

- ing's *Revolution in Science* [*Anti-Dühring*], x. 1: "... ideology, the deduction of reality not from itself but from its mental image." Also Engels' *Ludwig Feuerbach*, iv. 7th par. from the end: "... ideology, that is, occupation with thoughts as with independent entities."
4. "On the Jewish Question," in *Selected Essays by Karl Marx*, trans. H. J. Stenning (New York: International Publishers, 1926), pp. 55-56.
5. From K. Freeman, *Ancilla to the Pre-Socratic Philosophers* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957). *Dühring*, x. 1: "... ideology, the deduction of reality not from itself but from its mental image." Also Engels' *Ludwig Feuerbach*, iv. 7th par. from the end: "... ideology, that is, occupation with thoughts as with independent entities."
6. David Ricardo, *Principles of Political Economy and Taxation*, i. 1.
7. See, for example, *Capital*, i (p. 45).
8. *Ibid.*, IV. xv. 3 (p. 445).
9. *Ibid.*, 9 (p. 534).
10. *Ibid.*, xv. 4 (pp. 708-9).
11. See *ibid.*, xxxii.
12. Cf. the sentence with which Montesquieu begins I. iii of *The Spirit of the Laws*.
13. See above, p. 811.

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FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

1844-1900

The young Nietzsche thought of the philosopher as a physician of culture. His own philosophy is both a diagnosis of the sickness or crisis of his time, the nineteenth century, and the search for a cure. In his first published book, *The Birth of Tragedy* (1872), Nietzsche placed his hope in a revival of German culture through the music of Richard Wagner. His second book, *Untimely Considerations*, known in English as *Thoughts Out of Season*, consists of four essays published separately between 1873 and 1876. One of these is again a tribute to Wagner. Nietzsche soon ceased to believe in the cure he had suggested, repudiating Wagner and losing faith in the possibility of a German cultural revival. He thus entered into the second stage of his development, a stage characterized by disillusionment and a turning to Western positivism. Symbolic of this is the dedication of his third book, *Human, All-too-Human* (1879) to Voltaire.¹ Nietzsche's final position is articulated in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (its four parts were written and published between 1883 and 1885) and the books following it. Nietzsche, however, never repudiated but only deepened the view of his time as sick and critical, a view which is to be found in the writings of his first stage of development; and the problems he raised at this stage are problems with which he never ceased to wrestle. One is, therefore, justified in beginning an exposition of Nietzsche's political philosophy with a discussion of one of his earlier writings, the second essay of *Thoughts Out of Season*.

The title of the essay, which was published in 1874, may be translated as "Of the Use and Disadvantage of History for Life"; in English it is known as *The Use and Abuse of History*.² Nietzsche's

thoughts are out of season because they are meant to be contrary to his time and yet with an influence upon it for the benefit of a coming time. The essay is a critique of a specific "fault and defect" of the time, historicism, which Nietzsche calls the historical movement, the historical trend, or the historical sense. He believes his time to be suffering from a "malignant historical fever."⁸

Nietzsche's critique of historicism is also his confrontation with, and criticism of, Hegel. In the latter part of the essay Nietzsche refers to a "very celebrated philosophy" and continues, "I believe there has been no dangerous turning point in the progress of German culture in this century that has not been made more dangerous by the enormous and still living influence of this Hegelian philosophy." Hegel regards contemporary man as the perfection of world history; Hegelianism establishes the sovereignty of history over other spiritual powers such as art or religion; for Hegel "the highest and final stage of the world process came together in his own Berlin existence."⁹ Against Hegel's doctrine that the historical process is a rational process which in Hegel's time has ended in an absolute moment at the zenith, Nietzsche asserts that the historical process neither is nor can be finished, that the completion of history is not merely impossible but undesirable because it would lead to a degeneration of man, and that history is not a rational process but is full of blindness, madness and injustice.

It might thus appear that Nietzsche simply effects a return to a pre-Hegelian viewpoint which considers history a realm of chance rather than a dimension of meaning. However, Nietzsche's critique of historicism does not deny the validity of the essential premises of historicism, and his criticism of Hegel is based on a crucial area of agreement with Hegel, as a closer analysis of *The Use and Abuse of History* will show.

The essay begins with a consideration of the life of animals. Animals forget each moment as soon as it passes. To live entirely in the present, without memory of the past, means to live unhistorically. Man remembers the past and cannot escape from it; man lives historically. He also suffers from the awareness of the past and the passing of time, if only because it brings with it an awareness that man is an imperfectible imperfection. Happiness depends on the ability to forget and to surrender completely to the present. A man who could forget nothing would be a totally unhappy man, for he would see only flux and change and would have no fixed points by which to take his bearings.

On the other hand, man would not be man without a memory of the past. Moreover, it is only by developing his historical sense and by virtue of his power of turning the past to the uses of the present that

man rises above other animals and becomes man. Man's problem is therefore to find that balance between remembering and forgetting which is most conducive to his life as man. The degree and limits of man's memory of the past must be fixed by the extent to which man can incorporate or absorb the past. A healthy organism is one which instinctively assimilates only as much of the past as it can digest; the rest it simply does not see. The dividing line between the historical and the unhistorical is the organism's horizon. According to Nietzsche, "This is a universal law: a living thing can only be healthy, strong and productive within a certain horizon."¹⁰

Man's horizon is constituted by his fundamental set of assumptions about all things, by what he considers the absolute truth which he cannot question. His historical knowledge must be surrounded by an unhistorical atmosphere of darkness which limits the historical sense of man.

The proper sphere of history lies within and under the unhistorical atmosphere which must envelop man if he is to endure. Nietzsche admits that there are uses as well as abuses of history. He speaks of three kinds of history which can serve life. *Monumental* history provides the man of action with models of greatness by its depiction of the great men and events of the past. *Antiquarian* history addresses itself to the preserving and revering element in man, imbuing him with a salutary love for tradition. It is of special benefit to less gifted peoples and races because it keeps them safe from a restless and unproductive and cosmopolitanism. *Critical* history places obsolete aspects of the past before the bar of judgment and condemns them; it brings to light injustices surviving from the past so that they can be abolished in the interest of the present.

Nietzsche is, however, more concerned with the abuses than with the uses of history. He is quick to point out how easy it is to misuse each of the above-mentioned kinds of history. Monumental history's models of past greatness can be erected to hinder the emergence of present greatness. The reverence for the past which antiquarian history fosters can act to stultify the present. There is always the danger that critical history will uproot more of the past than deserves to be uprooted. Moreover, Nietzsche links the efficacy of each kind of history to its blindness to the whole truth. By paying insufficient attention to the conditions needed for the emergence of greatness, monumental history deludes one into thinking that, because greatness was possible, it is still possible, which need not be the case. In cultivating a general reverence for the past, antiquarian history is necessarily indiscriminate and praises aspects of the past which do not deserve praise. Critical history fails to

realize the extent to which men are the results of the past they seek to condemn. The uses of the past for the present depend on a violation of the truth about the past: useful history cannot be scientific history.

Science and the demand that history become a science disrupt the proper relation between history and life. Historical science is motivated by the desire to know rather than the desire to serve life, and it forces on the attention of man more historical knowledge than he can properly absorb or digest. At this point history no longer serves life; it disrupts life.

Nietzsche presents the reader with a catalogue of calamities resulting from an excess of history. One of these calamities is that men, confronted with a spectacle of history so vast that it becomes meaningless for them, will come to think of themselves as *epigoni*, late arrivals on the scene for whom there is nothing whatever to do. If Hegel were right, if history were finished, modern men would indeed be *epigoni*. Hegel is wrong, but the belief that he is right makes men act as if they were *epigoni*. Men who have no further task to accomplish or men who believe there is nothing more to be done are bound to degenerate, for what is best in man is his aspiration.

But neither the assertion that the historical process is finished nor the assertion that the historical process is rational is the most fundamental assertion of historicism. Historicism asserts the overwhelming importance of history, the determination of man's life and thought by history, and the impossibility of transcending the historical process. Nietzsche accepts this assertion of the omnipotence of history, and his acceptance constitutes a crucial area of agreement with Hegel. The calamities which Nietzsche attributes to an excess of historical knowledge can be summarized by saying that an excess of historical knowledge destroys man's horizon. There is, however, no permanent horizon of man as man. Men's fundamental assumptions about things are unevitable, unsupported, historically variable and historically determined. There are neither eternal things nor eternal truths; there is only flux and change, which Nietzsche calls the finality of becoming.⁶ While doctrines asserting the finality of becoming are true they are also fatal. History as the science of universal becoming is true but deadly.

If human life can only thrive within a certain horizon which men believe to be the absolute truth, but which in reality is merely one of many possible horizons, then life is in need of illusions, and the truth which exposes the horizon as a *mere* horizon is deadly. There is, then, a conflict between truth and life, or between life and wisdom.

In such a conflict, according to Nietzsche, one must choose the

side of life. There can be life without wisdom, but there can be no wisdom without life.

It is, however, impossible to accept the illusions which life demands if they are known to be illusions. Myths are useful only so long as they are mistaken for the truth. A man's horizon is his most comprehensive myth, and it enables him to live because he thinks of it as the truth. To see a horizon as horizon is to be beyond that horizon. At the very least the continued acceptance of a discredited horizon would involve man in a degrading self-deception, but Nietzsche is concerned with the enlightenment of man. If there is a tension between wisdom and life, it cannot be resolved by the preference for life. An impasse has been reached.

Yet *The Use and Abuse of History* ends on a note of hope, asserting a harmony between life and wisdom. After historicism's exposure of the arbitrary character of all human horizons, man is subjected to "the hopeless waves of an infinite skepticism"; but Nietzsche professes to sight land: man can recover from "the malady of history."⁷ Such a recovery is only possible if historicism is proved to be untrue or at least not completely true. Tentatively in *The Use and Abuse of History*, and more comprehensively in his later writings, Nietzsche attempts to overcome and transcend the historicist insight; what begins as the questioning of the objective truth of historicism ends as a questioning of the very possibility of objective truth.

The kind of history which culminates in historicism is history which understands itself as scientific and objective. Historicism is a theoretical assertion based upon an examination of historical phenomena. Nietzsche questions whether the historical phenomena can be understood by objective and scientific history and historians; he questions whether history will yield its secrets to disinterested inquiry. History is made by historical actors, by great men. History-making men are dedicated men having a commitment to a cause. They act within a horizon of commitment, unhistorically believing the absolute validity of their attempt. The great men of history were the great creators, facing the future and devoting themselves to that which was to be. The greatest creators are those who create horizons within which future men will live. They create these horizons unconsciously and under the illusion that they are merely discovering truth. All previous horizons enveloped a belief in an absolute truth which cannot be created but which may be discovered.

Objective history stands or falls by its fidelity to its object, by its ability to present the past as it really was. Nietzsche quotes with ap-

proval the old maxim that like can only be understood by like. Only committed men facing the future and only creative men can understand the creations of future-directed and committed men of the past. "The language of the past is always oracular. You will only understand it as builders of the future who know the present."⁸ The objective historian is not a creative man, and he does not face the future. He may establish the date of Michelangelo's birth, but only an artist can really understand Michelangelo.

The objective historian deludes himself into thinking that he does not interpret the past but only describes it. There is, however, an illusion which lurks in the very word "objectivity." Any statement about facts is an interpretation of facts. The very selection of data from an infinity of data is already an interpretation. Ultimately there is not a choice between objective and subjective history but only a choice between a noble, rich interpretation of the past and a base, impoverished interpretation of the past.

Thus Nietzsche does not deny the validity of the insight that horizons are the creations of men; he attacks historicism as a particular interpretation of that insight. He attempts to transcend the apparent deadliness of the historicist insight by interpreting it nobly. If it is a fact that the values by which men have lived have been their own creations or fictions, it is an ambiguous fact. Nietzsche moves in the direction of viewing this insight as a revelation of man's creativity and therefore of his power. Man is revealed as the animal who is able to create horizons. For the first time he can create his horizon consciously; could not a consciously created horizon be the most glorious horizon yet created by man?

Nietzsche only hints at the possibility of such a solution in *The Use and Abuse of History*, and the questions raised by those hints are not resolved in that essay. If horizons are the creations of men, can there in principle not be as many different horizons as there are men? If horizons are free projects, how is one to choose between different horizons? When these questions arise, one must turn from *The Use and Abuse of History* to the main body of his work, but with an appreciation of the importance which the historical process has for Nietzsche. In *Human, All-too-Human*, Nietzsche criticizes traditional philosophy for its lack of the historical sense.⁹ The importance of the historical process is such that Nietzsche's own political philosophy can almost be said to be couched in terms of a historical analysis. Nietzsche tries to create man's horizon of the future. His creation cannot, of course, be derived, or merely derived, from history, for it is a free project. But the historicist insight into horizons as horizons, for instance, is necessarily a post-

Christian insight, as will be seen. And Nietzsche's own project is in some respects meant to be a synthesis of the best projections of the future which have occurred in history. With these considerations in mind, one may turn to Nietzsche's interpretation of man's history, which has led men to the total crisis of Nietzsche's time.

The peak of man's history was reached near the beginning of recorded history; the highest culture hitherto was that of the Greeks. To Nietzsche culture is the perfection of nature, and every culture is characterized by a unity of style which pervades all its activities. A great culture is one which abounds with great, creative men and which elevates men. In *Beyond Good and Evil* Nietzsche writes:

Every enhancement of the type "man" has so far been the work of an aristocratic society—and it will be so again and again—a society that believes in the long ladder of an order of rank... and that needs slavery in some sense or other. Without that *pathos of distance* which grows out of the ingrained difference between strata—when the ruling caste constantly looks afar and looks down upon subjects and instruments and just as constantly practices obedience and command, keeping down and keeping at a distance—that other, more mysterious *pathos* could not have grown up either—the craving for an ever new widening of distances within the soul itself, the development of ever higher, rarer, more remote, further-stretching, more comprehensive states—in brief, simply the enhancement of the type "man."¹⁰

The *pathos of distance* existed in Greek society, which was a master-slave society. Nietzsche also notes with approval that the Greeks made a virtue of combat and contests; even the poets contested each other.

If Greece is the peak of recorded history, Greek tragedy is the peak of that peak. Man's fundamental experience is abysmal: he is confronted with an abyss of meaninglessness in a world that is a chaos and not a cosmos; man is a suffering animal. Optimism is a shallow reaction to man's condition, a self-deception. Pessimism may be a mere weakness of the will, but it can be a courageous confrontation of the abyss. Greek tragedy is a pessimism of strength, an affirmation and therewith a transfiguration of man's suffering.

The Greek culture Nietzsche admires is primarily pre-Socratic, just as the Greek philosophers he praises are mainly pre-Socratics, especially Heraclitus. Socrates is, to Nietzsche, the destroyer of Greek tragedy. A healthy culture is one in which men's creative instincts are maximized. Socrates is the enemy of the instinctive life, a theoretical man who is critical rather than creative, who bizarrely equates both happiness and virtue with reason, who withers nobility and the noble virtues by subjecting them to a ruthless dialectical inquiry they cannot withstand,

who imposes his will on posterity so successfully that, since Socrates, rationalism has been the fate of Western man.

Socrates and Plato are an anticipation of an even greater calamity for mankind: the appearance of Christianity. Nietzsche labels Christianity as "Platonism for the people."¹¹ Christianity's triumph over Rome is the triumph of slave-morality over master-morality.

For Nietzsche moralities are creations, but the first creators were individuals rather than herds. Herd-morality is the first form of morality, from which both slave- and master-morality derive. However, there were always strong herds and weak herds. Strong herds impose their will on weak herds and enslave them. Master-morality is the affirmation of strength by the strong, a celebration of the vigorous and active life by those who are possessed of vigor and capable of action. The strong do not repress their instincts but glorify them. Masters are cruel but they are innocently cruel. They identify the good with the powerful, and they dismiss the weak with contempt, calling it bad.

Conversely, slave-morality is the rejection of strength by the weak. Whereas masters distinguish between good and bad, slaves distinguish between good and evil; what the master affirms as good the slave rejects as evil. Slave-morality is essentially negative, being a reaction against, and a revenge upon, the rulers and their values. Its primary concern is with evil. Good becomes a label attached to various kinds of weakness, such as humility and passivity. Eagles cannot help being eagles, and lambs cannot help being lambs, but lambs pretend—and must pretend—that their weakness is voluntary, just as the strength of the eagles is voluntary and can therefore be condemned.

Nietzsche tends to use the terms slave-morality and priest-morality interchangeably. Slave-morality is formulated by priests who are members of the ruling herd, but weak and decadent members. They make common cause with the herd: the sick minister to the sick. They develop ascetic ideals which are the revenge which weak life attempts to take on life, but this attempted revenge serves life by keeping the herd from destroying itself. *The* priestly people are the Jews, who are the inventors of Christianity. Through Christianity they connive to effect a transvaluation of all values. They succeed: humility becomes a virtue and pride a vice; master-morality is stood on its head. Christianity makes life soft by sapping its vigor. The instincts are denied their free play and forced to turn back upon themselves.

The worst effect of this transvaluation of all values is to preserve what Nietzsche calls a surplus of "defective, diseased, degenerating forms of life"; in the economy of life this preservation is necessarily at

the expense of higher forms of life. It has made man a "sublime miscarriage" who is too tame for his own good.¹²

Nietzsche conceived of his own labors as an attempt at a transvaluation of all values, but it would be a mistake to assume that he merely attempted to restore a pre-Christian master-morality. Such a restoration would be impossible because of the changes in Western man which Christianity has produced, and it would be undesirable because the changes have not all been for the worse. Nietzsche thinks of the abortion as sublime in a very serious way. Christianity has deepened man. Slave-morality spiritualizes man by sublimating his instincts until there is a possibility of their expression in ever more delicate forms. The spiritualization of man has produced, among other things, science, which has widened the scope of man's possible future. Furthermore, Christianity has universalized man and has made any restoration of limited goals for peoples or races obsolete. Christianity has superseded the Greeks. Nietzsche's transvaluation of values will replace the false universalism of Christianity with a true universal goal for mankind; it will transcend Christianity rather than merely destroy it.

When Nietzsche compares his own time with the great age of the Greeks or even with the eras in which Christianity produced in European man a magnificent tension of the spirit, he finds it wanting in all decisive respects. There are almost no true individuals in the nineteenth century; even the rare true selves that do occur in such a paltry time are stunted by the time. The rule of low forms of life at the expense of higher forms is for Nietzsche the meaning of democracy. Democracy is mediocrity. There is no significant difference between democracy and socialism. Both democracy and socialism preach egalitarianism and both are the true heirs of Christianity and its slave-morality. Christianity prepares the way for egalitarianism by holding all men to be equal in decisive respects: they have, in God, a common father; and they are all sinners.

Nietzsche finds that all the governments of his day are inherently democratic. Even states which consider themselves to be monarchies take their bearings by the many and cater to them. All modern states yield to public opinion; Nietzsche equates public opinion with private laziness. The rule of public opinion is the rule of sloth and laziness, breeding conformity. Modern societies are all mass societies which not only mold all men into one shape but also into a very degraded shape. The morning paper replaces the morning prayer. The time prides itself on its pacifism: the truth is that men no longer believe in anything strongly enough to fight for it.

Nietzsche condemns both the modern state and modern society. The state is a powerful, new idol, whereas Nietzsche is concerned with the destruction of idols. The state is a mere superstructure based on the unique quality of a people, but it warps that uniqueness: the state preaches universal doctrines like the rights of man. Its shallow universalism destroys the genius of particular people; its impersonal machinery depersonalizes man.

A false quality pervades society. Success in the market place is a sign of worthlessness. One must be an actor, the opposite of a genuine self, to succeed.

Modern education no longer molds true individuals but turns out specialists. The corruption of education necessarily produces a corruption of the general level of taste. Symptomatic of this is the debasement of literary style. People cease to speak well and to write well, for excellence as such tends to be rejected.

Philosophy, too, has been affected by the total crisis of Nietzsche's time. It is tolerated only because of its impotence. It is no longer sovereign over other disciplines. It is in such a bad state that it almost deserves the disrepute in which it is held. All varieties of philosophy which Nietzsche examines he finds deficient. To begin with, they all tend to be dogmatic. Philosophies turn into philosophic systems; the will to a system is a lack of integrity. Certain varieties of philosophy continue to be instructive. One can learn from cynics the "seamy" underside of values and to appreciate the animal qualities in man; one can learn from skeptics a necessary kind of detachment, and from pessimists the necessarily great role of suffering and pain in life. In themselves, however, these philosophies offer no solution for the crisis of the time, being themselves symptoms of the crisis. Nor does science offer a solution. It possesses the rare virtue of integrity, but it is involved in the crisis: science is the last form assumed by the ascetic ideals of slave-morality. Science turns against life in the interest of truth. Its very truthfulness, however, disarms it. Science has taken to discrediting itself by revealing its own limitations.

Nietzsche has a short saying to express what is at the root of the total crisis of his time, a crisis reflected in thought and in deed, in individuals and in institutions. That saying is, "God is dead."

With Nietzsche's saying that God is dead one arrives at the core of his philosophical endeavors. In Nietzsche's greatest book, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Zarathustra, who to some extent is the self-idealization of Nietzsche, asserts the death of God near the very beginning of the work.¹³ He does not at first prove that God is dead but makes it, as it were, a matter of personal honor that God be dead. The belief in God

has become an indecency for all men except those who have had no opportunity to hear of the death of God. Later on the meanings of the saying, its basis and its consequences, are articulated.

Nietzsche is obviously not the inventor of atheism, but his atheism is nevertheless unique and significant in various ways. First of all, Nietzsche makes no attempt to conceal his atheism but proclaims it again and again with all the eloquence at his command; many previous atheists had tended to be more reticent about their atheism. Secondly, atheism had been in the nineteenth century chiefly a preserve of the political left. Nietzsche, who abhorred the politics of the left and who envisioned a new aristocracy, may be said to have invented the atheism of the political right. Aristocracy has traditionally been associated with the preservation of religion; Nietzsche's aristocrats are to be candid atheists. Thirdly, Nietzsche's atheism is historical atheism. The saying that God is dead implies that God once existed. God existed while one could believe in God; God is dead because belief in God has become impossible.

Since Nietzsche is concerned with an analysis of *his* particular time, his teaching of the death of God refers primarily, but not exclusively, to the death of the Christian God. The speeches in Part I of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* are to a large extent concerned with Christianity and its effects. It is part of the intention of the whole book to be an imitation and parody of the Bible. Zarathustra wants to create a true universal goal for humanity and must therefore overcome the false universal goals which already exist. Christianity and Buddhism are false universal goals, but since only Christianity is a significant force in Europe, Nietzsche devotes more attention to it. The death of the Christian God leaves European man without a universal goal but at the same time so universalized by the influence of Christianity that he is beyond any national or ethnic goal.

The death of God is the last event in the history of Christianity, but with the death of the Christian God all other gods die also. With the exposure of man's most universal horizon as mere horizon, all belief in eternal truths and beings becomes impossible. At the end of Part I of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Zarathustra proclaims the death of all gods.¹⁴ The death of God is also the death of the Platonic ideas and of metaphysics. Traditional philosophies and traditional religions have shared a belief in a true world which they distinguished from the world known by man through his senses, the apparent world. Both philosophy and religion have been other-worldly. The impossibility of the belief in God is also the impossibility of the belief in a true world, but the abolition of the true world is also the abolition of the apparent

world: the world known by man through his senses and feelings and through his whole being is now the only world and not the apparent world. Or, one could say that with the death of God the apparent world becomes the true and real world.

The death of God comes about when men realize that God is their own creation. The descendants of the men who created God, men who have been radically changed by the belief in God, now murder God. The Christian God is the anchor of Christian morality. Christian morality, by making man conscious of his weakness, also made him strive to overcome that weakness. Christianity deepened and heightened man's spiritual powers. Christian morality emphasizes the desirability of truthfulness. It not only makes man a tamer but a more subtle and clever animal. The devotion to God evolves into a devotion to truth which may be called science. The strict and tender conscience which the belief in the Christian God creates finally turns against God. The Christian God is killed by intellectual probity, which is the consummation of Christian morality.

But with the death of the Christian God at the hands of Christian morality, Christian morality renders itself baseless. Christian morality cannot survive the death of God. Devotion to the truth or devotion to anything now becomes problematical: all visions and aspirations are exposed as arbitrary and unsupported. The death of God is the death not only of Christian morality but of all traditional moralities.

In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Christianity is considered as a metamorphosis of man's spirit, which by the acceptance of Christianity becomes a camel. It burdens itself with moral obligations which say to the spirit, "Thou shalt." Man "burdens" himself with the mortification of his pride, with the denigration of his own wisdom, with devotion to lost causes, and with the search for truth. The camel goes into the wilderness but there a second metamorphosis occurs: the spirit of man becomes a lion. It rebels against its burdens. It slays the dragon of obligation; instead of listening to the dragon's "thou shalt" it now says, "I will." But while the lion may slay the dragon of values which precede the will of man, he cannot create new values; he is left in a desert.¹⁵

With the death of God man finds himself in a desert which is the total crisis of Nietzsche's time. It is obviously more than a crisis in the history of ideas. Christian morality may continue to be observed for a while, perhaps out of habit, but such a situation cannot endure. Men are progressively less able to believe in anything. There is no longer a horizon to give life meaning: the crisis is total.

The politics of the left are to Nietzsche a symptom of the total crisis and an aggravation of it, so they obviously are not a solution. What

about conservatism, or the politics of the political right? Nietzsche rejects the possibility of a conservative solution on various grounds, criticizing both the specific form which German conservatism took under Bismarck and the general assumptions of conservatism.

First of all, nineteenth-century conservatism is forced to make overwhelming concessions to the democratic movement of modern times. Bismarck attempts to preserve a monarchy but at the same time is forced to introduce universal suffrage and extensive welfare legislation and thus to advance the democratic movement. The king is no longer considered the ruler but merely the first servant.

Secondly, conservatism embraces the ideals of nationalism. Nationalism is inherently a democratic phenomenon, as is shown by its outgrowth from the French Revolution. It is also an anachronism. The very concessions which all European states must make to democracy and the increasing likeness of all European cultures show that there is already a hidden European unity which cannot be denied: Nietzsche calls himself a good European. The few true individuals of the nineteenth century, like Napoleon and Goethe, were not national but European events. The superficial conflicts of European nation-states can no longer be tolerated, if only because of the threat to Europe from the sleeping giant Russia.

Thirdly, conservatism relies on the old nobility, which is decrepit. What is needed is a new nobility and a new idea of nobility.

Finally, conservatism is allied with Christianity, but, as has been seen, Nietzsche advocates a candid atheism.

One may summarize Nietzsche's view of conservatism by quoting from an aphorism in one of his late works, *The Twilight of the Idols*:

Whispered to Conservatives. What was not known formerly, what is known, or might be known, today: a reversion, a return in any sense or degree is simply not possible. . . . Today there are still parties whose dream it is that all things might walk backwards like crabs. But no one is free to be a crab. Nothing avails: one *must* go forward—step by step further into decadence (that is *my* definition of modern "progress"). One can *check* this development and thus dam up degeneration, gather it and make it more vehement and *swollen*: one can do no more.¹⁶

Nietzsche rejects both the politics of the right and the left as petty politics, opposing to them his rather vague concept of great politics, the politics of the future. The transvaluation of all values is also the transvaluation of all politics; Nietzsche equates the moral with the political.

The total crisis of the time must be resolved but there is absolutely no necessity for it to be resolved for the benefit of man. With the death

of God man is exposed to the greatest danger: man may become utterly degraded. Both the belief in God and the fight against God improved man; with the death of God man has no more opportunity to love or to hate God. The death of God may result in man's abandonment of all striving, all aspirations, and all ideals. Such a man, motivated only by the desire for comfortable self-preservation, is called by Nietzsche the last man. The last man is the most despicable man because he is no longer able to despise himself. He neither wants to rule nor be ruled, to become rich or poor; he wants everyone to do and be the same. "We have invented happiness" say the last men, and they blink.¹⁷ When Zarathustra describes the last man in order to warn men, his listeners are enthralled by the picture he draws: contemporary man is not yet the last man but his ideal is the last man.

Nihilism is a protest against the approach of the last man. The formula for nihilism is: nothing is true, everything is permitted. Since all aspirations and ideals have proved meaningless, men cannot devote themselves to a cause: they have no future to will. Nihilists will nothingness rather than to desist from willing. The ascetic ideals of Christianity, being a denial of life, can be seen as an unconscious form of nihilism. Furthermore, nihilism is a necessary consequence of modern science which destroys the validity of values. Nietzsche at times thinks of nihilism as the inescapable future of Europe; at other times he calls himself a nihilist. The creator of new values must be a destroyer of old values.

However, the death of God is not only the time of man's greatest danger but of his greatest possibility, because it makes possible the supreme creation of the values of the future. The death of God is the liberation of man from God. Previous horizons have kept man in chains; they have prevented him from being at home in this world which is the only world. Man can now be loyal to the earth, as Zarathustra admonishes him to be. The heart of the earth is gold: there is no hell. The death of God is the liberation of man from guilt: the productive innocence of the blond beast, the finest specimen of prehistoric man, can be recovered on a higher level.

The death of God is the discovery of man's creativity. Knowing that horizons are his creations, he also is more aware of his own power; if nothing is true, everything is possible. Man has become man by unconsciously projecting horizons; with the conscious projection of horizons man can become more than man.

At this point it becomes evident that Nietzsche needs a philosophical doctrine to explain man and the situation of man. Previous doctrines are discredited with the dissolution of previous horizons. The new

doctrine must explain how man has become man without recourse to teleological principles; the new doctrine must be in harmony with the knowledge of the sovereignty of becoming, of man's animal origins, and of the inherent meaninglessness of all givens. Nietzsche calls this doctrine the doctrine of the will to power.

Nietzsche maintains that the will to power is the basic characteristic of all reality. The doctrine of the will to power is a wholly new philosophical doctrine. In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and in *Beyond Good and Evil* the presentation of the doctrine is coupled with a rejection of all previous philosophical doctrines. These share the belief in an objective truth; that belief is, according to Nietzsche, a mere prejudice. Philosophers have spoken of a will to truth and have assumed that there is a truth which can be discovered by thinking. In reality, according to Nietzsche, they have merely and unconsciously sought to imprint their interpretation on the world. The thought or reason of philosophers is inseparable from the philosopher's personality. The will to truth is only a form of something more basic, a will to overcome and to master everything, the will to power.

In *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, the fullest exposition of the doctrine of the will to power is given in Zarathustra's speech on "Self-Overcoming."¹⁸ Zarathustra has observed living things and has found that wherever there is life there is obedience. But obedience is always obedience to something; it is relative to commanding. This commanding must not be sought outside of life. The urge to overcome, to command, to master is not a mere characteristic of life but the core of life.

Life is will to power. A living thing is one which tries to *overcome*; it "seeks above all to *discharge* its strength." However, it does not try to overcome and discharge with any view to a given end. Nietzsche denies that the instinct of self-preservation is the cardinal instinct of an organic being. Self-preservation is merely a result of the will to power, not the purpose of life; the instinct of self-preservation is a superfluous teleological principle.

The will to power is not peculiar to human beings, though it explains how man has become man: life consists in overcoming, and some beasts have overcome their beastliness, just as some men may overcome their humanity. The beast's preying in the jungle and the artist's painting of a picture are both forms of the will to power. Finally, the doctrine of the will to power is a cosmological doctrine, explaining the character of all reality. There are no inanimate things: the doctrine refutes not only all idealistic but also all materialistic philosophies.

Nietzsche's primary emphasis, however, remains on *man's* will to power. Man is the horizon-creating animal. For Nietzsche, man has no

determined nature or function; man is the animal which has not yet been defined (*festgestellt*). Man is a rope over an abyss, an interlude between what is less than man and what is more than man. The will to power explains all of man's activity, from his lowest cravings to his highest creations. Philosophy is the highest and most spiritualized form of the will to power.

Reason can then no longer be understood as being of man's essence, as traditionally it had been. Man is not primarily a thinking being. Reason and consciousness are mere surface phenomena. Man's ego is created; it is part of the total organism which is the source of reason and which reason cannot fathom. The highest things are neither accessible to reason nor communicable by reason. Beneath the ego is the self, the ground of the ego, the seat of the will to power, the source of all possible meaning. Nietzsche's concept of the self has some relation to Freud's concept of the id, and Nietzsche once called the self an "it." But Nietzsche's self, in contradistinction to Freud's id, is meant to be radically mysterious and itself a creation.

Zarathustra calls the self the body. The traditional dualism of mind and matter, of body and soul, is thus abolished; the self is also called the soul. The result is not only a less exalted notion of what had previously been thought to pertain to the soul, but a more spiritualized notion of things previously thought to pertain to the body; for instance, Zarathustra refers to blood as spirit.

The doctrine of the will to power necessarily leads to a revision of traditional notions of virtue. To Nietzsche, virtues are sublimated and transfigured passions, dedicated passions. Nietzsche compares traditional virtues with sleep because they were thought to lead to happiness understood as a state of peace and rest, and because traditionally the highest virtue is a wisdom conceived of as the contemplation of the eternal and uncreated. For Nietzsche virtue is creativity; wisdom is self-conscious creation. With Nietzsche's emphasis on the self comes an increased emphasis on self-realization and on such virtues as sincerity and integrity. Since every self is, however, unique and mysterious, there can be no comprehensive doctrine of virtues for Nietzsche: one man's virtue may be another man's vice. It may also be maintained that Nietzsche attempts to reduce notions of virtue and vice to notions of the sickness and health of the self which is the body, and these notions in turn to notions of strength and weakness.

Nietzsche is aware that the doctrine of the will to power raises difficulties. Is the doctrine of the will to power merely the expression of Nietzsche's will to power or is it an objectively true doctrine? Nietzsche can neither maintain that it is simply true nor that it is

in no way more plausible than the man on the street's opinion about the character of reality. Nietzsche wrestles with this problem in various ways. Previous philosophy had understood itself as simply true. Nietzsche characterizes traditional philosophy as dogmatic philosophy. He therefore takes pains to present his own philosophy differently. The doctrine of the will to power differs from previous doctrines not only in content but in mode. Nietzsche thinks there can be no objective knowledge of reality but only perspectives of reality. At times he therefore not only admits but asserts that the doctrine of the will to power is a perspectivist interpretation of reality, characterizing it as a hypothesis to be tested. He thinks of his own philosophy and of the philosophy of the future to which his own philosophy is a prelude as an experiment, an attempt which is also a temptation. Even if there can be only perspectives of reality, there can be more and less comprehensive perspectives. Nietzsche's perspective is the highest perspective yet attained because it embodies the insights of all previous perspectives, and because it is the first perspective aware of the law of perspectivity. Nietzsche's doctrine of the will to power, similarly, represents the first self-consciousness of the will to power; Nietzsche's philosophy is the first creative interpretation of creativity; Nietzsche has reached a peak where there is no difference between creation and contemplation. But this still means that some kind of finality has been reached. Nietzsche is both compelled to affirm and compelled to deny the objective truth of the doctrine of the will to power; the doctrine of the will to power must somehow be both an insight into the truth of things and the creation of Nietzsche's unique, created self. The arguments for the will to power in *Beyond Good and Evil* are also only Nietzsche's most private thoughts. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* is, as its subtitle indicates, "A Book for All and No One." It is both a new Bible for all mankind and Nietzsche's most personal expression. Nietzsche can only hint to others of what he means. At best he can only demand that others become true, creative selves. Zarathustra wants no disciples. Nietzsche's teaching is a creative call to creativity and can only be understood by creative men.

There is a second difficulty. What are the limits of the will to power? Can everything be overcome? If everything can be overcome, then man will finally overcome even the conditions of inequality which, according to Nietzsche, are indispensable for the elevation of man. Finally men will indeed become *epigoni*; there will be nothing left to overcome. Nietzsche believes in a hierarchical society, in the superiority of men over women, and in the necessity for suffering. But if the will to power is all, and if all is in principle possible, why should not and why will not the difference between the sexes or the rank differences

between men be abolished? Traditional political philosophy does not need to face these problems because it takes its bearings by nature. For Nietzsche man has no determined nature. There can be nature in the sense of the outside world but this nature is valueless and consists of meaningless data. One cannot live according to nature because nature dictates no course of action. To Nietzsche nature is a problem, but he cannot do without some concept of nature and a natural principle of ruling and being ruled which would guarantee hierarchy.

The gravest question of the limits of the will to power concerns the past. In principle everything can and must be willed, but can the past be willed? Nietzsche's own project of the future is based, if only negatively, on the past. His project is the creation of the self, but the self is also a creation of the past. Do not the passing of time and the past frustrate the will? Nietzsche thinks of previous philosophers as the will's *reaction* to its own impotence before the passing of time, the revenge of the will to power on time by the creation of fictitious eternal beings. But his own philosophy is not negative but a liberation from the spirit of revenge. It is to be a total affirmation, even of the past. The past could only be willed and affirmed if it were shown to be also the future. If there were an eternal return of all things, then the past would also be the future. Nietzsche's doctrine of the eternal return asserts that all things have already happened an infinite number of times before and will happen an infinite number of times again, exactly as before. The doctrine of the eternal return is a moral as well as a cosmological doctrine. If there is an eternal return, man will be aware of the awful gravity of all his actions, since they *will recur* an infinite number of times. Furthermore, by willing the eternal return of all things, man wills and affirms a future that will become his past; he can, so to speak, become the cause of himself. Finally, the return of all things guarantees the existence of low things and therefore of things which cannot be overcome by the will to power. By willing the eternal return the will reaches its highest peak: it overcomes itself but survives in the total affirmation of all things. Through the total affirmation of all things man can cease to be man and become superman.

The superman is Nietzsche's project of man's future. He is meant to be a fulfillment and a transcendence of the highest ideals of man which have been previously conceived. He is part poet, part philosopher, part saint. He is a poet because he is creative, but he is more than the poets of today, whom Nietzsche criticizes for lying (they falsify the meaningless given) and for failing to create new values but rather acting as the servants of traditional morality. The superman will create new values and in this respect will resemble the traditional philosopher,

but his creations will be self-conscious creations. Finally, the superman will resemble the saint because his soul will contain all the depth which Christianity has given to man. The superman will be Caesar with the soul of Christ. Ultimately the Christianity which Nietzsche curses plays a larger part in the noble future of man than does the classical antiquity he praises. Zarathustra is the most pious man who never believed in God.

The superman must be willed. There is no necessity for him to emerge; he is merely a possibility of the future, as is the last man. The total crisis means only that man can no longer be man; he must rise to the superhuman or sink to the subhuman.

The superman is Nietzsche's *free* project of man's future, but its roots in the past ideals of man which it transcends save the project from being arbitrary. The superman will recapture the innocence of the blond beast on an infinitely higher, post-Christian level. The superman represents the third metamorphosis of the spirit. The nihilistic lion who can only say "I will" and who destroys old values without being able to create new ones is replaced by the child who says "I am," who affirms all, and whose creativity resembles the innocence of a child at play.

The superman as a type cannot be fully described because he will be above all a true self. Every superman will be unique. One cannot describe the values by which he will live, because each superman will give his own law unto himself. One can, however, say he will be a man who suffers much and who creates much, and that he will be a man of infinite pride and infinite delicacy. For instance, he will not turn his cheek to his enemies, not because he is brutish, but because he does not want to shame his enemies. But the exact forms his delicacy and pride will assume are necessarily undetermined.

Nietzsche's concept of the superman is thus necessarily vague and ambiguous. It is not even certain whether the superman will be a ruler. Nietzsche does speak of the planetary rule of a new nobility, and the superman is Nietzsche's new idea of nobility. At other times he speaks of the coexistence of last men and supermen: last men will live in communities that resemble ant heaps and supermen will roam the earth, but the supermen will not rule the last men and will try to avoid having any contact with them.

Nor can Nietzsche recommend a way of political action which will make the possibility of the superman a reality. There is a strong strain of radical individualism in Nietzsche. He counsels men to become true selves. He advises men to seek solitude, to flee from public life, to reject established modes of conduct and thought. From this point of view it might be maintained that the superman represents an apolitical solution to the total crisis of modernity. Nietzsche's creative call to creativity ac-

counts in part for the predominant interpretation of Nietzsche which sees in him a teacher of true individualism. Such an interpretation, however, fails to understand the serious political consequences of a suggested apolitical solution. There is an underside to Nietzsche's advocacy of radical individualism. He teaches men to abdicate their public responsibility, to despise the pettiness of day-to-day politics, and to abstain from the ordinary duties of the citizen. There is always the danger, even from his point of view, that the worst men and not the best men will listen to his advice. Even if only the best men were to heed the advice, there would be the danger of withdrawing from the political arena the men most needed in it.

The predominant interpretation of Nietzsche is compelled also to overlook another strain in Nietzsche's writing, a strain which is overtly political. Nietzsche foresees a time of apocalyptic politics. What is more, he sees a necessity for an apocalypse and welcomes it. He looks forward to a time of great wars which will be an important part of the great politics of the future. He speaks approvingly of the need for a eugenics program; he anticipates a time when whole sectors of the earth will be devoted to man's experimentation on man; and he is in favor of the merciless extinction of inferior people and races. Nietzsche thinks of nihilism as knocking on the door of Europe. In his hatred for the degradation of man which is the last man, he advises that the door be opened to nihilism.

Part of the significance of Nietzsche's political philosophy lies in the fact that it is an implicit critique of Marxism. Nietzsche never refers to either Marx or Engels, but he was familiar with various forms of nineteenth-century socialism. Furthermore, Nietzsche, like Marx, was influenced by Hegel. One may summarize the relationship of Marxism to Nietzsche's political philosophy as follows: the Marxist realm of freedom which is to be secured by the revolution is for Nietzsche the realm of the last man, the utter degradation of man. Nietzsche thought more philosophically, more profoundly, than Marx did about what was to follow the revolution.

If Marx is inseparably linked to the growth of communism, it must be admitted that Nietzsche is linked to the emergence of fascism in the twentieth century. The relation of fascism to Nietzsche recalls the relation of the French Revolution to Rousseau. The problem of Nietzsche's connection with fascism is unfortunately not resolved by claiming, as many interpreters of Nietzsche are prone to do, that Nietzsche was no fascist, that he was a violent critic of German nationalism, and that he would have loathed Hitler. These things are undoubtedly true, and uttering them shows the absurdity of a crude identification of Nietz-

sche's doctrines with Hitler's ravings. Nietzsche was a man with a noble vision of man's future. His own delicacy, integrity, and courage shine through his writing. He was also free of the crude racism which was to be an important element of fascism, and he had only contempt for political anti-Semitism. But the fact remains that in various ways Nietzsche influenced fascism. Fascism may have abused the words of Nietzsche, but his words are singularly easy to abuse. Nietzsche was an extremist, and no man was more gifted than he in making an extreme view seem appealing by presenting it with great audacity and eloquence. A man who counsels men to live dangerously must expect to have dangerous men like Mussolini heed his counsel; a man who teaches that a good war justifies any cause must expect to have this teaching, which is presented half in jest but only *half* in jest, to be abused. Nietzsche praises cruelty and condemns pity without reflecting sufficiently on whether man must really be advised to be more cruel than he is, or what the effect of such a view will be on cruel men. Nietzsche was not a racist, but his writings abound with reflections on race and the possibilities of a biological rejuvenation of man. Nietzsche not only fails to advocate or teach prudence and public responsibility; he slanders prudence and public responsibility. Finally, it must again be repeated that Nietzsche is the inventor of an atheism of the political right.

Any exposition of Nietzsche's political philosophy must not only reveal the deep ambiguities, but must point to the grave consequences, of that political philosophy. Neither the revelation of ambiguity, however, nor a demonstration of grave consequences constitutes a refutation. Even if one could prove Nietzsche to be in error, one might still ponder what Nietzsche himself wrote about Schopenhauer: "... the errors of great men are venerable because they are more fruitful than the truths of little men. . . ." ¹⁹

NOTES

1. The dedication appears in the first edition of the first volume of this work (Chemnitz: E. Schweitzer, 1878). It does not appear in the English translation in *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche*, ed. Oscar Levy (Edinburgh and London: T. N. Foulis, 1910), vol. VI.
2. Trans. Adrian Collins (New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1949).
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 3-4.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 51-52.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 7.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 65, 69, 73.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 41.
9. Levy, *op. cit.*, aphorism 2, pp. 14-15.
10. *Beyond Good and Evil*, Aphorism 257. Translated, with Commentary by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage Books, 1966.

11. *Ibid.*, Preface, p. 3.
 12. *Ibid.*, Aphorism 62, pp. 74-76.
 13. See secs. 2 and 3 of "Zarathustra's Prologue," *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, in Walter Kaufmann, ed., *The Portable Nietzsche* (New York, 1954), pp. 122-26. Copyright 1954 by the Viking Press and reprinted by their permission.
 14. *Ibid.*, p. 191.
 15. *Ibid.*, pp. 137-40.
 16. *The Portable Nietzsche*, pp. 546-47.
 17. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Prologue, sec. 5, in *The Portable Nietzsche*, pp. 128-31.
 18. *Ibid.*, pp. 225-28.
 19. *Ibid.*, p. 30.

READINGS

- A. Nietzsche, Friedrich. *The Use and Abuse of History*. New York: The Liberal Arts Press, 1949.
 B. Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Beyond Good and Evil*. Translated, with Commentary by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Vintage Books, 1966.

JOHN DEWEY

1859-1952

John Dewey has been widely recognized as the foremost American philosopher of democracy of the twentieth century. His guiding intention throughout an extraordinarily long and influential career may be summarized as the attempt to further the realization of democracy in every sphere of life. Accordingly, he sought an all-embracing conception of democracy, a comprehensive formulation which he opposed to the understanding of democracy held by all preceding philosophers. Prior political philosophy, he contended, had tended to restrict its attention to such narrowly political concerns as "the state" and the various institutions of government. Dewey's fundamental objective was rather the development of a democratic philosophy designed not merely to encompass the traditional concerns of politics, but, more importantly, to provide a democratic understanding of ethics, education, logic, esthetics, and the many other fields of thought and activity with which he was concerned. Every element of his work as a whole was affected decisively by his political intention.

Dewey's philosophy is politically programmatic, which is to say that it addresses itself to what it regards as the true end of philosophy, social progress, and it concentrates its attention on the contemporary state of things rather than on any supposedly eternal, fixed conditions. Thus Dewey's rejection of traditional political philosophy springs partly from his belief that it led to little more than a sterile "consideration of the logical relationship of various ideas to one another, and away from the facts of human activity,"¹ as if those logical or rational relations were self-sufficient and themselves important. His rejection of traditional political philosophy is also partly inspired by his conviction