of their masters by the oppressed classes in which Christianity first made headway. He called this early Christianity the slave morality; according to Nietzsche slave morality makes a virtue of necessity, and underlying it is not divine inspiration but rather hatred, envy, and a wishful revenge. His argument was that slave morality, the morality of the oppressed classes, contains an antagonism against excellence, a leveling tendency, and negation; it encourages conformity and mediocrity. In the conviction that sex is sinful, it devalues this world in favor of another and it has contradicted classical morality.

"Slave morality," claimed Nietzsche, is generated by fear and inadequacy, not by divine inspiration. In *The Genealogy of Morals* he elaborated at length on this thesis: moral systems evolve, they are not divine. Their justification, according to Nietzsche, is their use in human life as adaptational tools, not divine authority. Nietzsche was not primarily against Christ; what he was against was the established Christian church and the alliance of the state, the established church, and the bourgeois and capitalist classes. In that sense he was similar to Marx, except that he attacked middle class morality from an entirely different point of view than Marx, and he certainly would not have agreed with Marx's solutions.

Nietzsche's use of the phrase "blond beast," is often misunderstood. "Blond beast" for Nietzsche does not mean a Nazi six foot storm trooper, it means literally a lion. The Aryan-Semitic distinction, which appears in *The Birth of Tragedy* is dropped by Nietzsche later on as he becomes increasingly interested in superior and distinguished men of *all* races and backgrounds.

The point of Nietzsche's argument was that the result and hidden purpose of slave morality is to make the superior man suffer from guilt and bad conscience. The concept of "bad conscience," which began here, runs throughout all existentialist writing. When slave morality takes hold, according to Nietzsche, it puts a pressure on superior individuals to conform, to be mediocre. It causes them to engage in a self-aggression, a self-detestation, arising out of their very urge to excel. This is how the oppressed

get their revenge, according to Nietzsche.

At this point Nietzsche began to vigorously attack professional philosophers. His quarrel was with establishment and academic philosophers who were apologists for their current cultural systems of belief. The most notorious of these, of course, was Hegel, whose whole philosophy can be interpreted—perhaps wrongly—as an apology for the Prussian state as the highest culmination of dialectic. Nietzsche detested philosophers who argued that the culturally accepted morality and political climate—whatever it happened to be in their time—is eternally true, and tried to give philosophical arguments to show that it is both eternally true, should be as it is, and is forever justified by immutable Reality or immutable metaphysical foundations. He insisted these philosophers were "lobbying," they were not doing philosophy. It is above all the use of metaphysics to justify any given moral or political system that Nietzsche was quarreling with. He believed this to be a very dangerous and inexcusable lack of integrity.

Hume said you can never derive what should be from what is, and that is the center of Nietzsche's argument. One cannot derive an eternally true system of morality from *any* system of metaphysics. One cannot derive how people ought to behave from any argument about what is Reality. This has always been one of the basic schisms in philosophical debate.

The title *Beyond Good and Evil* means, What is the value of this or that value? When we start to ask such a question we are now going "beyond good and evil," we are now challenging whether we even know what is good and what is evil.

Nietzsche asked, why do foolish traditions— which no longer have any adaptive value—persist? He answered: because any rule is better than no rule at all. Without rules there cannot be a civilization and it is civilization which gives people a sense of meaning to their life. He suggested that we can do better than that. He wanted us to sublimate or "spiritualize" our urges and then express them. His argument against bourgeois Christian morality, as already hinted at even in *The Birth of Tragedy*, was that it represses and stupefies the passions, leaving them in a position of explosiveness. It is inimicable to life and to the attainment of greater achievement, of greater excellence, according to Nietzsche. It holds down both the ordinary man and the superior man.

His crucial point in *The Genealogy of Morals* was that when a morality outlives its purpose, it stunts

civilization. It starts out as something which is useful to civilization because it holds the society together. For instance early Christianity was extremely useful because it bore into the decaying disintegrating Roman Empire and produced from it a great new society and held that society together by the strength of its originality and its imagination. Nietzsche argued however, that by 1883 the great imaginative spirit of early Christianity has now congealed into a rigid doctrine and into an authoritative organization which he argues now stunts the growth of civilization.

These arguments are parallel to some in *The Birth of Tragedy* where myths are given this energizing force. They are first put into some kind of expressible shape by the Apollonian force, but then Socrates and Euripides for Nietzsche here represent intellectualization, dogmatization, and structuralization of these mythological forces; the whole thing becomes sterile. The same kind of thinking was now in *The Genealogy of Morals* transferred from his arguments about tragedy and culture to philosophy and the evolution of civilization itself.

Nietzsche was in a state of agony over what he perceived to be an encrustation of Christianity over barbarism—over a vacuum—and he perceived that it was going to explode. Yet this whole argument about an encrustation over an explosive force is another example of what Nietzsche meant by the will to power— that *all* phenomena, human or inanimate, can be understood in terms of a striving of this will to power against various things that stand in its way. This is more than a moral theory or ethical theory, it is a *metaphysical* theory.[1]

An important current example of Nietzsche's argument about slave morality will perhaps help to explain his often misunderstood concept. Consider a "truth" that was assumed as self-evident in Victorian culture in 1883:women are inferior to men, should be ruled by men, and "the woman's place is in the home." Even Freud never rose above this, so ingrained was it in the culture of the Victorian era. For *centuries* this was accepted as a self-evident eternal divinely-given truth because, said Nietzsche, it was necessary for the survival of the family in the stone age. The physically weaker woman indeed in the stone age really did have to stay home and there had to be a division of primitive labor for the family to survive at all.

Even our language, he wrote, contains prejudices that originate from the stone age need to survive,

to adapt, and to get power. Feminists today have emphasized the innumerable depreciating aspects of everyday language usage in referring to women, for example, "girl-Friday" for a female assistant. This is a fundamental argument of Nietzsche's philosophy; our very language and our very concept of what is self-evident —what is "obviously" true, what is "obviously" good—has hidden behind it the power needs and the adaptation needs of the culture that produced it.

This "truth" that women are inferior to men and should be ruled by them and belong in the home was important in the stone age. The modern age, of course, has changed this—a women doesn't have to stay in the home and the family won't be destroyed if she goes out and gets a job. Her children won't die if she pursues a career. According to Nietzsche the "truth" now must change! He argued further that it is a hypocritical religion which still teaches women now to be satisfied with such a "truth." The women who accept this traditional morality and the intellectuals who work for the establishment and therefore must rationalize traditional morality are the people who Nietzsche was bitterly attacking. Women who accept traditional morality of this nature, especially, for example, basing it on the Christian Bible, are accepting what Nietzsche called a slave morality, a morality which justifies their slavery and attempts to get their masters to be compassionate. They imply, "I will stay in my house, I'll be barefoot and pregnant, and by my devotion to you I'll hope that you will be compassionate to me and give me something to eat." Nietzsche convincingly argued that this kind of morality has hidden secretly behind it a hatred, a resentment, and a fear of the strength of the master.

It could be at least maintained that an important component of Nietzsche's anger at women, which runs throughout his writing, is based on the fact that women of his time (and even many today) so passively accepted this kind of morality. He felt that such women were in a sense just like the philosophers of the establishment; they were justifying and even advocating an acceptance of slave morality, which terribly inhibits the development of women.

This is an evolutionary philosophy. Nietzsche was profoundly influenced by Darwin as were many philosophers, and his whole concept is that "truths," like myths, arise in the context of a culture; there is no Absolute Reality "out there" to which they correspond at all. Darwin argued that there is no "ideal" of man "out there," that man has evolved and changed from the lower animals; he wasn't just suddenly created in terms of some ideal or image in the mind of God. Nietzsche said the same about "truth"; he was

translating Darwin into the realm of philosophy.

Myths and truths arise in a culture. In an early culture they have an important adaptive value, they hold the civilization together, they give a sense of coherence, people are willing to die for them, and as such they enable a smaller group sometimes to overthrow a larger group--so they are useful in the struggle for power. Then as time passes the force of these "truths" congeals, encrusts, solidifies, and becomes obsolescent. At this point in the culture it becomes a repressive force—an obstacle—and sets up a situation that is explosive, because of the increasing pressure of the will to power in every civilization and in every person. As these truths are no longer useful in expressing these forces by sublimation, but now become a block, the result is an irresistible force against an immovable object—which results in an explosion. That, he correctly argued, was the situation in 1883.

He got into deeper philosophical trouble as we shall see over the subject of master morality or noble morality. In master morality obedience and rules are out; one does not follow blindly any set of rules. The *person* rather than the act is judged. He said that *the person confers a value on himself* by self-overcoming, by discipline, and by triumph over impulses with much unavoidable suffering. In other words, as Sartre borrowed this straight out of Nietzsche, *man creates himself*. He is responsible and cannot plead moral codes or rules for what he did. So Eichmann's defense, "I was just following orders" would be an anathema to Nietzsche; actually Eichmann is probably an excellent example of who Nietzsche had in mind by slave morality. Following orders, according to bourgeois morality, for a soldier is a highly valued thing to do. The general tells you to shoot those ten people; if you are a good soldier you shoot them; it is only a step from this to the whole history of the twentieth century. Nietzsche would abominate such behavior.

Nietzsche was what you might call a moral revolutionary not a moral reformer. He was not interested in changing our moral codes, he was interested in attacking the whole notion of morality and where it comes from, and so going "beyond good and evil." In this sense Nietzsche said philosophers must be "legislators," they must be *creators* of value.

There is an important counter-argument against Nietzsche's attack on Christian morality as based on resentment. Nietzsche was right in attacking hypocritical morality—the businessman who goes to

church on Sunday and then robs everybody all week long. That is true, but that is not the way Christian morality was originally conceived. It was primarily directed by Jesus at man's spiritual core, at man as a member of the Kingdom of God—which Jesus thought was literally at hand. It was not presented by Jesus as a series of rules on how to conduct yourself in this particular world—which He thought was about to end. It was aimed at much much higher spiritual values and aimed at a cataclysmic change.

Nietzsche unfortunately ignored the specific depiction of master morality. Often one gets the feeling he was really describing Christ's morality all over again, and yet in those areas where he was not describing the same old morality all over again he brought up dreadful "superior" examples like Napoleon or Caesar Borgia! This is obvious hyperbole which he himself admits. We never really get a very clear picture of Nietzsche's overman or superman, what he is really going to be like, and just how different he is going to be from a really decent spiritual Christian.

In *Beyond Good and Evil* (sections 188 and 198) he emphasized discipline but also emphasized that there is no such thing as an eternal universal morality. This is one of Nietzsche's most important points. No moral code is applicable to all men at all times. Notice that this is a direct contradiction to Kant. Yet in *Beyond Good and Evil* he was constantly saying that the will to power is a universal eternal drive in all men and it is the key to all human psychology. He argued that it should be bent to self-overcoming here and now, rather than to try to achieve some kind of eternal perfection for another world. In this sense Nietzsche described himself as the Antichrist.

The *Antichrist* in 1888 offered a summary of his attack on Christianity, which here he defined as the religion of Paul. So, in spite of the title, it was not an attack on Christ but on the religion of Paul. In this short shrill book he again stressed the concept of resentment. Organized Christianity and the resentment of the slave morality embedded in organized Christianity he considered opposed to the basic spirit of Jesus and the basic life-style of Jesus. In this work he again denounced anti-Semitism, in much contrast to Wagner. He actually admired the Man Jesus; his notion of Jesus was more like Dostoevsky's notion of Jesus in his novel *The Idiot*, portraying a Jesus- like figure who is an "idiot" in his simplicity. Nietzsche's use of the term Antichrist is *not* meant to name Christ's enemy of the second coming, and it is not a theological term. It is borrowed from Schopenhauer. Schopenhauer used the term Antichrist to represent a view that the world has no eternal or God-given moral significance. That is why Nietzsche called

himself the Antichrist—because it was his view that the world does not *per se* have any moral significance but only the values that men give it.

SCENE 2: THE WILL TO POWER

Nietzsche produced a pre-Socratic cosmology, what is known technically as an immanent metaphysics. For him the nature of Being is a continual clashing, a continual overcoming, a continual shaping and breaking, creating and destroying, in flux and change. This occurs in everything, and this is all there is. That is his definition of the will to power; *everything* is a manifestation of this Will to Power.

The Will to Power (Nietzsche 1968), especially Book III, I consider to be the most important and exciting of Nietzsche's work (although, as stated, it consists of unpublished notes) and I do not think has yet been sufficiently appreciated by modern scholars. In section 481 of Book III Nietzsche said there are no such things as facts, there are only interpretations. He beats this drum again, and again, and again. The first section of Book III, called "The Will to Power as Knowledge", carried his attack on knowledge to the extreme.

Descartes' absolute certainty—"I think therefore I am"—was taken to pieces by Nietzsche in section 484 (as well as in *Beyond Good and Evil*) because it already contains a value judgment, namely that there is an I, a thinking subject. Nietzsche pointed out there is no reason to make that judgment, there is no certainty about that, it is just a belief or "prejudice." Similarly, in section 494 he asked the extraordinary question, What *right* do we have to assume that our knowledge should ever extend further than what would be strictly necessary for the preservation of life? That we should know "anything more than what we absolutely have to know for the survival of the species" was questioned by Nietzsche, again consistent with the theory of evolution. He pointed out (in section 496) that our apparatus for acquiring knowledge is not designed for "knowledge" and that it is a mistake to think we are given some kind of a divine mind which is designed specifically by its Creator to learn eternal truths. He adopted an evolutionary view of the mental apparatus and sees it as evolving for the purpose of survival.

From this view there is no reason to believe that our knowledge would be other than strictly in the service of survival. Thesis: the mental apparatus or psyche was given to us by our Divine Creator for the

purpose of our reaching out towards eternal truth. Antithesis: the mental apparatus evolved over the centuries strictly for the purpose of preserving the species and therefore the "knowledge" we have is strictly in the service of adaptation. In sections 505 and 506 he pointed out that even our sense perceptions are permeated with value judgments, a revolutionary idea in philosophy, for he attacked what is often believed in philosophy to be the most objective of all knowledge, so-called empirical data or even "atomic facts."

One of the reasons science has been overvalued is because of the mistaken notion that science discovers "truth." He argued that science does not discover truth because there is no truth to discover. There is no objective Truth. Science for Nietzsche is a tool, which can be used for life or against life. The value of science is that of a useful adaptational tool in the struggle for power—ask any army general.

When Kant asked "How are synthetic *a priori* judgements possible in physics?" He assumed that they *were* possible. Nietzsche said: What is the value of such judgments, why do we have to make judgments like that, why do we need them? His answer was, because we need to put together these structures in a science—it gives us a tool, a weapon, which is good for ourselves. Thus he makes a *very* important statement: "every action requires illusion." At the bottom of *V* every action there has to be illusory belief in something ascertain. Without such beliefs we tend not to take any action at all.

This is the problem of Hamlet. In spite of the ghost—for perhaps it is a demon—he can never be absolutely sure that the events really happened to his father. Therefore, he can never get himself to take action. It is only when he himself is actually stabbed and poisoned that he feels a certainty that he has been wronged; then he takes action at once. A very famous analysis of Hamlet was provided by Nietzsche. His point was that our behavior in every culture is based on certain illusions and the basic illusion is that these premises are absolutely true.

What Plato called Eternal Ideas Nietzsche would call illusions—this is the reason that Nietzsche over and over again said that his philosophy is the exact opposite of Plato!

The Twilight of the Idols is a hundred page summary, written in 1888, of Nietzsche's philosophy that should be high on any reading list. It has a subtitle about "philosophizing with a hammer" that has been constantly misunderstood. The hammer he is talking about does not mean the hammer of the brute

who goes around smashing things with a hammer; Nietzsche means a tuning fork. If one went to an antique store and wanted to buy a real idol, to see if it was empty or full inside or if it was solid or empty, one would use a tuning fork and the reverberations would tell whether it was empty or full. What he meant here is that our idols are empty—they are the empty idols of prejudices of the philosophers, already reviewed in Book I of *Beyond Good and Evil*, and fervently discussed in Book II of *The Will to Power*. Francis Bacon in his early philosophical work listed "idols of the crowd," "idols of the market place," and so on, in one of the first attacks on philosophical prejudices and medieval philosophy—Nietzsche had him in mind.

Nietzsche argued that science, religion, art, and morality are useful fictions and they are all instances of the Will to Power. In other words, reality is essentially chaotic and art, religion, morality, and science impose a form, a structure, an intelligibility on it which enable us to mastery and control. This was Nietzsche's basic philosophical point: nothing is absolutely true, a total nihilism—there is no way ever to find absolute truth since there *is* no such thing. There is nothing except the eternal strife of will against will.

How can you make a statement like that if nothing is true? Any statement about what is true or what is out there in the world, by your own definition must also not be true! Here is a logical paradox in Nietzsche's argument, again reminiscent of Socrates, and just as deliberate.

SCENE 3: NIETZSCHE ON TRUTH AND SCIENCE

The need for humans to preserve their sense of dignity and importance is what all conceptual schemes arise from, said Nietzsche. Societies differ in what their basic conceptual schemes are; their religions, their sciences, their morality, their art differ. Even individual persons differ about their conceptual schemes. Art illusions make life bearable and science illusions help us adapt to life, but primarily it is art for Nietzsche which supplies metaphors and precedes science. Many modern social psychologists agree with this, and in the evolution of cultures it is usually artistic metaphors and myths which come first and then out of these emerge the sciences of the culture.

The role of art changed over Nietzsche's writing. In *The Birth of Tragedy* it was given the highest

importance. One might claim that the whole of Nietzsche's mature philosophy was an attempt to find something to replace art—to fill the space left empty by his disillusionment with Wagner and his disillusionment with art as giving meaning to life.

Nietzsche argued that philosophy should be the science of the origins of thought rather than the pursuit of absolute truth, so that the crucial problem of philosophy is not to provide solutions to problems which philosophers have quarreled about for ages, but to show how and why the quarrels between philosophers have really arisen.

This is a theme taken up by many contemporary philosophers. For instance, modern language philosophers argue that the quarrels in philosophy arise from mistakes in language—when one hypostasizes grammatical concepts. He added to this something even more unique when he proclaimed that science is *also* an invention, just like philosophy.

That leaves Nietzsche with a sort of pragmatic criterion of truth. There can be no correspondence theory of truth because there is nothing in an eternal objective order to correspond with as far as Nietzsche is concerned. The so-called objective world of common sense is an evolved creation of the human mind. There are no facts, there are only rival interpretations; it is will versus will.

This doctrine is usually called *perspectivism*, and it is considered his major philosophical doctrine. Thus, for Nietzsche, so-called common sense would be a mass metaphysics or the metaphysics of the herd. His argument was that, constituted as we are, it is extremely difficult to break out of this—to break out of mass metaphysics. Human life, according to Nietzsche, is sunk in falsehood, and his philosophy can be thought of as a compulsive effort to break out of this morass of falsehood. There are only *prevailing perspectives*, there is no truth, and these perspectives are the prevailing prejudices of the time.

This is more extreme than the pragmatism of William James because, according to Nietzsche, no philosophical system has truth—not even pragmatism, not even Nietzsche's system; there is no such thing as truth.

He had very high esteem for the scientific method of questioning and testing hypotheses, but he argued that science does not reach truth—it just reaches temporary truths. In other words, men will

always have to live on hypotheses, never on truth, and although the results of science may endure they do not endure absolutely. The most famous example of course, is Newton's science which was thought to be enduring for all times; it was thought by Kant to be an absolute synthetic *a priori* science and yet it was completely overturned by Einstein. As previously explained, Nietzsche answers Kant's question about how are synthetic *a priori* judgments possible in physics with the question, *why* is the belief in such judgments necessary? This is a question that never occurred to Kant; he just took it for granted that there were such judgments and that they were true for all times. Nietzsche answered his own question—that survival and power become greater if one can make generalizations.

Therefore, science is not a summary of observations as naively used to be thought, but it is a temporary creative organization of the world and it is related to the original observations in very complicated ways, fat more complicated than dreamed of in the nineteenth century. The fictions of science are useful but science claims too much when it claims to have discovered truth.

SCENE 4: NIETZSCHE AND LANGUAGE

Nietzsche was a philologist. He did not, like analytic philosophers, argue only that philosophers have been misled by language; he said *everyone* has been misled by language from childhood. All of our fundamental concepts are nothing but "lucky hits" in the struggle for life and power. If he were alive today he would give the example of the "quark" from physics—is this a "thing," a "fact," a "concept," or is it simply a fortunate explanatory fiction? Even "facts" do not exist for Nietzsche—they are interpretations; they are extractions from sense data. Every fact is an organization out of the chaos of experience. *Nothing* is rock bottom certain and there are no "basic" or "atomic" facts. Here is the absolute extreme of nihilism.

Causation, which Nietzsche said is nothing but a social and individual habit, locks us into a perspective of "things with their causes," for one cannot conceive of "causation" without discreet "things" "causing" each other. Here we have the "fiction which is dependent on fictions" according to Nietzsche. The whole perspective is embedded in our very language, which was the language necessary for survival in the stone age, the most efficient power language.

This explains Nietzsche's frenzied use of poetic diction, deliberate paradoxes, and perverted use of terms. Like the Zen *Koan* it is an attempt to wreck the shell of ordinary language and expose us to chaos — which is all there is as far as Nietzsche was concerned.

Nietzsche opposed all two-world doctrines. He called Plato "Europe's greatest misfortune" and he insisted that any idea of a world of Forms or Reality is an unnecessary reduplication. He followed what became the pragmatic theory of truth, as explained, yet he could not accept the pragmatic theory of truth either, for he would say there is no theory of truth; nothing is true! So even the theory defining "truth" as a belief that is successful in adaptation would be rejected by Nietzsche.

His attack on so-called eternal or divinely given moral principles is simply a subclass or example of Nietzsche's whole philosophy: there is no Reality, no moral order, no divinely given rules and regulations which anything has to correspond with. For Nietzsche the apparent world is the only world that there is, and the idea that there is a Real fixed eternal world he called a lie, or to put it in Nietzsche's sometimes more tactful terminology, the intellect is an instrument but what it produces are fictions. So he (1968) wrote: "Untruth is a condition of life."

As Nietzsche became insane or at least increasingly extreme as in *Ecce Homo* and some of his last writings, he became a total solipsist. The standpoint of solipsism is to deny not only an objective eternal world behind appearances but to deny even the world of appearances as being anything except something created by one's own mind. Nietzsche in his final productive works in 1888 went towards that position and began to argue that he was God: . that he created his whole apparent world as well as other people creating their eternal worlds. This is the farthest point of his nihilism.

Nietzsche said that language causes reason to postulate entities like Real World, substance, unity, cause, things, and Being; these notions are embedded in our very language but they are nothing but articles of faith or, to put it formally, the "categories of the understanding" that Kant talks about are absolutely built into the structure of our speech. This whole perspective is a grammatical error according to Nietzsche; it is spurious and we are misled by our own grammar. We have nothing but useful fictions to operate with according to him, so concepts like space, time, lines, planes, surfaces—and all the favorite universals of philosophers—are nothing but fictions, which we need in order to live. We can't survive as

well without them; beings with a different language and with a different kind of reasoning power would construct a different world. They would experience the world differently and develop a different set of laws and concepts which seem absolutely "true" to them, in order to survive with their particular mental apparatus in their environment. Again and again he wrote all these "entities" and immutable laws are nothing but "a tissue of lies and frauds" built into our very language and our experience because of their survival value. The Newtonian "laws of nature," and so on, for Nietzsche are only fictions; they are necessities for us to survive but they have no absolute value. They do not correspond to any eternal reality or show some "purpose" in the mind of God.

This is why he constantly said that his philosophy is dangerous, for it ruins by challenging these fictions, and these fictions are most important to our culture because they give survival power value. Perceptual and linguistic presuppositions are illusory "necessities" for survival, but are neither entities nor explanations, according to Nietzsche.

Notes

1 In the present work from now on, when I wish to stress the metaphysical nature of the Will to Power, I will use some capital letters.

ACT V:

NIETZSCHE, PSYCHOLOGY, AND METAPHYSICS

SCENE 1: NIETZSCHE AS PSYCHOLOGIST

The "will" is an utterly obscure concept— thoughts are not "caused" by a spiritual agent, wrote Nietzsche, a position that has been much supported by research in brain physiology. "Thoughts" as they occur to us are the computer printout of the complex electrical activity of the brain.

The person who argues for either free will or determinism is arguing for a particular fictional construct that he thinks is the best one for adaptation and power. They are all perspectives and that explained for Nietzsche why one cannot resolve these arguments. In such age-old interminable philosophical debates, who is wrong and who is right? Both are wrong, because both are organizing experience through different perspectives, neither of which are "true." His philosophical psychology and his philosophical perspectivism fit each other and they are consistent.

Nietzsche is the first great psychologist who attacked the notion of consciousness. Until Nietzsche's time consciousness was considered something almost divine—the great separation between man and the animals. Descartes, of course, makes it the starting point of all philosophy. Nietzsche turned the whole discussion around. He asked, why is there consciousness at all? He reminded us that other species get along just fine without it!

If consciousness is not something divinely given as man's unique attribute, then where does it come from? He answered this in *The Gay Science*. It has power value, survival value, because it comes from the necessity to communicate; it has social origin. Man is a weak animal and he needs constant care by his fellows. In order to express our needs we have to know ourselves. This is a social and evolutionary theory of the origin of consciousness.

Language has to express "the perspective of the herd," as he called it. Easy communication is

necessary for survival so we all have to know what we mean by certain basic words. A very important contrast appears here in philosophy between Nietzsche and the so-called British ordinary language philosophers. Philosophers like Strawson begin by *accepting* ordinary language. They would say our philosophical problems arise out of the incorrect use of language. Nietzsche was *far* more radical; he said, whatever becomes conscious and said in language is already "shallow and stupid." All common language that the British philosophers are interested in represents nothing but "herd signs," signs that developed to enable easy communication for survival. He wanted to revise and overcome ordinary language, in contrast to the British philosophers who take it as a given starting point.

Furthermore, he said there is no certain knowledge of inner states, there are just familiar states. We constantly try to change the unfamiliar to the familiar. That was his rather simplistic theory of dreams. Dreams for Nietzsche represent a search in the imagination for "causes" of random physiological sensations. They are arbitrary interpretations of these stimuli—which are experienced *first*, before the explanations. His point was that in our waking state man "reasons" the same way—the representation a certain state *produces* is taken to be the *cause* of the state. All are fictions, useful in sleep and waking to give an apparent rational structure to the world. His dream theory is wrong because he left out the unconscious mind discovered by Freud, but it is a useful example of what he was talking about in his entire psychology. A person is asleep and has a sensation of the alarm going off. It is an unfamiliar noise going off in his head while he is asleep—so he dreams something that fits the noise into some context that makes it familiar. It is all aimed at comfort, not really providing understanding of anything. There is no capturing of Reality in either the mental or physical sciences. For Nietzsche, the inner and outer world are images of each other, projections and reflections.

Man is an animal with no separate soul, said Nietzsche, although he is not a behaviorist since he claimed that in psychology we use both introspection and sense perception. There are no facts of consciousness; everything is colored by wishes and especially the wish to be comfortable. He rejected all "mental faculties," all "pure thought," and the whole Cartesian notion of the mind as a "thinking substance." As a matter of fact, he viewed consciousness as a danger to the organism. He said that our most efficient acts were automatic acts—for instance, typing—we do that far more efficiently than thinking about a mathematical problem. Typing comes automatically—one needs no reflective consciousness while typing. This is a deliberate tremendous overturning of the role that consciousness has been given

in philosophy up to this time, far more radical even than Freud.

The notion that passion and not reason controls and drives man was not Freud's discovery, it was Nietzsche's fundamental principle, but he always added that sublimations of these passions are best. He was not an advocate of raw, crude passions but he insisted that the body and the mind, or passion and reason, are inseparable. He emphasized the plasticity of human nature. Even conflict can be good, because it generates growth. For Nietzsche, man is the only sick and unfinished animal.

He made a disastrous blunder in genetics. Like Freud he believed in the Lamarckian theory; this view underlies Nietzsche's hope that if we can produce his aristocratic overman it would then be inherited. This is now definitely proven biologically not possible. He wanted man not to peter out—genetics for Nietzsche is at the core of our being and our fate. Only man, he said, is yet not fixed in heredity. In contrast to other species, man is sick and unsettled. He claimed that man is stabilizing at a hereditary mediocrity; he was thinking mainly about the Victorian man, the bourgeois self-satisfied man. He wanted to elevate man . . . otherwise, "the last man!" He thought of himself as trying to save the entire human species from a disaster. It is a Messianic kind of philosophy and is very egotistical.

There is no thinking subject and there are no things-in-themselves for Nietzsche. Such agents cannot be truly separated from the process of appearance. He pointed out that scientists and artists create a second degree world out of the world of appearances— an arranged and simplified version. This, of course, can be done in innumerable ways, so obviously we can have many artistic versions of the world and many scientific versions of the world. They are perspectives and they all involve a simplification and a reduction and furthermore—a fascinating part of Nietzsche's psychology—a person's perspective changes as he moves through the phases of life from childhood to old age. This has been experimentally proven by research in developmental psychology--for example, a child from birth to adolescence undergoes substantial changes in his perspective of space, time, causation, and so on. Nietzsche would take it even further—he would say that all through our whole life we go through phases in which perspectives change; for example, the old jocular adage that a college student who is not a liberal has no heart and a middle-aged person who is not a conservative has no brains. Life compels us to these changes because they are required for adaptation; we live in a world of continual flux and conflict and as we get older we have different problems, therefore we require different perspectives ("truths") to provide

power to resolve these problems.

SCENE 2: NIETZSCHE AND HEGEL

Hegel was one of the first philosophers to take the history of philosophy seriously. Hegel claimed that philosophy progressed by what he called dialectic to culmination and fulfillment, and that culmination and fulfillment happened to be the philosophy of Hegel. Nietzsche, as one might guess, could not agree with this because he did not believe in any possible moving towards any absolute truth; he insisted that there is no absolute truth. He said that one philosophy just corrects another, so the history of philosophy is simply one of power clashes. Philosophers are constantly fighting with each other but it does not lead anywhere; there is no truth and no fulfillment. No higher truth emerges from this clash—only continuous clashes of wills; sometimes one perspective temporarily predominates and sometimes another, explained Nietzsche.

A third obvious view would be that philosophy is going *backwards*, and that is the view of Heidegger (1968, Steiner 1979) who argued that philosophy is retrogressive—it has led away from the key question with which it began, namely, man's relationship to Being. According to Heidegger, philosophy has moved steadily to the "technical" and away from openness to Being. Heidegger borrowed from Nietzsche; also following Nietzsche, he made Socrates the turning point.

Hegel thought of himself at the close of an era and he thought of himself as the last great world historical philosopher who had finally reconciled Greek philosophy and Christian dogma, and who had produced a fulfillment of all philosophy. This is in great contrast to Nietzsche, who thought of himself as beginning a new era. Nietzsche maintained that he had uncovered the hypocrisy of Christian morality, a morality which depreciates this life, diminishes striving, and emphasizes other-worldly retribution and reward. He saw himself as the Messianic herald of the anti-Christian epoch.

He attacked Christian morality from another point of view, for he challenged the compulsion arising from Christian morality to run and help others rather than perfecting one's self first. Hiding behind the respectable facade of Christian virtue he called Tartuffery, after the character in Moliere's t famous play, *Tartuffe*. Above all he opposed those who profess Christianity but are unchristian in their

practice.

For Nietzsche the weak will not find happiness through conformity. Only the man with self-overcoming can find the good life here—not in dreams of the next life. Socrates and Goethe are offered as supreme examples of men who have attained this excellence— here again we see Nietzsche's curious ambivalence towards Socrates. He argued that if man would perfect himself first, then a lot of goodness would come automatically.

For Nietzsche there is no such thing as a finished system of anything. Nietzsche can be compared to Leonardo daVinci; in their work nothing is finished. Every work of art that Leonardo did he abandoned. He was never satisfied with anything he did, he was always asking questions—what Nietzsche calls fearless questioning—but he never found enough answers to satisfy himself.

Nietzsche distinguished among philosophers between the philosophical laborers, as he calls them in *Beyond Good and Evil*, who present systems that are nothing but wish fulfillment, and what he would call philosophers proper, who create new values and new truths. Therefore, according to Nietzsche, a philosophical system rests on basic assumptions which are nothing but the expression of the mental makeup of the philosopher.

For example, Nietzsche might say that the reason Whitehead developed his particular philosophy is that it occurred to Whitehead after a very significant event in Whitehead's life, the death of his only son in World War I, which was a disaster he never got over. All of Whitehead's philosophy can be thought of as an attempt to produce an interrelatedness of everything in this world and the next so that you are in a sense reunited with everyone who has died and who will come ahead of you. To get a little nasty about it, Nietzsche might also say that Whitehead's philosophy changed when Bertrand Russell made a pass at his wife —which led to a power struggle that was reflected in a clash between their subsequent philosophies. These are things not published in the professional journals of philosophical laborers, but they are documented in all the biographies of Russell and Whitehead.

So, according to Nietzsche, God, "the moral law within," Truth, and *all* premises must be questioned, must be under suspicion. He then proceeded to give us a metaphysics of his own as if he had not written anything at all up until then about the impossibility of attaining truth in philosophy!

SCENE 3: NIETZSCHE'S METAPHYSICS

The core of his thought and the key to his entire philosophy is the notion of the Will to Power. This has nothing to do with fascism or politics; it depends heavily on sublimation—the powers of self-control, the power expressed in the creation of art, the power in self-discipline and overcoming suffering. It has nothing to do primarily with the subjugation of other people. It is based, as everything in Nietzsche is based, on the Greeks—here he has in mind the Greek concept of a contest, for example, between Socrates and his judges in the *Apology*. The acme of power for Nietzsche is the self-possessed man who has no fear of himself, no fear of other men, no fear of death, and whose simple personality--unaided by any props—changes the lives of all who encounter him. In Socrates and Goethe he admired men of intelligence, passionate men who master their passions and who use these passions intelligently and creatively.

One can make what is known as a "hard interpretation" of Nietzsche or a "soft interpretation" of Nietzsche, because his language is ambiguous. There are plenty of passages in which the will to power seems to be described as two barbarians hitting each other over the head with clubs. If one is sympathetic to Nietzsche, then one likes to think of a more gentle intellectual or cultural type of contest. The reader must choose his own perspective in this deliberately ambiguous presentation by Nietzsche.

The key assumption is that the only thing wanted for its own sake is power. Even in the sex act, power for him is what counts—and clearly Nietzsche over-interprets everything with respect to this one doctrine. Furthermore it is objected that he is not a philosopher because he did not really give a systematic account or a scientific study of this. He did not study apparent exceptions to it, nor did he study alternative possibilities; this is poor professional philosophy.

Nietzsche did a lot of preaching rather than analyzing carefully of his own metaphysics; at times he even applied his one principle to the inanimate world. Why did he do this? He deliberately chose this unpleasant phrase "will to power" because he wanted to shock. He was trying to counteract Victorian prudery. "Will to power" was considered a very nasty phrase especially in those days; it would have horrified anyone who professed hypocritical Christian morality or "Tartuffery." In *Ecce Homo* one finds him worriedly saying; don't mistake me, above all don't misunderstand me! What he was really talking about was a course of thought, not action—a striving to transcend one's self (a soft interpretation of Nietzsche).

The Dionysian man who gives style to his own character and who can tolerate his passions because he is strong enough to control them was Nietzsche's ideal. This man, this overman, achieves joy—he wants nothing to be different than it is—in Nietzsche's famous phrase *amor fati*.

Amor fati is the direct negation of Schopenhauer's pessimism. Nietzsche's man overcomes himself, embraces the struggle of life with happiness, and rejoices in it. Schopenhauer's man is pessimistic —he withdraws from life into either music or asceticism. Here is a very important contrast between these two philosophers and it shows how far Nietzsche came since his early idealization of Schopenhauer's philosophy.

Nietzsche's Will to Power is an absolute and therefore it contradicts Nietzsche's own philosophy. It forms a hypostasized metaphysical force. In other words, he has taken his observations of the will to power as manifest in various situations and has hypostasized it into an absolute force which exists *everywhere* . This is exactly what he complains that other philosophers do, and like them he starts to use it instead of divine design, for example, to explain evolution. It is clearly being used with the same explanatory function as divine plan; to say that man has evolved because God had a plan in His mind that man should reach a certain image or a certain peak, or to say man evolved because Will to Power is an action in everything, is still appealing to an organizing force—whether we call it divine or some other absolute. It is therefore an ontological concept and it places Nietzsche into the tradition of classical philosophy in spite of all his protest. It is an ontological concept just like "substance," a monistic philosophy in the ancient pre-Socratic tradition of monism, the ultimate explanatory principle of everything.

It is also an experimental idea, in that Nietzsche is somewhat different as he oscillates back and forth; sometimes he talks as if "this is it," and sometimes he talks as if it is an experimental idea he is toying with.

For Nietzsche pain becomes a normal ingredient of every organic event. We don't have to explain the presence of evil; evil is necessary, pain is necessary, suffering is necessary—all are part of conflict. The aim of life then becomes not happiness but power.

Happiness or pleasure or joy for Nietzsche is a side-effect of continual self-overcoming. This is a

very important idea, because for philosophers up to Nietzsche happiness consisted of peace and repose where one is not driven by one's passions and by one's needs. Aristotle, for example, says every man seeks *eudaemonia*, which in Greek does not mean happiness (a common mistranslation), it means freedom from being pursued by troubles, a sense of repose. Here Nietzsche was even ahead of the early Freud (Chessick 1980).

Let us turn next to the overman (*Übermensch*) and the last man (*der Letzte Mensch*). The term overman has been translated as "superman" by most translators. Kaufmann (1968) translated it as "overman," because superman today has a Nazi connotation (most translators still don't agree with him). It is important to know that the overman theoretically includes women—it isn't specifically a sexist idea. It is a term which comes from Goethe's *Faust*, a poem against the petrifaction of knowledge, against the sterile academician.

One of the important differences between the overman and the last man is that the last man is characterized by wishing to be like everyone else as much as possible. The last man wishes to be content and happy. The overman on the other hand, is a person who has organized the chaos of his passions, given style to his character, and has become creative. He is aware of life's terrors but he affirms life without resentment. He sees perfection as a task. Nietzsche again and again insisted on trying to give a meaning to one's own life without Christianity, for he claimed there is no such thing as supernatural dignity. For Nietzsche, man is not separated out in some divine fashion and the only dignity to man's life is the dignity we give it.

According to Nietzsche, to raise ourselves above the senseless flux of appearance, we must cease being human-all-too-human (to use his phrase); we must be hard against ourselves, overcome ourselves, and be "creators not creatures." He believed that if we could get some people to be that way it could then be inherited (which, as explained, is simply biologically wrong, since acquired characteristics cannot be inherited). Nietzsche appreciated great men not because they made history but because he saw them as embodying a state of being that all of us long for. For Nietzsche, this was the only ultimate value there is, the overman.

It gets to be quite an argument as to just what Nietzsche was talking about in this overcoming. For

instance, how much of this is a reflection of Nietzsche's attempt to overcome his own psychosomatic illnesses and headaches? It depends on whether we take a hard or a soft interpretation of Nietzsche. If we take a soft interpretation we see this more or less as a philosophical position, whereas a hard interpretation views Nietzsche as projecting his own personal struggle to stay afloat in his philosophy. As an example from recent studies, Stern (1979) disagreed with Kaufmann and claimed that Nietzsche's idea of the overman is a call to conquest and a call to enhancement of an elect percentage of mankind. Nietzsche is open to this kind of criticism because of the rhetorical and ambiguous terminology he deliberately used.

He is also open to criticism because Nietzsche does not ever explain how a person should become an overman. It is easy enough to tell somebody to be an overman but it is another trick to tell them how to become one. Nietzsche gave very little illustration of this throughout all his work. He offered us the idea that the overman is a joyous person and a guiltless person and a master of his drives who may even decide to turn these drives to produce science, art, or philosophy, but he did not really explain how to reach that point.

One of the most important differentiations between the overman and the last man is in that the last man is looking for peace and quiet, contentment and happiness. Nietzsche scorned this; he considered it to be degenerate, to be a sign of the exhaustion of the culture. The overman, on the other hand, is an adventurer who joyously affirms traveling to the moon in a spaceship, or creating a new scientific field, and so on, and as an adventurer the overman has to accept suffering and pain and overcome it, in contrast to the last man, whose happiness is perhaps the T.V. set and a can of beer.

The most difficult part of Nietzsche for students to understand is the concept of the eternal recurrence, "the eternal recurrence of the same." Commentators widely disagree even on the importance of this concept. Jaspers (1966) essentially ignored the eternal recurrence, whereas Heidegger (1979) considered it very important. The reason I am inclined to follow Heidegger is that Nietzsche himself considered his discovery of the eternal recurrence to be the most exciting of his concepts and to be the capstone that puts the hammerlock of authenticity on his philosophical system.

This doctrine is not as original as Nietzsche made it out to be. It was held in one form or another by

pre-Socratic philosophers, especially Pythagoras and Empedocles. It was also held by the German poet Heine. If it is true, it reinforces tremendously the importance of joyously affirming our present existence and giving style and meaning to life. Imagine if one is going to have to live this moment over again, eternally over again many many times, how important it is to make every moment the most joyous exciting creative moment one can make it. The concept of authenticity and making life meaningful is one of the fundamental tenets of existential philosophy. Existential psychotherapists also have this in common with Nietzsche, but like him they never give much explanation of how you are supposed to do it. Like Nietzsche, they tell you in the most powerful rhetoric possible it is very important, and certainly if the eternal recurrence is true it becomes infinitely more important.

This is a metaphysical theory, yet Nietzsche claimed that it was a scientific theory. The doctrine of the eternal recurrence is what surely makes Nietzsche a metaphysician in spite of himself. No scientist has ever held this doctrine, nor am I aware of any scientific argument that tries to establish through modern science any such doctrine.

At the essence of it is the concept of *amor fati*; the overman is characterized by making his life so exhilarating, so drunken with happiness and joy, that he loves the moment and he never wants it to be any different than it is. As Nietzsche put it, *amor fati* means: do not wish things to be otherwise—live so you desire to live again. It underlines the importance of the individual. The doctrine of eternal recurrence adds dignity to the individual because now he is dealing with something that is going to recur again and again eternally so he must come up now with something in life that is worth being permanent. After spending innumerable pages on throwing out the permanent world of Forms and Ideas of Plato, Nietzsche turned completely around and gave us something permanent and eternal—the timeless eternal recurrence of every moment.

Notice how different this is from the Victorian idea of progress. Nietzsche did not say that the world is progressing, improving, and getting better; he insisted that it is going around in a circle. Because of this, and because there is no possibility of any breakthrough to any higher reality as far as Nietzsche is concerned, the problem is to make the world as it is here and now more acceptable.

What happens if we believe this doctrine? This is another way to criticize any metaphysical system;

suppose I believe this system—what will the consequences be? First of all, it renders the world aimless and impersonal. Second, it indicates that man will live the same life countless times, so that the eternal recurrence then is a reward or punishment for one's success or failure in becoming an overman. It represents an extreme fatalism for the purpose of generating a maximum energy toward self-overcoming. If we believe in the eternal recurrence our becoming an overman becomes a matter of infinitely more importance, since we are going to have to go through this over and over and over again. *Amor fati* then becomes the love of the fate which returns everlasting.

T. S. Eliot in his *Four Quartets* wrote about "an eternally frozen mobility." It is a poetic doctrine and that is what Nietzsche had in mind—to find some way out of the chaotic world of appearances. Nietzsche said there is no way out, there are nothing but perspectives that each individual man imposes on the world of appearances. It is a dramatic plan for motivating authenticity.

Jaspers (1954, 1970) suggested another way out—there are "ciphers." Every religious system, every beautiful sunset, every attempt at philosophizing is a "cipher," which illuminates temporarily something he calls the "encompassing." One has to make a fundamental choice between Nietzsche and Jaspers here.

How do we decide which choice to make, how do we criticize a metaphysical system? The decision we make will have to be based on some criterion. If we want to criticize metaphysical systems on the basis of psychology, we can say the metaphysical system we choose will be a reflection of our particular character or psychology. For example an optimistic person may vote for "the transcendent" of Jaspers; if one is perhaps obsessive, one will be an "analytic" philosopher. Or we can take a psychoanalytic view and say the metaphysical system we have chosen will be dictated by our unconscious; it will be a form of wish-fulfillment. In the next scene this crucial age-old philosophical and psychological problem which so preoccupied Nietzsche will be investigated and explained in detail.

SCENE 4: METAPHYSICS OR AUTISTIC REVERIE?

Beginning with Thales in the sixth century B.C., the pre-Socratic Greek philosophers took a tremendous step forward from the chaotic and unpredictable theology of Homer and Hesiod (Chessick

1977). For these philosophers, the cosmic processes were not personified but rather conceived of impersonally and with emphasis on natural and necessary movements. They did not repeat ancient doctrine but instead reached their own conclusions, made of sweeping generalizations, often not carefully reasoned. Above all, they introduced the Greek notion of a well ordered harmony in the universe, a *kosmos*, the first principles of which were thought to exist eternally.

With the questions of whether there is anything orderly in, or anything that serves as the ground of the apparent world of chaotic appearances, we have the beginning of metaphysics. Metaphysics does not possess a method to reach truth either analogous to or the same as the method of experimental science, which has proven so powerful and efficient in our time toward the advancement of empirical knowledge of the universe. Indeed, we know that the answers to the crucial questions that all metaphysics asks cannot be found by the methods of experimental science. I have discussed this problem in a previous publication (Chessick 1982a) and will now review my views on a subject which constantly preoccupied Nietzsche, and which he never solved.

William James (1890) said, "Metaphysics means nothing but an unusually obstinate effort to think clearly." As Socrates explains in Plato's *Theatetus* (Passmore 1966): "We no longer seek for knowledge in perception at all, but in that other process, however called, in which the mind is alone and engaged with being." For the man of action involved in the world of everyday life, the questions metaphysics asks are profitless. On the other hand, man as a psyche or spirit, not totally immersed in the world, standing out from or observing the world, seems to be compelled to ask metaphysical questions—to seek a unity behind or underlying the curious but unavoidable subject-object situation of our apparently absurd existence. Kant called this the "regulative function" of reason.

In the history of philosophy there has been a waxing and waning of confidence in the capacity of reason to gain answers to metaphysical questions. During some periods, such as the pre-Socratic time or the era of the German idealists in the 19th century, it was believed that metaphysical questions could be answered by seeking within the mind, and elaborate theoretical structures were developed by various geniuses to answer them; we may call these the various "systems of the world" or, with Pepper (1942), "world hypotheses." At other more despairing times such as the era of the Sophists or our present era, there has been a reaction away from the investigation of *physics* or "the real nature of things" and a sense

of hopelessness about the discovery of the answers to metaphysical questions. This hopelessness usually followed the flowering of a series of conflicting metaphysical systems of the world, with no method to choose among them that is acceptable to all, leading to skepticism, confusion, disintegration, and an eventual cynical immoral ism or opportunism on the one hand, or a bad tempered irrational clinging to ancestral custom on the other.

In order to find the answers to metaphysical questions one either has to find a method that can be generally accepted, or admit that thinking on metaphysical issues cannot bring "truth" in the sense that the term is used in the sciences—a correspondence to experiential reality with predictability and testability through the manipulation of experimental variables. That is why numerous authors have insisted that thinking about metaphysical questions yields a different kind of information than scientific truth or knowledge in the empirical or cognitive sense.

Visionary thinkers like Plato who emphasize the "higher regions" of thought tend to reach a two-world theory in which a superior world of Eternal Being presides and is grasped through an inferior world of apparent experience and changing chaos, whereas "common sense" philosophers like Aristotle try to reduce the two worlds by making the productions of reason and the mind simply abstractions derived from sensory experiences, such as the laws of science. Yet even Aristotle insisted on the paradoxical (in his own system) concept of reason alone having a partly divine or eternal nature as an immaterial thinking substance. He did not escape the metaphysical question of the relationship of mentation to matter, and he floundered inconsistently on the metaphysical concept of substance. Like Plato he emphasized intuitive reason as an important procedure by which first principles are directly grasped, and separated this from deliberative reason, which aims at practical wisdom, and even from the process of inductive generalization, another function of the highest form of reason, according to Aristotle.

It is easy to see how metaphysical thinking conceived of as "intuitive grasping" can quickly lead to autism, mysticism, and ecstatic religious experiences. The extreme of this Greek view is of course embodied in the philosophy of Plotinus, in which the aim of metaphysical thinking is to eventually reach mystical union with the transcendent Good, a coming out of one's self in ecstasy. Thus Freud (1927) could write, "I not only have no talent for it (metaphysics) but no respect for it either. In secret—one cannot say such things aloud—I believe that one day metaphysics will be condemned as a nuisance, as an

abuse of thinking as a survival from the period of the religious *Weltanschauung*."

Although Freud repeatedly insisted that psychoanalysis was a natural science, numerous authors have demonstrated this to be a gross oversimplification. Whether or not they are correct, psychoanalysis, like any science, clearly contains important metaphysical and epistemological assumptions that are much debated today. Brann (1959) carried this even further by attempting to delineate a philosophical system implicit in Freud's "psychology," and he offered numerous references to others who have attempted to do the same; all this in spite of Freud's repeated denials of philosophy, and his flat rejection of metaphysics. In fact Slochower (1975) turned the process around and attempted to psychoanalyze Freud's attitude towards ontology! Perhaps this is some kind of ironic reply to Fenichel's (1923) most outspoken paper, in which an uncompromising denial that psychoanalysis harbors a metaphysics is coupled with an interpretation of all metaphysical thinking as a regression from adult reason to infantile thought and longings. In fairness to Fenichel, I think Freud would have entirely agreed with him.

After the Greeks in the history of metaphysical thinking we find an increasing preoccupation with the limitations of reason, culminating in the modern trend of claiming that metaphysical questions themselves are either spurious or represent, as Wittgenstein insisted, mistakes or unjustifiable aberrations in the use of language. This attitude is found already in St. Bonaventure, who insisted that purely rational knowledge or philosophy *must* fall into error and that faith is necessary for metaphysics. Thus for St. Bonaventure philosophical science as he calls it, is the way to other sciences, but he who wishes to stop there falls into darkness.

In the late middle ages William of Ockham made a major advance by providing a vital methodological principle. He insisted that reason must reach its own kind of truth in its own way. He thus ruled out hidden purposes, occult forces, and "divine love" that dominated the medieval (and Aristotelean) explanation of nature. In so doing he gave a much needed emphasis to logic, subjecting all proposed answers to metaphysical questions to the relentless rules of logic. Ockham was not an empirical scientist but he demanded that in our thinking about metaphysical questions, a) we try to answer with the fewest possible principles, b) we employ the fewest possible entities or theoretical constructs, and c) we choose the simplest hypotheses. These demands became known as Ockham's razor, and are clearly still quite relevant, as reflected in Passmore's (1966) recent insistence that "it is our job to subject the

audacious speculation of our great men to the most rigorous possible critical examination, the sort of examination to which, indeed, they subjected their own ideas in the process of formulating them . . . . For metaphysics, or so I have suggested, is speculation controlled by close critical reasoning."

The successful explosion of science beginning in the 17th century led to serious attempts to establish metaphysics as also amenable to scientific investigation, but as fast as various aspects of metaphysical questions were subjected to successful scientific investigation, new sciences were formed and the questions dropped out of the province of metaphysics. However, the great crucial metaphysical questions about our being in the world and the grounds of our knowledge, values, and freedom of choices remain stubbornly impermeable to any form of scientific investigation.

Thought begins with definitions and self-evident premises and by deduction reaches a series of conclusions based on the use of reason alone. Yet when man looks at nature or the world of experience he finds that these conclusions appear in sense experience also. *Why* should this be true? Kant attempted to answer by his famous "Copernican revolution," in which he hoped to demonstrate how the contributions of our mind to our experiences make it impossible for us to experience the world in any other way. This represented for Kant the limits of pure reason and made room for faith, but Kant also accepted man's constant innate compulsion to answer metaphysical questions, even though he demonstrated that the application of our empirically derived notions such as that of causality to metaphysical questions represented a confusion between the phenomenal world and what he called the noumenal world. Thus we cannot, according to Kant, attain further knowledge of reality in the scientific sense by metaphysical thought, although we are compelled to try to do so, leading to endless disputes and a disrepute of metaphysics.

Kant established the important distinction between *Verstand*, scientific understanding,[1] and *Vernunft*, which seeks out transcendental ideas of unity. He characterized this seeking as a natural tendency of the human mind to exercise what he called a regulative function. For Kant the only science of metaphysics possible is the investigation of the boundaries or limits of human reason, and speculative metaphysics, seeking out the transcendental, is similar to religious visions, which may either come from the spiritual world of theology or from psychopathology.[2] Kant did not deny the natural impulse of the reflective mind to strive after unified conceptual syntheses—to think obstinately beyond the limits of

reason—and indeed in his own lifetime there appeared the first of the great German idealist constructions, which rested on the fundamental error of claiming that metaphysical speculation could reach knowledge of a *cognitive* nature on a par with or even higher than the knowledge of science.

In reaction to the post-Kantian German idealists, Dilthey distinguished natural sciences, which study objects from without, from what he called *Geisteswissenschaften*, usually translated as "cultural sciences," such as history, literature, poetry, metaphysics, and psychology. In the latter group, getting in to the inward spiritual structure, from external phenomena to operative inward purposes and ideals which are expressed in them, a reliving or empathic identification, represents the crucial methodology. For the so-called inductive metaphysicians of the time, the scientific view of the world demanded completion through such metaphysical reflection. They explained how reflection on the world that is known to us through the sciences reasonably and inevitably leads to metaphysical theories.

The question of how to validate metaphysical theories remains a burning issue. Bradley insisted that the validation of metaphysical findings occurs through a kind of intuition or basic feeling-experience; thus his famous saying that metaphysics is "finding bad reasons for what we believe on instinct." Bradley's skepticism and ambivalence about the possibilities of reason in answering metaphysical questions represented a turning point away from attempts to grasp Reality, to the meticulous (shall we say obsessive?) analysis of appearance and ordinary language by British philosophers after the turn of this century.

The problems of metaphysics refuse to go away. Insisting that either logical reductive analysis or positivism is the only "sensible" approach to philosophy, is in itself a metaphysical principle which cannot be proven within the positivist system. Scientific investigation even in the laboratory could not go on without the assumption that the world has orderly intelligible characteristics for science to discover; this premise of the ordered intelligibility of Reality is a metaphysical proposition which cannot be established by the method of science. Thus Bachelard insisted that every science contains an "epistemological profile."

We are left with the inevitability of metaphysics and the establishment of metaphysical propositions by either "intuition" of various types such as described by Bradley or Bergson, or a form of

reason that one may call with Copleston (1966) "transcendental reflection." For example, we can know the mind empirically or scientifically in natural science only as a succession of introspectively experienced mental states in time that we might label the phenomenal self; yet we have a sense of self known indirectly through its absolute necessity to establish the transcendental unity of apperception—this is the transcendental or noumenal self of Kant. More recently we have the self known empathically—the self of Kohut's (1977) "psychology of the self in the broad sense." (For details see Chessick 1977a, 1981).

All this leaves unanswered the question of how man can establish the validity of metaphysical assertions. The translation of the answers achieved by metaphysical thinking into discursive speech is a necessity arising out of the normal human need for communication with others and the human wish for consensual validation. Without this translation metaphysical speculation runs the risk of becoming autistic reverie. This is the danger of Arendt's (1977) approach in *The Life Of The Mind*. How does one tell the difference between the privately experienced metaphysical solutions of a reasoning philosopher and the visions or reveries of a schizophrenic, a religious mystic, or someone on L.S.D. or mescaline? They can only be distinguished if we refer the conclusions of metaphysical thinking to the world of appearance, and use these conclusions as explanatory concepts subject to debate and verification by other humans.

For example, take the famous "paranoid crystallization" described by the psychiatrist H. S. Sullivan, in which the paranoid schizophrenic suddenly "understands" the phenomena around him in terms of what might be called a quasi-metaphysical enlightenment, that makes sense for him out of the shattered phenomena of his everyday life, and eases the burden of his fragmented sense of self. When his paranoid delusions are expressed to others however, this quasi-metaphysical system breaks down and is revealed as based on autistic reverie, part of an idiosyncratic attempt to restore a fragmented self.

The life of the mind *in solitude* as Heidegger and his pupil Arendt recommend runs the danger of degenerating into autistic reverie; one needs to come back into the world and engage in dialectic with other persons, not just one's self. It *is* true that metaphysical preoccupation causes one to live as a stranger in the darkness of the actual social here-and-now. The life of a person possessed by metaphysical questions requires no implements or special place to live, and engenders a cosmopolitan

spirit of tolerance. The presuppositions of every civilization and every science, which are metaphysical propositions, are so important to human history and the future of man that a continuing debate is unavoidable. For such a debate to occur, the intuitive grasp of metaphysical propositions *must* be translated into the common speech of mankind. Any metaphysical answers that cannot be so translated remain indistinguishable from autistic reverie or idiosyncratic quasi-religious visions that may be of enormous help to the individual but only as equivalent to a drug-induced trance as an escape from the world of reality.

Metaphysics represents an ongoing debate in the history of man regarding certain fundamental premises that have been grasped by transcendental reflection (*Vernunft*) and which, when generally accepted by a given culture, have led to the flowering of various civilizations and the explosion of science. Metaphysics differs from autism, religion, or mysticism, essentially because it demands the application of the rules of reason to its speculative findings and employs Ockham's razor whenever possible. Metaphysics differs from science because metaphysical propositions cannot be demonstrated by standard scientific methodology; in fact when certain metaphysical propositions become demonstrable by scientific methodology we have the establishment of a new science and the issues involved are no longer labelled as metaphysics.

The problem of methodology in metaphysics falls within the realm of Dilthey's *Geisteswissenschaften* as described above—the cultural sciences, getting into the inward spiritual structure, empathic identification, moving from the external phenomena to operative inward purposes and ideals which are expressed in them. This is consistent with the viewpoint presented by Bergson in his *Introduction to Metaphysics*, which opens with a contrast between the two ways of knowing anything. When the intellect approaches the thing externally from some point of view alien to it, we have Dilthey's "natural sciences," that study objects from without. The second way is a process Bergson calls intuition, whereby we "enter into" the thing and identify ourselves with it by a kind of "intellectual sympathy" or the art of "intellectual auscultation." This is compared to identifying ourselves with a figure in a novel we are reading, and results in a knowledge of Reality such as the method of empirical science can never yield. Similarly, existential psychiatrists have pointed out how this direct grasp of the patient at hand provides important complementary and vital information, most useful in psychotherapy.

Whitehead (1941) in *Process and Reality*, wrote,

> Speculative philosophy is the endeavor to frame a coherent, logical, necessary system of general ideas in terms of which every element of our experience can be interpreted . . . . Philosophers can never hope finally to formulate these metaphysical first principles. Weakness of insight and deficiencies of language stand in the way inexorably. Words and phrases must be stretched towards a generality foreign to their ordinary usage; and however such elements of language be stabilized as technicalities, they remain metaphors mutely appealing for an imaginative leap . . . .Thus one aim of philosophy is to challenge the half-truths constituting the scientific first principles (pp. 4-15).

In *Modes of Thought* Whitehead (1966) explained, "The great difficulty of philosophy is the failure of language . . . . Language halts behind intuition."

It is not true, as Arendt (1977) and Heidegger insisted, that no progress has been made in metaphysics since the time of the pre-Socratics, or that we have moved in a circle. The numerous metaphysical systems, influenced by each other, when translated into communicable words, have gradually yielded to the application of critical techniques for coherence and logic, leading to the refutation of a number of very attractive false starts, and making it harder and harder for any amateur (or obscure professional) to present an essentially autistic or esoteric metaphysical system as representing a satisfactory answer to the compelling problems of metaphysics.

Demonstrating a) the medieval confusion of metaphysics with theology, b) the mistake that metaphysical questions could be answered by science, and c) the fallacy of positivist disregard of metaphysics, are all examples of progress made through clarification and consensual validation, as pointed out in decisive detail by Blanshard (1966). Even those philosophers, such as certain neo-Hegelians, who argue that it is not self-evident that Ockham's razor is needed or even desirable[3] for metaphysics must face the necessity to find alternative methods to validate metaphysical propositions. If they can do so, it will represent further progress. Both science and metaphysics aim at the unfolding of man's knowledge of himself and the world around him; these disciplines complement each other and together represent "an unavoidable human enterprise" (Reck 1972). Let us turn more specifically to Nietzsche's view of it.

Notes

1 Here I am ignoring Arendt's idiosyncratic translation (1977) of Verstand as "intellect," and remain with the generally accepted

translation.

2 A subject of great interest to Kant the scientist, as in his pre-critical work Dreams of a Ghost-Seer.

3 For a recent discussion and defense of Ockham's razor, see Walsh (1979).

ACT VI:

NIETZSCHE ON SCIENCE AND METAPHYSICS

SCENE 1: DESCARTES AND CERTAINTY

The famous mind-body problem, one of the thorniest issues in philosophy, arose out of the Cartesian distinction between "I" and matter, or between the mind which thinks and which is not extended, and inert matter like the body or "things out there," which do not think but which have extended substance. This distinction is embedded in the whole notion of *I think therefore I am*, and rises from it logically, but it is questionable whether ancient philosophers thought in those terms at all. At any rate, the mind-body separation greatly influenced all philosophy from the time of Descartes to the time of Nietzsche—and formed a philosophy which fit beautifully with the development of classical science. It was Nietzsche who first called attention to the bankruptcy of classical science, and who predicted that eventually the basic concepts of science, like "atoms"—hard little balls floating around in a void—would turn out to be nothing but constructs. Much of the development of modern science has been consistent with Nietzsche's prescient criticism of Cartesian philosophy and the mind-body dichotomy.

Nietzsche explained that philosophy goes along with the science of the day; philosophers tend to be envious of the particular scientific method prevailing and try to imitate it. They produce philosophies which fit very neatly with the science of the day, and then claim that their philosophies have discovered Truths as veridical as those of science. How accurate a description this is of the pseudo-scientific nature of some academic philosophy as it is practiced today!

In section 530 and 532 of *The Will to Power* he attacked the whole structure of Western logic, the whole possibility of true and false propositions. He argued that any proposition believed to be true cannot be thought of as anything but what he called "a regulative article of belief"; a true proposition is not a form of knowledge at all. Consistent with this in section 551 he proceeded to demolish the concept of cause. Here he argued (as previously explained) that the concept of cause is simply introduced by us

because we don't like the unfamiliar, so therefore, we tend to interpret everything in terms of what we are familiar with.

The first section of Book III of *The Will to Power* is a systematic destruction of all the basic beliefs on which Western science is based. In section 555 he fulminated about what he called the scientific prejudice, "the fable of knowledge"—the idea that the scientific observer studies things that are happening outside of him and learns the truth about them.

He made a statement which has formed the basis of all existential psychotherapy, although to my knowledge no existential psychotherapist ever gave Nietzsche credit for it. He said that coming to know means to place one's self "in a conditional relationship to something; to feel oneself conditioned by something and by oneself to condition it" (p. 301). Knowing is therefore, under all circumstances, "establishing, denoting, and making—conscious of conditions," *not* pursuing "entities, things, what is 'in itself'" (p. 301). In other words, the essence of existential psychotherapy is the emphasis on the mutual interaction and on mutual changes induced in I each; it gets away from the authoritarian gap between the doctor and patient.

In section 578-579 he introduced a topic which might be called the psychology of metaphysics. Nietzsche argued that metaphysics itself has been produced by suffering. The two world theory, the idea of an eternal and unchangeable Real world up in heaven or somewhere, is the production of an exhausted depressed unhappy man. This is a unique approach to metaphysics. It is an attempt to explain the whole notion of Reality on the basis of psychological motivations, and of course it turns around and negates that Eternal World as nothing but a hope or consolation. This is one of the areas in which Nietzsche anticipated Freud. Nietzsche applied this not only to religion but to metaphysics. He also spoke of the *ressentiment* of metaphysicians against actuality; here it is the metaphysicians who are living in relative poverty and Suffering on poor teachers' salaries and not getting their books published who invent these eternal truths and systems to console themselves.

Nietzsche used "value for preservation of species" as the criterion to determine what any given culture decides is true, good, and valuable. Section 584 of *The Will to Power* might be thought of as a summary of Nietzsche's entire epistemology, and in section 594 he wrote more specifically about science.

Nietzsche was one of the first philosophers to call attention to the roots of science—these basic premises of science which had been accepted up to his time as absolutely true. He argued that science is nothing but an attempt to make temporary sense out of chaos. It imposes a schema on the chaos of our everyday appearance; in section 597 he labeled the prejudicial presuppositions of scientific work to be the belief in the unity and perpetuity of scientific work. Here he had in mind the scientific worker who spends his whole lifetime on studying one little area of science, secure in his belief that he is trying to discover something more about the Truth. Nietzsche described this as building a house on quicksand.

The second section of Book III of *The Will to Power* presented Nietzsche's psychology. It opens up with an argument asking physicists what they mean by force. The notion of force was taken for granted in physics; in fact it was so important in physics that Leibniz used it in his metaphysics. Leibniz's monadology described the whole world as made up not of things but as of points of force, but Nietzsche insisted that nobody has ever been able to define what they really mean by force. He tried to give what he considered the first operational definition of force, namely it is the will to power.

So he tried to base his metaphysics on a scientific construct and fused metaphysics with classical science. He went through all this trouble to demonstrate that classical science is just a useful interpretation of the world, and that all metaphysics is just consoling interpretations of the world; now he turned around and gave another metaphysics—Nietzsche's perspective. Furthermore, it is deliberately offered in such an ambiguous way that each reader or student has to impose their perspective on interpreting Nietzsche's perspective!

He attacked the notion of the "ego" in section 635. We need unities, and one of the unities we use is the ego. I believe that Freud borrowed his concept of the ego from Nietzsche, but Freud apparently did not study Nietzsche because Nietzsche introduced this concept only to attack it, whereas Freud used it exactly in the way Nietzsche says you *should not* use it, as an "entity" inside the mind. Nietzsche attacked the *I;* there is no real reason to believe in such entities—they are fictions, he says, and there is nothing but events.

Whitehead introduced the famous fallacy of misplaced concreteness; in that fallacy momentary instances in space and time are concretized as "things" in classical science. Whitehead pointed out such a

procedure is no longer justifiable in our era of Einsteinian and quantum science. This was Nietzsche's view, for Nietzsche insisted there are no "things," there are only points of force, and these points of force are will-to-power points. If for example, I say, "I see a chair," what I am really illustrating is my will to power, my need to impose an organization on the world at this particular moment at that particular spot. It does not mean that there "really" is a "thing out there" called a chair, nor does it mean there is something called an *I*. Here is a total demolition of all of philosophy from Descartes to Nietzsche's time, and a total destruction of all the basic constructs that were assumed as self-evident in philosophy from the time of Descartes.

In section 676 he did the same thing with the concept of purpose. Nietzsche's approach to the free will and determinism argument as we have seen was to answer "a plague on both your houses." Both the person who argues that there is free will and purpose possible in the world, and the person who argues there is nothing but mechanistic determinism in the world, are giving perspectives which are neither true nor false, they are just perspectives which help an individual survive and adapt and attain power. They are simply perspectives which are adapted by this or that culture or individual for the purpose of power and control.

Notice in that section the word unconscious is mentioned; Nietzsche referred to the unconscious in a few places in *The Will to Power*. This may be a translation problem. I think it forms an interminable scholastic argument as to whether Nietzsche was really thinking about the unconscious even in the adjectival sense that Freud used it. Section 676, with the idea that there is an unconscious language of signs which expresses itself in the behavior of the conscious ego is the starting point of modern French psychoanalysis, a very powerful movement in continental Europe today originated by the late Jacques Lacan (Chessick 1980).

Nietzsche believed that man as a species is not progressing. He believed in certain higher types being attained from time to time but the level of the species itself is not being raised. His eventual hope as we have seen was that the production of these higher types would then be inherited. He offered considerable argument against Darwin for example in section 685, which contains a misunderstanding of Darwin. Nietzsche was really arguing against Herbert Spencer, a very popular late nineteenth century philosopher who took over from Darwin the idea of evolution and added the Victorian belief in progress.

For Spencer, man is evolving progressively and the strong man is entitled to riches and power because he is an evolutionary advance over the weaker man. Spencer's philosophy was in essence a justification of capitalism by an argument that the successful capitalist is a superior kind of evolutionary man. This attempt to justify the existence of capitalists in power is not a very generally accepted philosophy today but at the time of Nietzsche it was very much discussed and, of course, it was constantly quoted as justification for the capitalistic system and the inequality of wealth.

In section 699 he introduced a concept, which, if Freud (Chessick 1980) would have read it, would have saved him twenty years of going down the wrong path on the subject. Nietzsche pointed out that pain is *not* the opposite of pleasure. Most of Freud's early theories are based on the pleasure-pain principle, namely that man attempts to attain pleasure and avoid pain and in so doing achieve a state of peace, a state where there is neither pleasure or pain, and no tension. Freud realized in about 1920 that there are states of pain which can be intensely pleasurable, for example, the state of sexual tension just before sexual discharge. This is an example that Nietzsche also used in the section of how pain, if it is not too intense, can be actually pleasurable and enhance the pleasure that arises from it. Nietzsche argued that the notion of pain as something that should all be removed is again the argument of the exhausted man, of the tired out, worn out man.

He claimed that pleasure comes from the sense of power, so here he tried to use *psychology* as a basis of argument for his philosophy of the Will to Power. First he used physics, in which he argued that the concept of force in physics is an illustration of the Will to Power. Then he used psychology, in which he tried to point out that pleasure is essentially the feeling of power, and the opposite of power is not pain but weakness and helplessness. Man rather than seeking pleasure and avoiding pain, seeks power and avoids helplessness. Nietzsche's twist in psychology was to point out this extremely famous prejudice as he called it, that goes all the way back to classical philosophy in proclaiming man seeks pleasure and avoids pain; yet we realize that there are mild forms of pain that man seeks out, which contradict this point of view. Again Nietzsche was trying to show that there is no such thing as truth, and that there are moral values embedded in every single basic scientific and philosophical concept.

SCENE 2: NIETZSCHE AND THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

Nietzsche viewed art as an antidote to the decadence of philosophy, but his views on art changed. In *The Birth of Tragedy* he saw art as the salvation of man. By the time he wrote "The Will to Power as Art" (Nietzsche 1968), the title of section 4 of Book III of *The Will to Power*, he saw it as a countermove to the decadence of philosophy, morality, and religion but he no longer conceived of it as the salvation of man. He did make the crucial distinction between those who enjoy works of art and his ideal, the creative artist-philosopher. On pages 419, 421, and 451 this phrase comes up, and his hero, the Socrates who makes music, the artist-philosopher, is one example of the overman which he retained fairly consistently throughout his work. What he was emphasizing is the artist who affirms the senses and extolls life in this world. In contrast to that might be Wagner's *Parsifal*, which is a work of art that focuses on life in the next world and which Nietzsche hated.

Nietzsche's argument in section 1041 of *The Will to Power* is that philosophy is permeated by cowardice and lack of integrity. He called this the hidden history of philosophy. If we really want to get further in philosophy we are going to need a lot of severity, what he called cleanliness toward ourselves. The definition of cleanliness toward oneself is on page 541 in a comment about washing one's soul clean from the marketplace dust and the noise of this age. Compare this to the famous passage in Plato where Socrates talks about the philosopher not fitting into the marketplace and seeming remote from noise of this age. Somehow Nietzsche has come around back to Plato in a full circle.

Compare Nietzsche's passages in section 1067, with Plato's *Timaeus*. This section might be termed Nietzsche's *Timaeus*. What Nietzsche did is to introduce a pre-Socratic cosmology, an immanent metaphysics rather than a transcendent metaphysics. Being for Nietzsche is immanent in the apparent world for there is no transcendent world. For Nietzsche, Being is a continual clashing and overcoming, a shaping and breaking, and creating and destroying, flux and change. This is all there is, all a manifestation of the Will to Power—*everything* is a manifestation of this.

Being for Nietzsche is identified with becoming. There is no solid matter in motion, an amazing prescience into modern physics. There are no categories of the understanding. There is no "substance"; all of these concepts are embedded in the structure of our language. In our grammar there is a subject and a predicate in a sentence. From this fact we hypostasize that there are "subjects" in the world who

operate on or "cause" or move "things" in the world. This is an unacceptable hypostatization, a "prejudice" according to Nietzsche, based on our use of grammar. In this sense he anticipated modern analytic philosophy. In other words, nothing is really distinct from its relations. These distinctions are all arbitrarily imposed by us, they are perspectives.

All physical forces are the Will to Power and this is the only force there is. This is the only force we experience, he argued, so therefore why must we extrapolate any others? It lessens the gap between organic life and inorganic life. All force, whether it is manifest in organic or in inorganic life is Will to Power as far as Nietzsche was concerned.

The relative unities that appear in nature form themselves due to resistance between aggressive powers. What he meant by that can be best understood through politics. Groups of nations aggregate together in any given era as "allies" and they fight against other groups of nations who are their enemy. In another historical era entirely different groups, some of which were formerly allies and some of which were enemies, may now form and fight each other. These are relative aggregates, temporary aggregates, which come together to form a larger group and then clash with each other in any temporary period.

The relative endurance of these entities cause us to reify them. For example, in the Second World War we had the "Axis" and the "Allies"; today we have the "Free World" versus the "Soviet Empire." Our tendency is to think of these as "things" whereas they are actually just relative aggregates at a temporary time. Similarly, each individual man is nothing but a temporary aggregate, what Nietzsche called a piece of fate, a temporary power point clashing with other power points. The rough uniformities which are described by science again are local and temporary. These are just transient bits of order, and Nietzsche's main point was that such uniformities do not imply that there is an intelligent purpose working in nature. The fact that there are transient laws, transient bits of order, cannot be used to prove any Grand Design. The play of chance in the clash of wills to power is enough to explain various aggregates in motion in any temporary era.

For Nietzsche, time is endless but space is not. Thus there is a ceaseless flux in endless time in finite space. From this he argued you can only have a certain number of possible combinations of aggregates . and therefore, these will recur. The energy remains constant; there is no running down of the universe

in this metaphysics, there is simply endless time, limited space, and aggregates which form and then dissipate. Since space is limited and time is endless these aggregates will form again. That is eternal recurrence. He claimed this is the one strictly universal and eternal law. Energy is total and is constant and therefore, there is eternal recurrence.

This statement contradicts everything he said everywhere else, where he constantly claimed there is no such thing as a strictly universal and eternal law. How do we explain this? Nietzsche would say that anyone who reads the chaos of Nietzsche must impose his "will to system" on it in order to understand it. Interpreters clash with each other and with Nietzsche. This illustrates philosophy itself as "will versus will" and thus the history of philosophy, like everything else, is a manifestation of the Will to Power! It is nothing but clashing wills which manifest themselves through clashing interpretations. There is nothing but the Will to Power and the Will to Power is all there is.

One of the interesting corollaries of this view is that there is no clear dividing line between very general scientific hypotheses and metaphysical theories. We have a spectrum running from poetry and mythology, then through speculative metaphysics, then through inductive metaphysics, and finally through science. In Nietzsche's view these are all perspectives which begin with art, poetry, and mythology and "harden" as they approach science—when they become science they are hardened into prejudices. When myths or speculations have passed through speculative metaphysics and become scientific hypotheses, we mistakenly say this is an approach to the Truth.

SCENE 3: NIETZSCHE, JASPERS, AND HEIDEGGER[1]

Jaspers (1966) measured Nietzsche's significance neither in terms of biography nor on the basis of doxography (a compilation of extracts from the philosopher's work). Neither the life nor the doctrines alone constitute the event which for subsequent thinkers Nietzsche is. Nietzsche was a kind of happening in the history of philosophy. Nietzsche's dedication to thought throughout the whole of his existence, plus, his passion to communicate and his skill in devising masks for his passions, and ultimately the courage he displayed in posing the question of meaning—why or to what end—constitute this "happening." By asking about the whole, Nietzsche executed a radical break with past morality, past philosophy, and past humanity. No one can surpass the radicality of that break. Nietzsche, wrote Jaspers

(1966), thought philosophy through to its ultimate consequences. It is scarcely possible to take a step farther along that route.

Yet what drove Nietzsche to that protracted and painful rupture with the past is something powerfully affirmative—the yes to life, overman, and eternal recurrence. It is in the formulation of the positive side of Nietzsche's philosophy that Jaspers foresaw a successful career for subsequent philosophy. Thus he lauded Nietzsche's morality as that which cleared the path for his own philosophy of *Existenz* (Jaspers 1954). Although Nietzsche denied transcendence with every fiber of his being, Jaspers concluded that the fury of his denial testified to his embrace of the *Encompassing* I Obviously Jaspers read him as one who by the very fury of his protest actually was seeking transcendence, so that Jaspers actually conceived of him as a quasi-religious philosopher.

That is a very idiosyncratic and questionable reading of Nietzsche, almost a psychological interpretation, for Nietzsche at least ostensibly is *the* philosopher of anti-transcendence. He was constantly reversing the trend of Western philosophy and he repeatedly argued that Plato's two-world theory is a symptom of a feeling of weariness with life and of decline; the whole concept of an eternal Real world is constantly attacked as a symptom of decadence, exhaustion, and the end of man as he is now. Nietzsche attacked all concepts of God, Spirit, Being, the One, the self, the thing-in-itself, Hegel's historical process; he argued against all these because they reduce the world of our experience to something inferior.

The opening to a better understanding of Nietzsche is to ask the question, since he rejected the concepts of God, Spirit, Being, the One, the self, and so on, why didn't he also reject the concept of eternity, which is an integral part of most transcendent philosophies? He took the concept of eternity and he changed it to meaning "no end." He flatly stated that the one thing that goes on forever is time, and that is essentially what he meant by "eternity." He disagreed with other philosophers because he did not think any progress is implied by this; the "fact" that there is no end to time did not for Nietzsche imply some kind of forward progression in time. Existence for Nietzsche is just as it is, with no meaning and no purpose; it eternally recurs again and again and there is no end.

This is really quite different than what other philosophers have said about transcendence. It does

not coincide with the Buddhist philosophy of a circle of life and death, because the Buddhist hopes to and tries to get out of this circle of life and death, whereas for Nietzsche that is all there eternally is, a very important differentiation.

Heidegger (1979) turned Nietzsche's thought upside-down by placing Nietzsche squarely in the western metaphysical tradition. He argued that first of all the crucial question of Philosophy is the question of Being, and he asked, does Nietzsche say anything about the nature of Being—about the character of all things—or, to use Heidegger's phrase, the Being of beings? For Nietzsche, the Being of beings is the Will to Power, so the essence, or what the world is— the answer to the question, what is Being?, is for Nietzsche the Will to Power. This, according to Heidegger, is the key question of all philosophies, the question that philosophers have asked since the beginning of philosophy, and he criticized Jaspers for not realizing just how significant this is.

For Nietzsche the essence of the world was the Will to Power. The existence of the world, the how or the that of the world, was the eternal recurrence of the same. All classical metaphysical philosophers have to answer these two questions—what is the essence of the world and what is the existence of the world? According to Heidegger, Nietzsche was squarely in this tradition. He gave a theory of the essence of. the world which he said is the Will to Power and of the existence of the world, the way the world works, which for Nietzsche is the eternal recurrence of the same. This eternal recurrence concept is an attempt to interpret everything that happens. It is an enigmatic and unfathomable concept, but it is at the center and at the peak of Nietzsche's philosophizing; it is brought forth at the end of his most famous work *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* as his greatest finding.

What is Being? is the fundamental question of philosophy. According to Heidegger, Nietzsche was a transition figure between the modern age from 1600 to 1900 and its completion from 1900 to the future. What we mean by the completion of metaphysics for Heidegger would be reaching some kind of understanding of the unbounded nature of Being. According to Heidegger, in *The Will to Power* metaphysical thinking completes itself and this makes Nietzsche the last great metaphysician of the West. Nietzsche's metaphysics is the ground of the twentieth century. His tremendous nihilism, the Will to Power, the eternal recurrence, manifest themselves most predominantly in the horrible recurring struggles--the blood and slaughter that occurred in the unprecedented wars of the twentieth century.

What is not known is what will come next. Will there be destruction of the world or will a new man arise as Nietzsche is hoping?

Heidegger's important point was to think of Nietzsche as the completion of a phase which began with the modern age, with Descartes' emergence from medieval philosophy. What happens as you read Nietzsche more carefully, according to Heidegger, is that you get into the concept of "life" that he keeps bringing up—a very mysterious and poorly defined concept for Nietzsche. For instance in *The Gay Science* he writes, "life should be an experiment of knowers."

On the other hand, Heidegger very much objected to the tendency on the part of Jaspers to call the eternal recurrence a religious notion. He claimed this distorts Nietzsche's philosophy and he tried to distinguish between a religious position and a metaphysical position. A metaphysical position talks about Being, talks about the "is-ness of that which is," talks about existence, but it does not introduce a concept of God except as an abstraction. The concept of a God to whom we could pray or anything like that is outside of the metaphysical system. So religion may start from metaphysics and go past it, may use metaphysics as a springboard, but it has to be differentiated. Heidegger argued, and I agree, that Nietzsche's position is primarily a metaphysical one and not a religious one.

There are more questions to ask on this topic. For instance, what does Nietzsche mean by "will"? Sometimes he talked about it as a passion or a feeling, and sometimes he made it circular because passion and feeling are claimed to be manifestations of will. In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Book VII, section 28, he said it is very "complicated." There he was writing against Schopenhauer, who conceived of the Will as an abstract "simple" metaphysical concept.. Nietzsche did say that willing is only the will to power—it is an emotional concept not an intellectual concept, and it is a biological concept. In *The Will to Power* (section 702) he defined power as the wish to become stronger, and the original emotion or affect for Nietzsche is the pleasurable feeling that you get when you become stronger.

Heidegger focused on section 797 in *The Will to Power*. Here Nietzsche extolled the artist, not art. He called the person who extolls art a person indulging in what he calls "women's aesthetics." He was not interested in the question of what is beauty or what makes a painting beautiful. What he was interested in is the artist, the way of life. The creation of art for Nietzsche is thought of as a masculine

activity. Creativity is masculine in contrast to the degenerate "women's" aesthetic philosophies—like Kant who he was really writing against. The reason he focused so much on creativity is because creativity and the making of art emphasize the sensuous world, the world of appearance, in contrast to the intelligible Platonic world.

So he talked about "art in the grand style," that extolled the artist-philosopher (in section 795 of *The Will to Power*). He had a concept of the artist producing something in the world of appearances that directly affects us, and of that being the artist's main interest—in contrast, for example, to the academic philosopher who is producing a philosophical system of the world of Truth and Reality.

Both Nietzsche and Heidegger agreed on the urgent need of philosophy to advance beyond classical epistemology, beyond "theory of knowledge," to inquire into the goals and purposes of philosophy as such, that is to say, the need to advance in the direction of metaphysics. They saw philosophy as having an important function as a value for life, and they studied the tension between philosophy and the living personality of the philosopher—the drive to philosophize.

Nietzsche extolled the frenzy of the inspired artist and he invidiously compared the inspired artist to the dried up laboratory scientist. For him art stimulates life; he saw it as healing and refreshing and urging to renew creations, and he compared this invidiously with the search for security and the bliss of eternal Truth and so forth.

In summary, the question What is Being? is for Heidegger the key question of all philosophy. For us life, according to Nietzsche, is the most familiar form of Being and the innermost essence of life is the Will to Power. So the innermost essence of Being for Nietzsche is the Will to Power. The life of the artist gives the most clear and present mode of the Will to Power, what Nietzsche called the artist phenomenon, the person who creates from the world of appearances, to master the world of appearances, to create something out of it.

According to Heidegger the meditation on art in *The Will to Power* is the best illumination of what Nietzsche meant by the Being of beings, and his recognition of art as a countermovement to nihilism is what very much distinguished his thought from Plato. Plato banished poets from his Republic for this very reason, that poets tended to fix the mind of people on the world of appearance; Plato wanted to fix

their minds on the eternal world. Nietzsche was doing exactly the opposite—he was extolling the artist, because the artist fixes on the world of appearances. It just so happens that these metaphysical systems are in direct opposition to each other but they are both nevertheless metaphysical systems. The reason that Heidegger said Nietzsche is the last great metaphysician of the West is because with a grounding like Nietzsche's nihilism and the explosion of the Will to Power we come now to a radical turning point in the history of the world. We do not know what will come next but there is no place for metaphysics to go after this according to these philosophers; one cannot get more nihilistic than Nietzsche.

It was characteristic of Nietzsche's work to philosophize negatively, to break with everything that was met by universal acknowledgment whether it be God, morality, or reason. Teaching academic philosophy— the systems of other people—does not require a youthful attitude, but philosophizing requires this attitude, said Nietzsche. Hence the very important difference Nietzsche made many times, distinguishing between what he called philosophical laborers and philosophers proper. The passion of longing to proceed from the inner grandeur of the intuition of Being to its actual realization and fulfillment—that is philosophizing, in contrast to a person who makes his living teaching other people what other people have thought.

Usually these two kinds of philosophers don't get along. Yet, Copleston (1975), famous for his teaching of other philosophers, offered a fine starting point for criticism of Nietzsche. He conceded that we have to come to grips with the thought of Nietzsche and rise above it. Nobody who wants to philosophize in the twentieth century can do so without acknowledging what Nietzsche said and grappling with it in some sense. He saw Nietzsche as a lonely solitary soul who lived in the depths of his own visions; anyone who reads *Ecce Homo* will also get that feeling.

Nietzsche's philosophy can be thought of as an answer to Wagner's *Parsifal*, the opera in which Wagner returned to Christianity and salvation through Christ and religion. Nietzsche's answer is that Wagner sold out to make money, and that man must save himself by the glorification of his own species, not by recourse to Christianity.

Copleston (1975) pointed out that Nietzsche lacked the power of sustained scientific and rational argument; so he was neither a great metaphysician nor was he a scientific psychologist. There is no

debating with such a view since we do not find passages in Nietzsche of long sustained scientific or philosophic arguments. What Nietzsche did was to state his case and then fulminate against his opponents. There is a definite lack of reasoned careful philosophical or scientific arguments. Copleston also pointed out that Nietzsche made innumerable historical mistakes and inaccuracies, so one must not take literally every statement that Nietzsche made about the history of philosophy, human history, cultures, and so on, for there are many, many misrepresentations.

The question comes up very commonly about whether Nietzsche's overman or superman is a hard unfeeling egoist such as Napoleon; even Copleston felt that he is not. Of course, the crucial parting of ways we would expect from Fr. Copleston occurs because he felt Nietzsche was very wrong when he said Christianity is inimical to life and no-saying to life.

SCENE 4: CRITICISM

Why did Nietzsche consider Napoleon to be a great man when Napoleon led the world repeatedly to blood, slaughter, and war? Napoleon conceived of Europe as a political unity, so for Nietzsche Napoleon was in a sense a person who was trying to lift man one step higher away from nationalism and into political unity. There are of course a number of authors who worship Napoleon as a warrior, while others claim that the reason Napoleon wanted Europe to be a political unity is because he wanted to put one of his family members on the thrones of each country in Europe. Yet he *did* have political vision, he did codify the laws of France, and he was thinking about trying to form a super-national Europe. Again, we can have a hard interpretation or a soft interpretation.

The overman of Nietzsche gives, but he gives from strength in the sense that the sun shines and gives out warmth out of power and energy. The difference is that the Christian hero gives from compassion and pity, but Nietzsche's concept of the overman was of the person who has so much excess power and energy that he gives it out naturally, like the sun shines. Copleston agreed with Nietzsche's argument that if there exists no God and no religion, then it follows the strong will create their own morality and give to the weak as they choose. There can be no such thing as a natural morality, divine moral laws within, or a moral order in the universe, without a God.

Nietzsche's overman can be thought of as proud and free, joyful and serene, and strong in mind and body. Nietzsche was a philologist—Nietzsche's overman is the man who is *κάλος* translated as good, beautiful, and noble—a Greek ideal like Achilles or Pericles. In contrast to the overman we have "the last man," the mediocre man, the man who is *δειλός* (cowardly, wretched, idle) or μοχθηρός (the man in sorry plight or the villainous man). Greek is a very descriptive, poetic, and beautiful language and these are the Greek terms Copleston believed Nietzsche the philologist had in mind when he was juxtaposing the overman to the last man or the mediocre man.

Copleston claimed (without giving any reasons) that Nietzsche's concept of the will to power is a great improvement over Freud! We do both agree that the crucial error of Nietzsche was in his denial of the fundamental value of humility. The concept that no human being should ever be made a mere means for another human being is not only in Christianity but becomes a form of Kant's categorical imperative. Nietzsche's overman uses the herd, creates his own morality, and apparently does so without any sense of compassion or pity. Nietzsche's words are a challenge to Christians, what Copleston called "a prick to the Christian conscience," especially the Christian conscience that tends to water down Christ's ideals.

Nietzsche and Schopenhauer agreed on their fundamental despair, they agreed that death is the seal of meaninglessness, they denied the transcendental, they were atheistic, they believed that the universe is fundamentally irrational — in contrast to Hegel—and they believed in the subordination of intellect to will. Nietzsche's eternal recurrence is a fatalistic doctrine and, philosophically speaking, contradicts the possibility of change and the possibility of an overman, as Copleston pointed out.

Nietzsche's man can be thought of not as overman but as "only-man," only a man, without God, who is condemned to death and the abyss of meaninglessness. How, asked Copleston, in this situation can only-man be spurred to create values, culture, and civilization? What is the point, if it is all so meaningless? He concluded that the way of Nietzsche is the way of madness. If there is no ground and no meaning, what is the sense to any appeal for overman? Furthermore, the notion of overman already presumes a fixed system of higher and lower values—one could not talk about an overman if one did not have an implicit notion of "over" and "under"; this again is a logical contradiction in Nietzsche's thought.

In his discussion of Nietzsche, Scharfstein (1980) considered Nietzsche's loss of his father at the

age of 5 as decisive for his philosophy and his life. He considered his simultaneous longing for his father and his rejection of him as being very important and therefore the attack on his father's values— his father was a strict Lutheran minister—according to Scharfstein "was an irrational attempt to revenge himself and simultaneously to overcome his suffering and presentiment of death." This is an amateur psychological effort to explain all of Nietzsche's philosophy on the basis of an attempt to deal with his father problem. Such interpretations, I think, have very little scientific validity and tend to degenerate into simplistic generalizations, especially in such a complicated person as Nietzsche. Others, for example, in the same vein have interpreted *Zarathustra* as an expression of loneliness following his break with Lou Salome. Many authors have interpreted the will to power concept as a projection of Nietzsche's persistent infirmities, as his way of trying to overcome his own weaknesses, physical ailments, loneliness and failure. Others have interpreted *Ecce Homo* and *The Antichrist* as a declaration of Nietzsche's madness, and probably correctly have explained his frequent disparaging remarks about women as being due to his woman-dominated childhood.

Nietzsche anticipated many of Freud's notions; he was a very great intuitive psychologist. However, he never worked out his psychology into anything useful. He just threw out numerous sparks but never developed any kind of a program for using his psychology in understanding people or healing people as Freud did. Freud recognized his greatness and considered him to be the greatest intuitive psychologist who ever lived next only to Shakespeare, but Nietzsche provides very little of practical clinical use—a matter that would be irrelevant to Nietzsche.

There are at least three very great errors that Nietzsche made, in my view. First, it is a tremendous mistake to think that instinct has to be protected from reason and morality. Actually the problem is the other way around. Reason and morality have a very weak suppressing force on instinct. The true problem is that the thin veneer of civilization is what needs protection from instinct! Instinct is tremendously powerful and always threatens to destroy the veneer of civilization. The same is true with democracy, so despised by Nietzsche. Democracy does not have an inimical effect on man's development and instinct; democracy is always in danger of being destroyed and over-run by tyrannies, by right wings and left wings, by explosions of mob violence, and so on. The preservation of democracy has always been an extremely difficult task, especially in troubled times such as today (Chessick 1969).

The second great error I believe Nietzsche made is to see life (or spirit) and morals as opposed to each other. This is a philosophical blunder because it rests on an unclear use of the term "morals." When Nietzsche wrote about morality he was talking about the hypocritical Sunday morning sermon type of morality, and it is no great advance in philosophy to discover that kind of Victorian morality to be trivial. When this triviality is coupled with his increasingly violent tone as it developed in his writings, it lends itself to a very gross misinterpretation of Nietzsche and makes him sound much like he was advocating violence and destruction, although actually I believe he was not. Probably the most fundamental aspect of this second type of error is in his indifference to ordinary human beings. In my judgment this is unforgivable. His constant disparaging comments about democracy and the herd, regardless of rhetorical intent, indicate a *serious* problem in his own morality. There is something grievously the matter with any person that does not have a sense of compassion for the ordinary human being and for the sufferings of humanity, and no amount of philosophical argument, learning, and sophistry can justify Nietzsche's attitude.

Finally, as I have previously mentioned, there is a fundamental scientific error in Nietzsche, his Lamarckian belief in the inheritance of acquired characteristics. This by itself would destroy his entire solution. Similarly there is no scientific justification—in spite of his claims—for his doctrine of eternal recurrence.

In conclusion, keep in mind a crucial positive assumption behind all of Nietzsche's writings, a metaphysical a *priori* for Nietzsche; it is called "life." Life is the standard of all values for Nietzsche, and enhancement of human life on earth is the crucial issue for Nietzsche—enhanced life as against decadent life. Life is defined vaguely by Nietzsche as the will to power, and power is then defined as vital intellectual energies and abilities, that is to say, not pure physical force but sublimated force—not harshness and cruelty but enhanced and organized power, spiritual independence and adventure. Health for Nietzsche represents an abundance of this plastic force, this vital energy. Hypocritical morality is opposed to this kind of vital energy; it makes a virtue of decline and complacency, and produces guilt, self-hate, weakness, and fear. Nietzsche was fulminating against a culture which produced serious psychopathology in its own time and endless monumental wars in the century that followed.

Notes

1 At the time of this writing only Vol. I of the 4 volume work on Nietzsche by Heidegger was available in English. A subsequent volume (Heidegger 1982) has appeared, too late for inclusion here.

EPILOGUE AND SUMMARY

I, Friedrich Nietzsche, was born in a small town in Prussia in 1844 to a 31 year old Lutheran minister father and the daughter of another Lutheran minister; she was only 18. I was their first child. Two years later, in 1846, my "demonic" (Kaufmann 1968) sister Elizabeth was born; in two more years, 1848, my brother Joseph was born. When I was 5 years old, in 1849, my father died of madness—probably general paresis, and in January, 1850, Joseph died (Fuss and Shapiro 1971).

As I wrote, I became after that time a homeless wanderer obsessively seeking what I called the shadow of God (Nietzsche 1968a, Copleston 1975).

My household from the age of 5 until I went off to school consisted of my mother, my sister, my father's mother, and two maiden aunts. My puberty brought severe migraine headaches and "eye-strain" and my formative years from the age of 12 to 24 were marked by hypochondriasis, sinus complaints, gastrointestinal difficulties, but above all, headaches and bad eyes. Perhaps somewhere near the end of that period, in my early twenties, I may have contracted syphilis while on military service. If I did get syphilis it was one of the very few times that I ever experienced sexual intercourse (Lavrin 1971, Hayman 1980, Stern 1979) .

At 17 I wrote an essay on Hölderlin, a famous German poet who eventually became schizophrenic; at that time he was unrecognized in his greatness. Later he was seen as the greatest German poet after Goethe, and hailed by Heidegger in the 20th century as the foremost spokesman for Heidegger's famous philosophy of Being. I myself became the greatest master of German prose next to Goethe (Kaufmann 1968, Hollingdale 1965).

By the time I was in my early twenties it was generally recognized that I was an incredible genius. At the age of 24 I received by acclamation my Ph.D. degree without any thesis or examination, and I was made an associate professor of philology at the University of Basel, Switzerland—a most extraordinary event in the history of strict European universities. I was made a full professor at the age of 30. It was generally agreed that I had an incredible career as a professional philologist and scholar ahead of me and my future looked bright indeed.

At the end of my adolescence, around the age of 20, I formed, from reading, an intense idealization of the late Schopenhauer (1788-1860), which was soon followed by an even more intense adoration after I met Richard Wagner in 1868. This fateful year, in which I got my Ph.D. and was 24, also led to my adoption into the Wagner household. Richard Wagner was the same age that my father would have been —31 years older than I—and toward him I formed a totally intense, uncritical idealizing transference (Fischer-Dieskau 1976). Toward his much younger wife, Cosima, who was only seven years older than I —and who lived fifty years after Wagner died—I formed a silent merger (Kohut 1971) transference, which only surfaced when I went insane and wrote her a famous postcard: "Ariadne I love you," about which scholars have produced innumerable foolish papers (Hayman 1980).

All my great creative work took place in two decades. The first decade from 1869-1879 was the period while I was a professor at Basel. I constantly battled ill health and lived mainly in the Wagner household; two rooms were at my disposal. At the end of this decade my idealizations of Wagner and Schopenhauer (Nietzsche 1965) broke up and I suffered a severe fragmentation, characterized by hypochondriacal collapse and the voluntary resignation of my professorship. Yet, this disaster was necessary for me in order for my own self to form.

Here Kohut (Goldberg 1980) makes one of his rare scholarly mistakes. He compares my relationship with Wagner to Freud's relationship to Fliess—but there is a significant difference. Kohut writes,

> Freud's relationship to Fliess—his over-estimation of Fliess during the years when he made his most daring steps forward into new territory; and his realistic reassessment and subsequent dropping of Fliess after he had made his decisive discoveries—may serve as an example of what I have in mind. But it is not only Freud; there are innumerable others in whom we can observe this phenomenon we characterize as a "transference of creativity." There is Nietzsche's attachment to the idealized Wagner during the time when he prepared himself for the great outpouring of his most original works (pp. 493-4).

The fundamental difference is that Freud needed Fliess, as Kohut writes, to make his most daring steps forward into new territory; on the other hand it required the *break-up* of my idealization of Wagner to enable me to make similar daring steps forward into new territory . It was only *after* I was able to free myself of the idealization of Wagner that I was able to do my greatest creative work.

There *was* however, a relationship that I did maintain during the time of my great creative work,

but it was not to Wagner. It was instead to the composer "Peter Gast" (H. Köselitz), who was a dedicated friend I consistently overrated as a creative mind, just as Freud overestimated Fliess. I made innumerable efforts to get his musical compositions performed, but was unable to find any professional conductors or musicians who agreed with me in my assessment of Gast's musical talent. In this there is a definite parallel to Freud's over-valuation of Fliess's foolish numerical periodicity theories; the parallel ends here however, for Fliess considered himself a full-fledged colleague and competitor of Freud, whereas Gast was working in a different field and idealized me.

Jaspers (1966) quotes a letter from me in 1881 to Gast as follows: "You can scarcely realize how comforting the thought of our mutual understanding is to me, for one who is *alone* with his thoughts is accounted a fool, and often he is such to himself; but *two* is the beginning of 'wisdom', confidence, valor, and mental health" (p. 403).

The second decade (1879-1889) was marked by the full flowering of my own originality, during which time I wandered as an unknown person over various cities in Italy and Switzerland, living in cheap unheated rented rooms. It was only during the last year of my sanity, in 1888, that I began to gain some recognition—but all was soon erased by my complete breakdown in 1889, after which I lived like a vegetable for eleven years with my mother and then my Nazi sister.

As I tried to explain in the much misunderstood final original work of my life, my autobiography *Ecce Homo* (Nietzsche 1968a), subtitled "How One Becomes What One Is," the development of my sense of self was the central concern of my life. I realized that as a classical scholar in philology I would be condemned to the study of the works of others, and saw around me the tragedy of pedants burned out already at the age of 30. With the aid of my idealization of Wagner, I was able to break away from this fate and began to develop my own style. However, I soon realized that now I was in danger of being utilized as a self-object (Kohut 1977) by Wagner—that supreme narcissist—and again I had to break away, at the cost of temporary fragmentation. After that I was able to take several major steps forward and experience the maturation of my powers, unfold my creativity and, above all, feel the joy of finding my sense of self at last in my own original thought. Almost as I reached this maturational goal I was cruelly cut down by a psychosis, which I sensed was coming in 1888, enabling me enough time only to express myself by a few brief works of great intensity, instead of the leisurely middle age I had envisaged to be spent in

producing a complete unfolding of my philosophy.

My life was a total unmitigated agony of suffering and loneliness; I was ignored and ostracized, and published most of my books at my own expense. I believed in myself to the end, although as I became insane the self-esteem passed over into a megalomania and shrill shouting in order to be heard (Kaufmann 1968, Chessick 1977).

Only today my incredible genius is beginning to be recognized. Irony of ironies, academic philosophers in the United States—I again and again attacked academic philosophers—have formed the American Nietzsche Society, which means I have "arrived." Again and again in my writings I wrote, "Do not misunderstand me," and again and again I was misunderstood. No better example of this exists than how psychiatrists have misunderstood me! Usually, I appear as a footnote quoting this or that of the two or three comments made by Freud giving me credit for being a great intuitive psychologist (Chessick 1977). If the psychiatrist wishes to appear scholarly, he may offer quotations, such as epigram 68 from *Beyond Good and Evil* (Nietzsche 1968a):"'I have done that' says my memory. 'I cannot have done that' says my pride, and remains inexorable. Eventually--memory yields." So psychiatrists (Solomon 1973) correctly conclude that I had a number of intuitive and brilliant psychodynamic intuitions before Freud, intuitions that Freud's genius developed into a whole system of psychology and therapy (Chessick 1977, 1980). As such, I merit a footnote in textbooks and in the history of psychiatry, (except for Ellenberger 1970).

I have an even greater paradox to present to you. I repeatedly spoke of myself as the greatest psychologist who ever lived. Yet in a book by a Northwestern University professor (Watson 1963) entitled *The Great Psychologists: From Aristotle to Freud*, my name doesn't even appear in the index!

Am I relevant? What a question! I fought a running and yet unresolved philosophical battle with Socrates. I am Nietzsche the syphilitic—or perhaps not the syphilitic; a great study (there are plenty of bad ones) still needs to be written by a modern psychiatrist as to the nature of my insanity. I am Nietzsche the educator and the great prose writer; I am Nietzsche the poet. I produced a major system of metaphysics (Danto 1965, Stambaugh 1972) and was the first philosopher to develop what is now known as philosophical psychology (Morgan 1965), a central concern of modern philosophy.

I went through "phases" in which I was first a humanist and drama critic throwing light on the origin of Greek tragedy, then a positivist, scientist, and behaviorist, hoping that science and empiricism would rescue mankind, and finally ending up a philosopher alone on my own trying to reorient all of philosophy. Irony of ironies—a last unanticipated phase—yet some call it a deliberate mask—my insanity rendered me for eleven years the helpless tool of my Nazi sister.

I was a philologist who introduced the whole notion of what is now known as ordinary language philosophy, a major philosophical orientation in the twentieth century; I was a European citizen before the United Nations; also a musician—pianist and composer—who appreciated the greatness of Wagner's contemporary music and who then recognized the decadence of Bayreuth with its antisemitism and hypocritical Christianity. I died a shrill megalomaniac and left a dilemma for modern psychiatrists and philosophers to try to interpret whether my last works in the year of 1888 were brilliant philosophy or megalomaniacal insanity.

Above all I was a person of masks (Jaspers 1966), each of which represented a possible perspective. I lived many masks and I produced many masks in my writing. I challenged everything and accepted no prejudices and no premises as eternal truths. Because of this I was abhorred by the academic community and considered generally disrespectable and disreputable by the middle class. The Nazis abused my memory and distorted my writings, tainting my name with theories that were nowhere near my beliefs. I detested the state—especially the German and Prussian state so beloved by Hegel—and I abhorred nationalism and antisemitism. I had nothing but contempt for those who followed Wagnerian and Hegelian doctrines.

The essence of my argument was that man's salvation is himself; that we must make of ourselves what we can, and joyfully affirm life in this world (Nietzsche 1968b). I concentrated on the individual and his suffering, and I emphasized the importance of his overcoming himself and making a joyous life for himself in this world. No other thinker up to my time was aware of the massive dark forces in man that had to be overcome even to maintain a civilized veneer on human behavior (Nietzsche 1968).

I forecast the explosion in the twentieth century of the savage beast lurking in all humans, and tried as hard as I could to introduce the concept of sublimation (Nietzsche 1968b) so that these powerful

drives of sexuality and aggression could be sublimated, or what I sometimes called spiritualized, into the production of a man who joyously affirms life.

I never believed, as did my contemporaries, that science had all the answers. I felt that the basic premises of science were unrecognized illusions, embedded in the language and the grammar of the culture. I wished to look far and wide for other conceptual schemes—those not accepted by my nineteenth century Western culture—and because these were threatening to the very foundation of our culture, I was called "dynamite." I loved this—it made me feel important at last!

I felt that the basic metaphysical and epistemological activity of man is art, not science, and stressed the importance of dreams and fantasies which had what I believed were "a primal function"—to express the way we truly feel and perceive the world (Heidegger 1979). It is only later that Socrates with his dialectic and demand for rational explanation, and subsequently modern science, replaced these primal functions—but they also transformed them and cut us off from ourselves. Thus, an antipathy is set up within the personality, that Freud later described as a war between the Ego and the Id. By the way, he borrowed the term Ego from me, although he reified it in spite of my repeated protests that *any* reification of mental constructs is a total mistake (Chessick 1977, 1980).

I made the first fusion of philosophy with psychology and attempted to explain reality without metaphysical Ideas; the very opposite of Plato (I called Plato "Europe's greatest misfortune"). I tried to understand culture and our personality not through higher "God-given" qualities, but through evolutionary transformation of lower qualities which men have in common with animals. Here I anticipated the whole current philosophy of Susanne Langer (Chessick 1980). For example, I tried to explain sympathy and empathy as arising from the desire for power and from fear, not divine altruism. For sympathy and empathy require alertness to the motives of others and so protect us from danger. When Kohut discussed the origins of empathy in his (1971) *The Analysis of the Self*, I read echoes of my own explanations of these terms.

Above all, I was concerned with human dignity, which the Bible gave us and Darwin took away. I insisted that we had to remake our own nature, each single person individually, alone. My doctrine cut across all races, colors, and creeds, because I argued that all values derive from the individual and all

men have the potential to be truly human. When I talked about supermen or overmen this is what I had in mind; my ideals were artists, saints, and philosophers, which I believed to be the true representatives of the highest development of man—and Hegel agreed with me too.

Early in my career I wrote a book called *Schopenhauer as Educator* (Nietzsche 1965) in which I argued that the educator should help the student discover the fundamental laws of his own character. The educator helps unchain something in the student, enabling the student to climb higher towards his true self. Again and again I argued that each man is unique and should develop his own potential and account for his own existence.

My philosophy consistently ran contrary to the aims of making money, making good citizens for the state, nationalism, and the development of scholars and pedants. In short I opposed all the usual aims and assumptions of current education, which I termed the selfishness of the money makers, the selfishness of the state, the quest for superficial excitement, and the selfishness of scholarship. I ranted and raved against the scholarly teaching of philosophy with its cramming for examinations; I argued that the key test of a philosophy is whether one can live by it.

My doctrine denied the supernatural and the transcendental, and stressed the irrational character of the universe, in sharp contrast to Hegel. I insisted that the intellect was really subordinate to the instincts and, although I agreed with Schopenhauer on the meaninglessness of it all, I disagreed strongly with his pessimism and despair; I argued that we should welcome and embrace life. I was not fooled by hypocrisies and absurdities; for example, I wrote "Usually a mother loves *herself* in her son more than she loves him" and "The unresolved dissonances in personality and opinion between the parents go on echoing in the child's character, forming the history of his inner sufferings" (Hayman 1980). I never actually postulated a *system* unconscious although I used the term repeatedly. My thinking was closely akin to Dostoyevsky's *Notes From Underground* and *The Brothers Karamazov*. I demanded a scientific study of human actions but I did not systematically do so; I left that to Freud. The European tradition of detailed psychological observations, studying the human instead of the ideal, begins with La Rochefoucauld—who did it for literary pleasure—and runs through me, reaching its culmination in Freud.

Why did the highly educated Freud insist that he was not acquainted with my ideas? My views were in the air everywhere during the days of Freud and he could not have avoided hearing innumerable discussions of my thoughts and work. One of his most important disciples, Adler, formed an entire wrong-headed rival psychology allegedly based on my philosophy! I wonder why Freud refused to share his glory with me—and I think I know the answer. I was primarily a metaphysician, an artist, and a poet, and Freud wanted to found a science. Freud was obsessed with being called a scientist because he had to fight all his life against his own metaphysical and artistic tendencies (Chessick 1980). In that sense I believe I was a threat to Freud because I welcomed metaphysics and art and I did not care —as Freud did—about academic scientific respectability. I never had any disciples and although I was a very pleasant and mild mannered gentleman--a surprise to those who knew me only through my extreme rhetoric—after my rupture with Wagner I was essentially alone.

My greatest work (Nietzsche 1968b), *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, exploded after my greatest narcissistic blow. Ms. Lou Salome, who was 21 at the time and later became a friend of Freud, went off with my "friend" Paul Ree, after rejecting my offer of marriage.[1] I wrote the first three books of *Zarathustra* in a frenzy in ten days each, at the age of 40 while tortured by severe insomnia after this blow. It was my *magnum opus*, written as a dithyramb —a poem in a wild irregular strain—and it contains all my basic philosophy but no philosophical argument. My two major books (Nietzsche 1968a) that followed it, *Beyond Good and Evil* and *The Genealogy of Morals*, are expositions of my philosophy from *Zarathustra*; it is as if I calmed down and was able to express myself more clearly—except on the subject of women where I am almost always irrational.

Beyond Good and Evil expresses the philosophy I have already mentioned. I pointed out that science and the pursuit of knowledge are not absolutes and ends in themselves but can only be approved of when they further the cause of life. For me "life" means the value and dignity of each man in this world. I focused on the self of the individual man, his excellence, and his authenticity; I repeatedly wrote, after Pindar, "Become what you are."

I have to admit that I never really explained *how* you are to become what you are, but I sensed the danger to human individuality of establishment science, the state, the university, and government funding. I tried to present this battle between the individual and his requirements for life and self-

development, and the various forces preventing this development, as a war; because of this I was badly misunderstood and misinterpreted in political terms. I have to admit that this was partly due to my hysterical rhetorical style which was also a mask, as I specifically state in *Beyond Good and Evil*.

I attacked human prejudice wherever I found it, even in the highest circles of academia and government. I argued that paradigms and conceptual schemes vary from society to society (also even today from psychoanalytic institute to psychoanalytic institute) and even from person to person, and that there are no eternal immutable truths. I attacked the academic philosophers and professors in universities, who had to preserve their tenured positions by finding philosophical reasons for views which were considered "respectable" in their time and culture. Above all, I was a philologist, and I argued that all our most fundamental concepts must be regarded as "lucky hits" in the struggle for life and power. Nothing is rock bottom certain and we are endlessly caught up in our grammar and in the structure of our language. My frenzied use of poetic diction, deliberate paradoxes, and perverted use of terms, were like the Zen *Koan*, trying to crack the shell of ordinary language and expose us to the chaos that constitutes our sole reality (Morgan 1965, Danto 1965).

Over and over again I attacked scientific fictions like Ego or Self whenever they are thought of as special agents—little men within the man—producing mental activity and behavior. Before Freud I stressed that consciousness was not at all as important or divine as philosophers thought it was; I saw it as just another adaptational tool. Every culture and every science I saw grounded on a different metaphysics and I insisted that each metaphysics always be evaluated in terms of whether or not it is inimical to individual human life at the time and place of the culture.

To me health represented an abundance of plastic force, and I extolled the frenzy of the creative artist as against the dried up laboratory scientist. I encouraged vital intellectual and imaginative energies and abilities, spiritual independence, and adventure, rather than what I called a slave morality that emphasized mediocrity, conformity, and devaluation of this world in favor of another. For me art stimulated life; it is healing and refreshing. My work is characterized by constant urging to renew individual creation, and I challenged the search for security and the bliss of absolute truth, which I saw only as a function of the need to maintain narcissistic equilibrium. Thus, I saw health as a continuing overcoming of tendencies to obey slave morality, and to sink into the quiet respectability of conformity

and ritual. I defined master morality as joyfully accepting the suffering and loneliness inevitably entailed in challenging the prevailing perspective of any culture, and creating a new set of values and paradigms.

Is it any wonder that C. D. Broad, the famous British philosopher who won the peak of academic respectability by explaining the philosophy of others rather than creating his own challenges to them, dismissed me as a "crackpot"? Or that many others have tried to explain away my doctrines as merely the attempt of a suffering neurotic or syphilitic to overcome his personal agonies and project his private battle onto the world historical stage? Yet even these explanations of my ambiguous philosophy are "perspectives"; developed to serve the power needs of the proponent.

Similarly, the conflict between Freud's structural theory and Kohut's psychology of the self may be understood as a conflict between perspectives; in some instances one perspective is more useful and in some instances another. There is an extraordinary and, as usual uncredited, reflection of my thought in Kohut's later work, for example when he offers his reflections on the Conference on the Psychology of the Self (Goldberg 1980). He writes,

> Once theories have been with us for a long time, for example, and we have adjusted to living with them . . . theoretical systems tend to become rigid, take on the quality of dogma, becoming imbued with moral qualities, and instead of being helpmates of the observer, stand more and more in his way, interfering with his ability to perceive formerly unrecognized configurations in the aspects of the world under investigation, or to alter his understanding of configurations that were formerly misunderstood (p. 492).

This sentence could very easily have been written by me, as could Kohut's insistence that Freud's statement about mental health representing the capacity to love and work was a *moral pronouncement*, "the expression of his credo about the values that should guide each person throughout his existence" (p. 497). It seems clear when we have examined the current conflict between the theories of Freud and Kohut that we have placed ourselves squarely again in the realm of discussion of the morals behind philosophy and science, a subject that was first emphasized and explored with unparalleled vision by me, Friedrich Nietzsche. For there are no absolute truths in science and philosophy, only more or less useful hypotheses or perspectives, depending on the *case*..

I believe that if there is any absolute truth it is manifest in the inevitable clashing of perspectives, the ultimate manifestation of the Will to Power which, in my metaphysics, is all there is.

> For Nietzsche, as Foucault reads him, history is the story of petty malice, of violently imposed interpretations, of vicious intentions, of high-sounding stories masking the lowest of motives. To the Nietzschean genealogist the foundation of morality, at least since Plato, is not to be found in ideal truth. It is found in *pudenda origo* . . . "lowly origins," catty fights, minor crudeness, ceaseless and nasty clashing of wills. The story of history is one of accidents, dispersion, chance events, lies—not the lofty development of Truth or the concrete embodiment of Freedom . . . the history of truth is the history of error and arbitrariness: "The faith on which our belief in science rests is still a metaphysical faith" (p. 108).

. . . Dreyfus and Rabinow (1982)

> In this, Nietzsche, offering this future to us as both promise and task, marks the threshold beyond which contemporary philosophy can begin thinking again; and he will no doubt continue for a long while to dominate its advance (p. 81).

. . . Sheridan (1980)

Notes

1 Later she denied that a formal proposal was made.

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