

FROM BEING ILL IN TIME TO LOVE OF ETERNITY

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by

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I. "The most concerned ask today; 'How is man to be preserved?' But Zarathustra is the first and only one to ask: 'How is man to be overcome?'"*

Introduction

* "Thus Spoke Zarathustra" IV-On the Higher Man-3

Explanation of the footnote apparatus:

1. The passages quoted from Nietzsche's untranslated Nachlass appear in the original German.
2. Also quoted in German are passages from Menschliches, Allzumenschliches, Morgenröte and Die Geburt der Tragödie.
3. All other quotations from Nietzsche's works are from the translations cited in the bibliography.
4. In the list of references at the end of each chapter each book is referred to by an abbreviation; the key to these abbreviations is found on p. 190 along with the bibliography. In addition, I abbreviated the titles of the chapters in Nietzsche's Ecce Homo by forming their acronyms. Thus, for instance, "EH-WIASW 5" means: Ecce Homo, chapter entitled "Why I am so Wise", section 5.
5. Among the references there are some whose source does not appear in the bibliography; the reason for this is that I took the quotations in question from photocopies I had made a long time ago without noting the particular edition I had been using. Thus, my choice was either to exclude these quotations or to use them without being able to indicate the source completely; I chose the latter option.

That this planet - considered not as a hunk of rock but as a multi-dimensional theatre"including sentience and reflection within which "the human condition" is merely a temporary viewpoint - is in the grip of certain cumulatively dangerous developments entering the world through the activities of man, but whose source or nature have not yet been called by their proper names, and which seem to be proceeding from no particular center of control, can hardly be doubted any longer.

They are ubiquitous, intimate, intricate, but as yet inadequately identified processes, only incidentally physical, which, rather like a disease cutting across all boundaries of inner and outer, friend and foe, race and ideology, appear to be digesting both this planet and ourselves, both materially and psychically, so that they will likely leave nothing but exhausted matter, barren arrangements, and sense-less minds where once there had been countries and peoples and faiths.

Our squandering of the inherited capital, both biological and historical, is tremendous, and our sacrifices to the fierce gods of this age are bloodier than the Aztec ritual slaughters, and more astounding than the building of the pyramids.

We are not the first, and will not be the last, to suspect, with shuddering dizziness, that humanity might not be in the best of hands - or minds.

We have perhaps reached a point where we are no longer certain that all human problems can be solved by technical skill, where a weariness of settling our disagreements through battles has stolen into us and a distrust of ideologies is dripping its cynical apathy into our hearts, where the promise of progress has lost its naïve appeal, and where all criticism that stops at this or that culpable one leaves us cold, so that we wish to pause in our strivings in order to regain some clarity from so much confusion and noise of achievement.

It is perhaps in such a moment that we begin to wonder. We wonder, for instance, whether it is really true that peace would reign on earth if only ... armament ... pollution ... poverty ... communism... capitalism... crime ... national sovereignties ... inequalities ... had been got rid of. And in such a moment - it is an unlikely sort of moment, anyway - we may even be willing to entertain a strange, but nevertheless obscurely, teasingly attractive thought about the nature of this whole amorphous-polymorphous unsatisfactoriness of our cursed-beloved existence, our 'predicament': What if, so this playfully shocking thought whispers, our malaise is not at all due to a lack of the right values or our failure to strive for the right things, or the activities of some evil one(s)? What if - and now this thought becomes downright malicious - there is something profoundly unsound about this customarily ongoing existence itself? And what if our very customary strivings

themselves, individual and collective, for desirable objects and states, and for the satisfaction of needs, as well as our faith that there are, somewhere in time or space or after-time or other-space, truly good arrangements upon which we ought to fix our attention and which we ought to attain, - what if even most of our well-intentioned customary strivings participate in a fatal character of unsoundness?

Just as we normally presume to know what is good and what bad so we take for granted that we know what is health and what unhealth. Agreed that we do know unhealth in its most strikingly immediate forms, - yet it could be that our model of health has been crucially incomplete, missing a vital limb or two, as well as clumsily divided into physical and mental, so that what has been traditionally regarded as evil, sinful, wrong, or immoral would, according to a more complete model, be regarded rather as expressions of a truncated health or of outright diseases; - not, however, merely of bodily malfunctionings: for this reduction of ill to the corporeal is itself one typical strategy by that model of health whose inadequacy we are beginning to suspect.

If at this stage of our musings we have not become impatient, irritated at such silly thoughts, it might occur to us that it is indeed true that if our entire customarily ongoing existence were somehow permeated by an unsoundness then this would have necessarily escaped our notice simply because

we normally have no standpoint outside the total customary character of living, that is: because our very style of perception, the nature of our everyday transactions, our emotional receptivity, our method of diagnosing troubles, and our strategies for tackling problems, are themselves part and parcel of this customary dynamics of living, thus presupposing themselves and their total character as valid while systematically locating all possible causes of disturbance by means of, and therefore elsewhere than in this customary way of existence itself.

It may be that while considering this unsettling possibility a vision like a daydream lights up for a moment, a vision, for instance, of the whole noisy world of man as if in truth asleep, and of man's movements as if directed, pushed, and knotted by invisible hands, mankind being an army of somnambulist soldiers fighting battles for unknown generals whose hypnotic orders permeate all communications, a world where superstition holds up a mask of science, and canonized violence calls itself justice.

Perhaps the vision sharpens, showing our customary human existence to be a jungle of occult forces where speech is an incessant tumult of spell-binding and - wrangling, and black magic an everyday manner of transaction, where selves are rarer than diamonds but demon possession, ghost incarnations, automatisms, trance and out-of-the-body states

are the norm, where perception is the way of living without seeing, and emotion the ability to go through life without feeling, an existence whose time is the denial of change, whose values are its way of doing without appreciation, and whose thoughts are its method of preventing thinking, a world where hardly any one wills but most everyone is willed, - a world, in short, which is unspeakably remote, even in its most respected expressions, from that state of reason and enlightenment and humanity which precisely this ongoing customary existence ascribes to itself as a matter of course and in proud contrast to supposedly dark and barbaric ages of the past.

Let this already sufficiently disquieting vision be punctuated by one last question: What if precisely we who have become futuristic - have no future, neither a physical nor a moral - spiritual one, - and perhaps not even a today?

Indeed, the possibility might be less farfetched than we would like to admit to ourselves during our 'sober' moments that the species "man", as well as the earth herself, could actually be ruined by the ravages worked through superstition.

Perhaps it is by means of fables and fairy-tales sooner than through statistics, computer models, or sociological analyses that we can abbreviate for our intelligent vision and emotional sensibilities the vital import of happenings on earth!

But at this point in our musings we probably wish to pull

ourselves back from such foolish and disturbing daydreams, back into the real world. 'The real world'? The 'real world' - that is, as perceived, as felt, interpreted, and lived in the customary way? Has perhaps a small, nagging doubt nestled in us: What if there really is something unsound about the whole customary dynamics of living, unsound despite and in the midst of, perhaps even because of, our best-intentioned strivings and proudest achievements, and unsound only incidentally at the physical plane (where it spreads out over the planet) but centrally stretching through all the dimensions of human existence?

What, then, do we mean by 'soundness'? This much is certain: the problem of "soundness" is posed in contrast to the mythologies of sinfulness, the nightmares of guilt, the imperatives of wars and revolutions, the dreams of ideologies, the hysterias of religion, the orgies of moral rearmament, the battles of good and evil, - and the facile therapeutics of sociologies and psychiatries which derive their standards of norm and abnorm from the historical currencies of their time or from the unexamined ideals of their practitioners, and whose banner is 'adjustment' or 'increased efficiency' or 'maximization of happiness' or the 'development' of a 'self' whose nature - or non-nature - has never been effectively questioned.

This does not seem to leave us with many alternative

interpretations of 'soundness'. Our wondering about the soundness of the whole customary dynamics of living, even in most of its respected and acclaimed expressions, amounts, then, to wondering whether man - excepting, perhaps, a few known and unknown cases of health - has really entered into his right mind yet.

To suspect the possibility of a decisive, under certain circumstances perhaps fatal, unsoundness permeating all aspects, indeed, the totality, of the customary dynamics of living, including most of its acclaimed heights, is not only an irreverent - some would call it 'cynical' - experiment sure to draw its 'reward' of sneers, cold scorn, and fury, but above all it is a difficult one.

It is difficult for immediately upon its launching this experiment runs aground on two seemingly unsurmountable problems: For one, is it possible to call the total dynamics of ongoing human existence into question without already condemning it, without falling back into the pose of calling this world a swamp of sin, without poisoning one's everyday transactions by a smoldering suspiciousness, cynicism, or methodical hypocrisy, - without, that is, developing an evil eye for this world?

This could be called the ethical dilemma of the experiment. On the other hand, which standpoint could one possibly take in one's explorations that would not be already in the thrall -

grammatically, emotionally, transactionally, perceptually, conceptually - of just those everyday dynamics towards which one now wishes to become critical? Or could a measure of freedom from the distortion and finitude inherent in any standpoint be realized through a constant ranging over many standpoints?

Therein consists the metaphysical dilemma of such an experiment.

Having run aground on this twofold seemingly impossibility - this seeming self-contradictory presumptuousness - of an investigation into the essential soundness of the very customarily ongoing existence itself, we are stuck for the moment, and we take the opportunity to look around for a precedent. We examine the titles of books by philosophers within the past hundred years: "Fear and Trembling", "The Crisis of European Sciences", "The Sickness unto Death", "Being and Nothingness", "Nausea", "Beyond Good and Evil", "The Question of Being", "Civilization and its Discontents", "Twilight of the Idols", "The Concept of Dread", "Sense and Nonsense", "Ressentiment", "One-dimensional Man". Clearly, the question of the soundness of the ongoing human enterprise as a whole has arrived in the Western hemisphere. If we add the growing literature of concern about our spontaneous mismanagement of the natural world within which we subsist, then we see that the problem, though only incidentally physical,

has not only arrived but has already been explored in some of its more tangible ramifications.

Foremost among the modern philosophers who both took notice of an all-pervasive and extremely serious malaise afflicting life in the Western hemisphere - then mainly in Europe, now in North America as well - and created diagnoses of their own are, of course, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Wittgenstein, Heidegger, and Sartre. I am deliberately omitting Marx from this list for he was much too rigidly committed to a naïve, though complexly elaborated, polarized vision of man and history, - he was a master builder upon a fundament painfully vulnerable to even small amounts of scepticism and psychology - and true philosophical inquiry.

As regards our present purpose, however, namely, that of getting a handle on the problem of the essential soundness of human existence as we know it, Nietzsche's thinking is distinguished among that of the other modern philosophers in several important ways. First, Nietzsche was a decisive influence on Heidegger and Sartre. Second, he gave the problem of the entire customary character of life (in Europe) more attention, pursued its ramifications more continuously, more widely and deeply, and exposed his whole self to its profoundly unsettling implications more courageously, than anyone else. Third, Nietzsche simply is the most radical and energetic sceptic in the history of Western philosophy since

the Pyrrhonic sceptics, Montaigne notwithstanding, whom he loved and emulated-and outdistanced. Only Wittgenstein among the modern philosophers has a similar sceptical temperament, though his whole thinking is rather more narrow and lacks that ice-cold and white-hot explorative exuberance which drives Nietzsche to open up distances and abysses where Wittgenstein - and the others - still find grounds for faith. If we wish to be strict, Nietzsche is the only one who has actually subjected the entirety of our inherited existence to a scrutiny with regard to its soundness, including time, the religious need, grammar and logic, self, utility, egoism, causality, the existence of mankind, moral improvement, science, progress, the value of truth, and whatever else we chance to believe in. Fourth, Nietzsche's solution to the problem of the soundness of customary existence, his prescription for the malady as he diagnosed it, is bolder, and more original than the answers offered by the others: it is also more difficult to understand, and more interesting.

I shall, therefore, seize upon Nietzsche's thought as the most important precedent and principal guide in our perplexity concerning the essential un-/soundness of our customary existence.

Although Nietzsche's philosophical investigations by no means took their point of departure from a focal concern for

the essential soundness of customary existence, this question soon became a recurrent topic for his widely roaming observations. Already in Human, all too Human he had begun to trace a crucial link in everyday existence between the predominance of a morality of mores, for instance, on the one hand, and a basic character of unsoundness, on the other hand. So he wrote, ". . . the first experiment is . . . to see whether mankind can change itself from a moral into a wise mankind."¹ He also began to explore the possible shapes of a life without metaphysical verities, for they are "imagination which originate only in errors of reason and deserve not satisfaction but destruction", and "philosophy can serve to . . . remove them; for they are acquired, temporally limited needs which are based upon suppositions contrary to science."² Thus, "it is, according to historical probability, very well possible that man will some time become wholly and universally sceptical; the question will then be this: What form will human society take under the influence of such a mode of thought?"³

His next book, The Dawn, subtitled "Thoughts about the moral prejudices", was already entirely devoted to exploring morality as a problem, even as possibly a factor in rather than a remedy for our malaise.

In the following Joyous Wisdom, morality - "the morality that is very prestigious nowadays"⁴ - and metaphysics

emerged as the principal obstacles to man's 'becoming what he is', to man's coming into his own, - to man's being in his right mind.

These preparatory raids into what had, until then, been philosophical no-man's-land culminate in 'Zarathustra's devastating diagnosis of man's malaise:

" . . . do not believe those who speak to you of otherworldly hopes! Poison-mixers are they, whether they know it or not. Despisers of life are they, decaying and poisoned themselves, of whom the earth is wary: so let them go."⁵

"It was suffering and incapacity that created all otherworlds - this and that brief madness of bliss which is experienced only by those who suffer most deeply.

Weariness that wants to reach the ultimate with one leap, with one fatal leap, a poor ignorant weariness that does not want to want any more: this created all gods and afterworlds."⁶

"Once the sin against God was the greatest sin; but God died and these sinners with him. To sin against the earth is now the most dreadful thing, and to esteem the entrails of the unknowable higher than the meaning of the earth."⁷

And last, :

" . . . whatever harm evil may do, the harm done by the

good is the most harmful harm. ... The stupidity of the good is unfathomably cunning. ... For the good are unable to create; ... they sacrifice the future to themselves - they crucify all man's future, The good have always been the beginning of the end."⁸

With this merciless diagnosis, Nietzsche not only attacked the naïve credibility of moral rearmaments, religious revivals, organizational improvements, and technical advancements as sound investments for modern hopes to improve man's lot, but he also shot a deadly arrow at the Achilles-heel of socialism and other political or revolutionary reform programs, namely, at their naïve faith, inasmuch "as they say and feel in their hearts, 'We already know what is good and just, and we have it too; woe unto those who still seek here!'"⁹

Abandoning the traditional theological, metaphysical, epistemological, axiological, and political paradigms of accounting and prescribing for human existence, Nietzsche began to increasingly rely on medical metaphors and a pseudo-physiological vocabulary to characterize the nature of the ongoing situation - and the task which man had to face up to.

Man was not just abandoned by God, was not just ignorant and laboring under errors, was not just unhappy, or wicked, or ill-adjusted, - man was sick:" ... man is ...¹⁰ the sick animal ...".

But in Nietzsche's assessment of the situation

confronting modern man this fact: that man was sick, meant something far more terrible than that which the ordinary understanding takes the fact of sickness to signify. When we think of someone as being sick we visualize this 'someone' as a sort of unchanging substratum who 'has', or manifests, different properties at different times. Healing, according to this naïve everyday model of thinking, consists in somehow removing the property of 'sickness' from and restoring the property of 'health' to the unchanging substratum, namely, to 'the one who' is sick, or healthy, as the case may be. In Nietzsche's view, however, there is no unchanging substratum anywhere in this universe. Man, for instance, does not signify an unchanging entity which 'had' a history and which 'experienced' the vicissitudes of life. Rather, if man is sick, and especially if man has been sick for a few centuries, then the situation is not just that of an unchanging substratum 'man' having 'undergone' so many 'experiences' and having acquired the property of 'being sick', but is that of a sick type of man having ascended to dominance. As Nietzsche saw it, 'man' always embodies his qualities, and his qualities are his embodiment; there is no separation between mind and body, or soul and body, - or health and body.

Thus, in Nietzsche's diagnosis, the problem is not that an unchanging substratum 'man' has temporarily

acquired the accidental quality of 'being sick', but, to put it most radically, that sickness has become man, that is, if we keep the language of substrata and external qualities, that the substratum has become sick(-ness). Consequently, whatever (Western) 'man' does, thinks, believes, values, *it* is precisely a sick substratum that 'acquires' and 'sheds' all these external qualities.

As if this were not a sufficiently shocking thought Nietzsche discovered a further consequence of sickness not being an external quality pertaining to an unchanging substratum but being the type, the substratum itself: "When a decadent type of man ascends to the rank of the highest type, this could only happen at the expense of its countertype, the type of man that is strong and sure of life."¹¹ That is, not only does 'man' signify the embodiment of an illness, but health, namely, the embodiment of health, has itself been reduced to a subordinate, and despised, type.

In short, according to Nietzsche's understanding of the matter, health and sickness are not external, or accidental, qualities attaching to and detaching from an unchanging substratum 'man' like clothes to and from a manikin, but are the very fact of man, more accurately, are the very fact, in each case, of a man. The fact which is signified by man changes in its entirety, though in many ways very subtly, when 'man' 'becomes' ill or healthy. Moreover, 'man' has,

actually, 'become' ill: "mankind itself has become mendacious and false down to its most fundamental instincts - to the point of worshipping the opposite values of those which alone would guarantee its health, its future, the lofty right to its future."¹²

Of course, that 'fact' of 'man' which has 'become' ill consists not so much in bodily features as in men's functioning: their emotions, their thinking, their believing, - their philosophizing. It is in respects such as these that men have become sick, have become sickness itself.

It is precisely for this reason that moral restructurings, political reforms, technical advancements, and all the other devices of modern progressive civilization can do nothing to improve man's lot but have to remain mere palliatives.

At this point we are probably developing a sense for that unfamiliar complex of tasks and problems and possibilities which Nietzsche is referring to when he calls his "whole Zarathustra ... a dithyramb ... on purity",¹³ when he calls Zarathustra "the act of a tremendous purification and consecration of humanity,"¹⁴ and when about the figure of Zarathustra himself, he says, "To understand this type, one must first become clear about his physiological presupposition: this is what I call the great health (Gesundheit)".^{14a}

Now we also understand why, "assuming one is a person, one necessarily also has the philosophy that belongs to that

person; but there is a big difference. In some it is their deprivations that philosophize; in others their riches and strengths."¹⁵ Consequently, the philosophizings, valuations, beliefs, moralizings, and art of those in whom their deprivations became creative simply cannot be taken seriously. Therefore it is first with "supra-human well-being and benevolence (Wohlseins und Wohlwollens) that ... great seriousness really begins, that the real question mark is posed for the first time, that the destiny of the soul changes ..."¹⁶

According to this diagnosis, new moralities, technical advancements, and the other paraphernalia of 'progress' are simply so many ways of sidestepping the one task whose time has come: not just to 'become' healthy - for there is no 'one', no neutral substratum, 'who' could, like a manikin, exchange 'his' external qualities, exchange 'sick' for 'healthy' - but to become and to bring forth the man who is fit.

Wherein does man's sickness consist - wherein does the sick man consist - according to Nietzsche? The nature of the sickness, or rather, the nature of the sick man, consists in a fundamentally false relationship to the way things truly are. The specific illness of the Western sick man, that is, of the Western false relationship to the truth of existence consists in Christianity, Nietzsche thought; Christianity - 'Platonism for the people' - is that false relationship in that it is an anti-natural morality and an addiction to the 'beyond'.

Because man has become a false relationship, and thus has become a false order of values, Nietzsche calls for a "Transvaluation of all values: that is ... for an act of supreme self-examination on the part of humanity."¹⁷ This self-examination is, as we have seen, to be understood in analogy to the physician's examination of his patient!

Insofar as all of Western man's reverences have been conditioned by this anti-natural morality and the metaphysic of the 'beyond', and insofar as through and in these reverences Western man has been sick, and insofar as his sickness is terminal, that is, insofar as he simply has no future in his sick state, namely, as the sickness he is, Western man is now confronted by the most "terrifying Either/Or: 'Either abolish your reverences or - yourselves!'" And, adds Nietzsche, "The latter would be nihilism; but would not the former also be -nihilism?- This is our question mark."¹⁸

Does this Either/Or seem familiar? It is, though in a different formulation, that very same ethical and metaphysical dilemma upon which our musings ran aground just when we were about to launch into an experiment of questioning the soundness of the entire dynamics of our customary existence so far.

In Zarathustra Nietzsche formulates his answer to that question mark, and to the malaise of Western man. More accurately, he formulates his name for his answer,

namely, "der Übermensch", but the precise substance of that answer had not by any means become clear yet, so that Nietzsche continued to explore in a fabulous diversity of aphorisms and notes the subtleties and ramifications of that disease as well as of that health which in his view constitutes the single decisive alternative confronting humanity.

Clearly, since there is no unchanging substratum 'man', the very fact, the very substance of man is continually being determined and re-determined by what we might in a large sense call 'political' events. In this sense Christianity, for instance, was a decisive political event. Consequently, Nietzsche saw the task of health to be one not just for the individual but also, and perhaps more importantly, for whole peoples. Therefore, Nietzsche consistently explored the problems and possibilities of discipline and breeding and 'great politics', the politics of determining the very fact and substance that 'man' is and will be.

As we have said, Nietzsche was not alone among modern European philosophers in seeing himself as tackling a disease rather than a mere conundrum or challenge to knowledge or moral problems of the times. More recently, Wittgenstein spoke of "philosophical illnesses".¹⁹ In his view, "The philosopher's treatment of a question is like the treatment of an illness."²⁰

For men like Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, Wittgenstein,

Heidegger, and Sartre the aim of philosophizing is no longer the production of an exhaustive account or systematic survey of the world or of the faculty of reason, nor is it that of vindicating their own age, or showing the finger of God at work in the forces of history, or of issueing permanently binding ethical principles; they no longer believe that anything can be explained or exhaustively accounted for: "Der ganzen modernen Weltanschauung liegt die Täuschung zugrunde, dass die sogenannten Naturgesetze die Erklärungen der Naturerscheinungen seien. So bleiben sie bei etwas Unantastbarem stehen, wie die älteren bei Gott und dem Schicksal."²¹ Consequently, the later Wittgenstein said that his own aim in philosophy was rather to "shew the fly the way out of the fly-bottle."²² Neither do these men believe in progress, or wish to tailor a creed for modern man to follow. Nietzsche even risks the guess that "what was at stake in all philosophizing hitherto was not at all 'truth'", that is, never was explanation, the vindication of God's action in history, or the discovery of true ethical principles, but always was "something else - let us say, health, future, growth, power, life."²³

"(All) previous interpretations have been perspective valuations ... for the growth of power; ... every strengthening and increase of power opens up new perspectives

and means believing in new horizons ... The world with which we are concerned is false, ... (but) a falsehood always changing but never getting near the truth: for - there is no 'truth'." ²⁴ Thus, the "aberration of philosophy is that, instead of seeing in logic and the categories of reason means toward the adjustment of the world for utilitarian ends (basically, toward an expedient falsification), one believed one possessed in them the criterion of truth and reality." ²⁵ "Accordingly, I do not believe that a 'drive to knowledge' is the father of philosophy; but rather that another drive has, here as elsewhere, employed understanding (and misunderstanding) as a mere instrument. ... (In fact, all) the basic drives of man ... have done philosophy at some time ..." ²⁶ And, in an entry in his notebooks he muses: "The really royal calling of the philosopher (as expressed by Alcuin the Anglo-Saxon): To correct what is wrong, and strengthen what is right, and raise what is holy." ²⁷ And elsewhere: "one can conceive philosophers as those who make the most extreme efforts to test how far man could elevate himself ..." ²⁸ And, finally, to which European philosopher between Plato and Nietzsche would it have occurred, even in his most frivolous moments, to describe his relationship to wisdom, to that sophia whose lover he supposedly is, in words like Zarathustra's:

"Brave, unconcerned, mocking, violent - thus wisdom wants us: she is a woman and always loves only a warrior."?²⁹

Clearly, during the last hundred years a revolutionary reassessment has been taking place in the West concerning the task and capability of thought, the nature of 'truth', and even concerning the requisite personal - and by no means merely intellectual - endowment of a lover of wisdom.

But when we expand our horizon beyond the European theatre to include the thinking of other peoples on this planet, the seemingly novel turn of these men, for instance, their analysis of the human predicament as a problem of (ill) health rather than as a battle between good and evil or as a struggle for salvation, - this turn shows itself to be merging into a great and ancient river of human thought and exploration - and practice. Among the tributaries of this river we have to count not only schools such as Vedānta, Taoism, and the many branches of Buddhism in India, Tibet, China and Japan, but perhaps also the world-wide phenomenon of shamanism.

In fact, once we have widened the scope of our vision beyond the great European philosophical traditions, a spontaneous sensation is likely to arise that "the whole of religion might yet appear as a prelude and exercise to some distant age."^{29a}

Perhaps we of the West have been committing an error which betrays a certain characteristic limitation of our

traditional philosophical understanding in that we have been indiscriminately regarding **everywhere the highest traditions** of intellectual-emotional-practical cultivation as 'religions' on the model of our own Christian background, and have been doing so as a matter of course. In viewing as 'religions' the noble intellectual-emotional-practical traditions of non-European origin we have perhaps merely been projecting our own need, our own addiction, our "old habit (of seeking) another authority that can speak unconditionally and command goals and tasks"³⁰ into them. Probably we ourselves are not yet weaned from Christianity; hence the modern soul catchers roaming the earth today find a willing prey in us 'Christians with a bad conscience'. For "under the rule of religious ideas one has become accustomed to the notion of 'another world (behind, below, above)' - and when religious ideas are destroyed one is troubled by an uncomfortable emptiness and deprivation."³¹

It is conceivable that the noble schools of Buddhism, Taoism, and Vedānta, for instance, receive their proper appreciation only when we regard them as three of the most decisive and well-matured overcomings of religion - and of metaphysics, as "victors over God and nothingness",³² in Nietzsche's longing words.

This characteristic proclivity of ours to see 'religion' wherever men are emancipated and whole and have traditions,

celebration, and intellectual-emotional-practical cultivation is the reason why Nietzsche in The Antichrist could not restrain his lamentation over the decisive manner in which - so he thought - Christianity has spoiled the fruit of those two glorious buddings of emancipation in Europe, the Greeks and **Renaissance man**.

It is also conceivable that the real tasks for men who are 'victors over God and nothingness' have as yet no names, at least, still have no names in the thinking of the Western hemisphere. Perhaps Nietzsche's affirmation of the Eternal Recurrence, Rilke's "Rühmen", and Heidegger's 'thinking' are the first true tasks for the emancipated man that have been formulated in the West.

Our musings began by experimenting with seeing a character of essential unsoundness in the overall dynamics of customary human existence as we normally know it. Immediately upon launching our experiment we ran aground on a twofold dilemma: that of an appropriate ethical attitude, and that of an appropriate epistemological methodology. We rejected the lures of the soul catchers and searched for a precedent to our dilemma. We saw that certain modern philosophers had already begun to explore our problem, foremost among them Nietzsche. Among Nietzsche's aphorisms we discovered a statement of precisely our dilemma. Realizing that the revolutionary turn of certain modern philosophers brings them closer to

schools developed in non-European countries, such as those of Taoism, Vedānta, and Buddhism, we now ask whether the proceedings and insights of any of these schools might, in return, be able to elucidate, by means of its being uncontaminated by European idiosyncrasies of thought and emotion, certain crucial developments in Nietzsche's thought and emotion which alienated him from the great European traditions.

In fact, attempting to understand and evaluate Nietzsche's thought purely in terms of earlier European thought, or even from a contemporary Western standpoint, would make us overlook what is genuinely novel and unorthodox in him. Within a purely Western standpoint the Greco-Christian tradition of vision, sentiment, and thought inescapably structures our receptivity and comprehension according to certain paradigms. For instance, without a non-Western paradigm we almost inevitably see in Nietzsche's non-Christianity only an anti-Christianity or a neo-antiquity. Or again, we will claim that "Nietzsche ... may be said to have invented the atheism of the political right. ... Zarathustra wants to create a true universal goal for humanity and must therefore overcome the false universal goals that already exist."³³ But Nietzsche neither is an atheist, nor of or for the political right: he both cuts across and undercuts such distinctions by thinking much

more fundamental issues than they will. Moreover, it is precisely the idea of a universal goal, any universal goal, which is Christian and unacceptable to Nietzsche/Zarathustra: 'Zarathustra' deliberately proposes a task which he knows will split humanity in two: into those who a r e and those who a r e not the 'can' implied by that 'ought'. Even Heidegger has no choice but to assimilate Nietzsche's experiment to the tradition: "... Nietzsche's thought (namely: the 'will to power') moves on the long line of the ancient leading question of philosophy, the question of what beings are. ... The fundamental question, i.e. the question that became the foundation stone of philosophy, is the question about the essence of Being; it has never been developed in the history of philosophy as such. Nietzsche, too, remains within the preliminary domain of that question."³⁴ But, as we have seen, Nietzsche explicitly denied that the question about the essence of Being is the fundamental question! Though with regard to the tasks that he foresaw for thought he did indeed admit to be writing a mere 'prelude to a philosophy of the future'. It is conceivable that Nietzsche's intention is literally not thinkable within the Greco-Christian idiom; and, "where nothing is heard the acoustic illusion is that nothing is there".³⁵ The crucial role of the apperceptive paradigm is best expressed by a Sufi proverb: "When a pick-pocket meets a saint all he

sees is his pockets."

However, when we turn to the East in the search for a paradigm by which to do more justice to Nietzsche's experiment than any standpoint within the Greco-Christian tradition permits, it turns out that precisely Buddhism, which Nietzsche thought a respectable but merely nihilistic escapist practice, promises to be of special interest and help in making sense of many difficult and, in terms of the great European intellectual-emotional traditions, unintelligible steps in Nietzsche's intellectual-emotional-vivial experiment. While the details of this elucidation will be carried out in the later chapters, I shall here point to the following rather striking parallels between certain important aspects of Nietzsche's thought, on the one hand, and Buddhist thought, on the other.

1. The centrality of the medical metaphor, both for understanding the nature of the malaise, or predicament, inherent in ordinary human existence, for interpreting the philosopher's activity, and for visualizing the philosopher's task and accomplishment. We have already seen Nietzsche's own heavy use of physiological and medical terminology in order to formulate his observations and guesses about the historical situation of European man in 1880. Buddhist literature abounds in metaphors from medical practice. There are, for instance, the Four Noble Truths, clearly

conceived in analogy to illness-diagnosis-prognosis-medicine:
 The basic fact of suffering, the fact of a cause of this
 suffering, the possibility of stopping suffering, and the
 way to do it. In one sutra, the Buddha compares his own
 teaching to a physician's skill, and ordinary existence to
 the unenviable condition of a man wounded by a poisoned
 arrow. Elsewhere we read that "The Savors of the
 World ... have ... become the supreme physicians...."³⁶
 And, the central elucidatory conceptual device of Mahāyāna
 Buddhism, the notion of śūnyatā, is likened to the
 "medicine administered to a sick man by a doctor" with the
 purpose of removing all his ills".³⁷

2. Nietzsche as well as the Buddhists conceive the
 purpose of their 'medical' prescriptions to be not a
 functional restoration of the 'patient' back into the gears
 of society - that society which consists of the "ordinary
 person ..(who).. lives with his mind obsessed by perplexing
 ... obsessed by clinging to rites and customs obsessed by
 malevolence ...",³⁸ as the Buddha characterized it, but as
 a whole-making in a trans-social sense beyond good and
 evil and metaphysics, and, in the case of the exceptional
 individual, as a total transfiguration beyond the entirety
 of what he had previously reckoned to be his home, his
 nature, his virtue, and his destiny.

But even though both see the sound nature and true

destiny of man beyond good and evil and metaphysics, they do not reject either morality or a way of speaking which, to the uncomprehending, is indistinguishable from metaphysics. One could also say that it ~~first occurs in man~~ **first occurs in man thinking and life** like that of Nietzsche or the Buddhist that morality and metaphysics lose their immature and stifling manners and attain their proper function as helpers of man. To put this idea in the most radical, though somewhat paradoxical, fashion: it is impossible to be moral or to think before one has emancipated oneself from 'morality' and that reliance upon the - putative - truth of thought which characterizes **traditional European philosophy**.

3. Man's ordinary manner of existence is characterized by both as 'impure', 'unclean', 'ill', 'ignorant', and 'mendacious', rather than as evil, sinful, politically imperfect, or economically lacking.

4. Both hold that it is precisely the customary life, including its most acclaimed expressions, the life that prides itself on being firmly lodged in reality, practical, down-to-earth, sensibly planning for the future, and accomplishing deeds of greatness, it is that very life which is stumbling through self-spun labyrinths of delusion, which is incapable of truly appropriate action and appreciative discrimination, free-floatingly out of touch with the earth, plainly without

a future, and prevented from attaining true greatness.

5. Purity, a truly sound existence, wholeness is attained not by adjustment to social standards or by achieving certain goals, but by becoming, somehow, coincident with the unadulterated truth of this very world itself, not just in isolated ecstatic sessions, but in one's continuous everyday life. Thus, both the Buddhist Bodhisattva and Nietzsche's 'Übermensch' are not 'ideals' at all, in the sense of more or less arbitrary images of desirable states of affairs, but are non-arbitrary possibilities inherent in the very nature of man and reality itself.

6. The perfectly realized man, in the Buddhist and in the Nietzschean sense, continues to act in this world, to "bring home the redemption of this reality";³⁹ he is one "whose compelling strength will not let him rest in any aloofness or beyond" and "who will sanctify all activities, ... (for) this world must be transfigured ever anew and in new ways;"⁴⁰ or, to speak with the Buddhists, who as "Wise Bodhisattvas ... engender in themselves the great compassion" and "become the supreme physicians ... who course in the practice of pity and concern for the welfare of others", and who "fetch suffering beings out of the three places of woe (although) they never have anywhere the notion of a being."⁴¹

7. Both conceive the 'treatment' as a radical stripping

away of all supports "in which formerly we may have found our humanity", ⁴² during which ordeal the 'patient' is sustained only by his "double will", ⁴³ by his commitment to compassion and enlightenment.

8. Finally, both Nietzsche's Übermensch and the Buddhist Bodhisattva are expressly conceived as counterideals to previous nihilistic-escapist ideals, as anti-dotes against a rampant poison. These 'ideals' - 'ideals' in the previously explained non-arbitrary sense - themselves are already a device in a higher kind of 'medical' practice, in 'great politics'.

Thus, our original musings and predicament have not only led us to become acquainted with Nietzsche's thought, but have also carried us half-way around the planet to India where we find a school of thought with whom Nietzsche's experiment has more in common than it has with the European philosophical tradition! In appreciation of the beauties of these two developments of thought and of their strange affinities, but without presupposing their complete parelellism or ultimate compatibility, I shall, then, lay out the essentials of Nietzsche's thought insofar as it pertains to the understanding of his concept of the Übermensch, his possibility and necessity, and shall do the same with regard to Buddhist thought and its concept of

the 'Bodhisattva'.

Finally, I shall also show how both Nietzsche and the Buddhists, each in their own way, tackle the twofold dilemma upon which our original musings on the soundness of the customary way of life as a whole had run aground, and how, therefore, a continuing critique of ongoing existence with regard to its soundness seems to be possible.

- 1) MA i 107
- 2) MA i 27
- 3) MA i 21
- 4) FW 21
- 5) Z-Prologue 3
- 6) Z-I On the Afterworldly
- 7) Z-Prologue 3
- 8) Z-III On Old and New Tablets 26
- 9) *ibid.*
- 10) GM-III 13
- 11) EH-WIAAD 5
- 12) EH-Preface 2
- 13) EH-WIASW 8
- 14) EH-BT 4
- 14 a) EH-Z 1,2
- 15) FW-Preface 2
- 16) FW 382
- 17) EH-WIAAD 1
- 18) FW 346
- 19) PI-I 593
- 20) PI-I 255
- 21) Tractatus 6.371, 6.372
- 22) PI-I 309
- 23) FW-Preface 2
- 24) WM 616
- 25) WM 584
- 26) J 6
- 27) WM 977
- 28) WM 973
- 29) Z-I On Reading and Writing
- 29a) FW 300
- 30) WM 20
- 31) FW 151
- 32) GM-II 24
- 33) HPP, p. 792
- 34) N, p.106
- 35) EH-WIWSGB 1
- 36) Ast. -III 73-74
- 37) Pra-XII 248-249
- 38) Greater Malunkyaputta
- 39) GM-II 24
- 40) WM 1044
- 41) Ast. -XII 270-274
- 42) FW-Preface 3
- 43) Z-II On Human Prudence

II. "man is t h e sick animal"*

An exposition of Nietzsche's and the Buddhist views concerning the fundamental fact, character, and significance of ill inherent in man's ordinary existence, as well as of those concerning the nature of a greater health as it is foreboded in a radical suffering -such as 'Zarathustra's and prince Siddharta's- from that existence.

Our present reflections took their departure with a remembrance of 'dangerous developments on this planet' and our 'predicament', though the nature of these 'developments' and of this 'predicament' was left undetermined in favor of a willingness to experimentally open ourselves to a sense of a fundamental unsoundness permeating the whole of customary existence, even in its conventionally most acclaimed expressions.

Still, how can we say that there is a general 'predicament', 'dangerous developments' in some rather impersonal sense, when many people only know that they are hungry, or worry about their next vacation? Are we perhaps only imagining a 'predicament', afraid to tackle real down-to-earth concrete problems, as a Marxist might charge?

It might easily seem so -especially at those times when we only notice hunger or worries- if we fail to pay attention to one inconspicuous little fact that normally gets overlooked almost as a matter of etiquette, and does so especially in our technological-psychiatric-ideological age, but the comprehension of which is crucial for the soundness of our experimental exploration of unsoundness: namely, the fact that there are altogether no problems, n e i t h e r 'down-to-earth concrete' problems n o r a 'predicament' or 'dangerous developments' such as those mentioned at the outset of

our musings.

If earlier our thought-experiment of suspecting customary human existence to be pervaded by a spontaneously ongoing unsoundness had seemed outlandish, though perhaps tolerable as an experiment, then the present claim, that there are altogether no problems, must seem sheer madness.

Quite apart even from hunger and worry, if there are no problems then why do we reflect on 'man's predicament'?

For the sake of calming our irritated perplexity concerning this question we must anticipate some of the points that properly belong to later stages in our argument.

Briefly, the claim that there are altogether no problems means that types of problems 'exist' only correlative to types of caring.

But who is it that cares?

This question concerns the nature of illness, dis-ease, and problems in general. Do illness, dis-ease, problems consist in objective facts or events? Or in pain? Or in pain associated with certain objective facts or events? Anticipating ourselves, we claim: illness etc. consist, rather, in suffering from certain facts or events, e.g. from pain, or from pain associated with certain events or facts.

And who is it that suffers?

In each case, it is a certain sensibility that suffers, 'a sensibility' not as some abstract, free-floating capacity,

but as embedded, and embodied, in a certain ongoing way of life. This sensibility is that ongoing life itself, namely, its sentience aspect, that fundamental irritability, responsiveness and impressionable liveliness which constitutes the very motility of an ongoing life, layered as it is between degrees of slow dullness, such as that of genetic constitution, bone and flesh, and of quick delicacy, as that of mood, emotion, thought and inspiration. We do not claim, however, that he who is ill necessarily suffers from it himself. On the contrary, he who is ill may think of himself as perfectly healthy, while it is some other sensibility which detects his unhealth. For instance, a physician is able to diagnose illnesses in patients who believe themselves free from disease. However, we do claim that for a given fact or event to be reckoned as an illness, dis-ease, or problem, someone somewhere must suffer from that fact or event.

A way of human existence is always already a highly specific - though normally unconscious - ongoing choosing and creating of a particular character of existence, of a 'life-style' in the deepest sense of that worn-out expression.

Thus, problems do not exist as such but presuppose an ongoing appreciative and volitional stratum of reference. Problems - even of the 'down-to-earth' type - do not exist purely as, or rigidly correlative to, given facts or events - though in the total absence of correlative facts problems are

not problems but madness - but 'exist', more basically, correlative to a very specific kind of ongoing sensibility which, first of all, perceives in terms of one system of facts rather than another, and, for which, secondly, these facts have a specific vital significance, namely, a significance unconsciously in terms of and for the sake of that ongoing way of life.

When, therefore, a way of life becomes questionable, or a sensibility changes, then so will the type and the weight of 'the problems' that 'exist' correlative to it. On the other hand, if a type of problem becomes questionable then so does a way of life which necessarily 'has' these problems.

If, then, we sense a 'predicament' or a basic 'unsoundness' and not merely hunger or specific frustrations, the reason for this difference is neither that some thing exists for us now which did not exist before, nor that we are right now and were wrong before, but is a sensibility correlative to a different ongoing commitment, namely, one not to self-preservation or to the realization of next year's vacation, or to the victory of the proletariat, but an intuitive commitment to a certain basic, overall character of life. It is that sensibility which is the sentience-aspect of our altered commitment that now suffers globally, so to speak, and intuits a comprehensive, coherent and fundamental 'predicament' where previously there were only the chaotic multitude of sharply

individual, discontinuously and randomly rising and disappearing problems.

Our imaginary Marxist charge that an investigation into a global unsoundness represents merely an avoidance of 'the concrete problems' of human life on this earth could, then, be turned around into a polemical rebuttal against 'the concrete problem' solvers, to the effect that it is their attitude rather which in its uncritical servitude to a sensibility that takes notice of defects exclusively in ideologically delineated terms, that is, as we have seen, which in its uncritical commitment to a certain ideologically projected character of life methodically blinds itself to the possibility of a much more basic, ubiquitous, always already ongoing, spontaneous and innocent stratum of unsoundness which has already completely infected the ordinary naïve as well as the sophisticated ideological identifications of problems and remedies.

To experience, then, even if only by way of a vague inkling, an overall and fundamental unsoundness is itself a derivative of a certain ongoing sensibility, namely, of one which has - temporarily - let go of specific problems in favor of 'listening' to the ongoing stream of human life itself. It can do so for it is the sentience aspect of that life itself.

For instance, the emphasis which both Nietzsche and

Buddhism in their 'medical' treatises and prescriptions give to the purification and consecration of man, instead of to a mere social adjustment or historical production of certain states of affairs, as the true purpose of a 'cure' for the problems of everyday existence such as they see it, indirectly reveals once more that most fundamental experience which they hold in common and which they have also stated directly, namely, that the v e r y c h a r a c t e r o f l i v i n g a s w e n o r m a l l y k n o w i t , i s , i n s o m e s e n s e , a n ' i l l n e s s '.

An illness, however, as we have said, is never such simply by virtue of consisting of this or that objective state of affairs: if no one suffers from a given objective state of affairs, then it is not an illness. There must be suffering associated with a state of affairs - though, as we have seen, he who suffers from a fact may be spatially remote from the fact - if such a state is to be called 'an illness'. Thus, it is suffering that defines illness.

But from this it follows that every refinement of man's health, every increase in man's stature, derives from an abnormal alteration in sensibility which, somehow, begins to s u f f e r from that which others still experience as indifferent, as pleasant, acceptable, as right and normal. "You want, if possible - and there is no more insane 'if possible' - t o a b o l i s h s u f f e r i n g", writes

Nietzsche, "And we? It really seems that we would rather have it higher and worse than ever. Well-being as you understand it - that is no goal, that seems to us an e n d, a state that soon makes man ridiculous and contemptible - that makes his destruction d e s i r a b l e. The discipline of suffering, of g r e a t suffering - do you not know that only this discipline has created all enhancements of man so far? In man c r e a t u r e and c r e a t o r are united ... but ... y o u r pity is for the 'creature in man', for what must be formed, broken, forged, torn, burnt, made incandescent, and purified - that which n e c e s s a r i l y must and s h o u l d suffer."¹

Thus, "prophetic human beings", namely, those who know of new heights and healths for man, "are afflicted with a great deal of suffering; ... it is their p a i n s that make them prophets."²

And, what is the instinct for cleanliness or purity that instinct which dominated both Nietzsche's and the Buddha's lives, but a sensibility that s u f f e r s from certain conditions and that seeks a state where those conditions do not obtain? "What separates two people most profoundly is a different sense and degree of cleanliness. ... saintliness (is) the highest spiritualization of this instinct."³

Consequently, "... it almost determines the order of rank h o w profoundly human beings can suffer ... by virtue

of his suffering (a man) k n o w s m o r e than the cleverest and wisest could possibly know ..."⁴

Because suffering, and the instinct for purity as one generator of suffering, drives him who suffers to new healths and heights, because" ... nausea itself creates new wings and water-divining powers ...", therefore "... Zarathustra ... (is) .. the advocate of suffering".⁵

Now we understand what Nietzsche said by calling Zarathustra a "dithyramb on solitude or, if I have been understood, on p u r i t y."⁶

'On solitude': because "the highest instinct of cleanliness places those possessed of it in the oddest and most dangerous lonesomenesses ...".⁷ 'On purity': because 'Zarathustra'/ Nietzsche experiences the ongoing customary human existence as unclean. 'Zarathustra' s u f f e r s f r o m m a n : he experiences not only the average human existence but even the customary best as radically impure, or, which amounts to the same thing, as unsound, that is, as a debilitation, "diminution and levelling"⁸ of man, as a way of preventing man from attaining his true health and greatness. 'To suffer', that means not a snobbish dissatisfaction, personal frustration, theoretical disagreement, political dissent, artistic oversensitivity, moral indignation, or the resentment of the failures and the agony of the oppressed:

for all of these sentiments criticize the ongoing existence only with regard to those features from which they derive disadvantages, and would by all means affirm the customarily ongoing world - or some variant of it - if only they profited from it as they see others do now. Rather, 'to suffer' means that our very bodies revolt, even against our wishes or duties, that we are at the mercy of a spontaneous reaction in us which, like a physical illness, proceeds from no ideology and is indifferent to the conventional scapegoats and methods of accusation as well as to the customary medicines, entertainments, honors, - and profits. In this state we feel as if our true being, or destiny, had somehow altogether withdrawn beyond the reach and competence of the ongoing existence, and as if the tension between our factual being and our destiny ached in the pain of our illness. It is this nausea at even the best of the customarily ongoing existence that drives him into solitude in his search for purity, for a new health, which consists of a new man since health and unhealth are not external, indifferently exchangeable qualities of an unchanging substratum 'man'.

Thus, according to FW 316, it is precisely his suffering from what custom regards as the best in man which makes 'Zarathustra' a prophet of future, or at any rate of possible, healths and heights for man, - even though mankind cannot possibly (as a whole) cross over into these new healths and heights. But it is not only his suffering from what man conventionally takes to be his best that distinguishes the true

prophet. He also wrests from concealment the lineaments of a greater health: the prophet knows man's illness through his own suffering, but for him it is "an illness as pregnancy is an illness"⁹ The prophet's power to act as a midwife to another health for man constitutes his greatness. Without the prophet man's illness would be a meaningless suffering best forgotten. But through him mere illness is turned into the nausea of pregnancy and the pain of birthgiving. He delineates a creative meaning in man's ills: he sees in man a higher destiny sick with the smallness of man's customary greatness.

Any possible evolution of man, then, whether as individuals or as mankind, can take place only if suffering, namely the suffering due to an abnormally altered sensibility which experiences the norm and the best of the ongoing world as nauseating, continues and develops to ever new degrees of agility, subtlety and comprehensiveness.

But for suffering to contain pointers to new healths rather than to lead into the cul-de-sacs of neurotically constructed patterns and securities, it must itself already be the expression of - at least a moment of - extraordinary health rather than of a neurotic irritability. That is, for suffering to be valid as a director of development, that which suffers in us must already be a new health. It is precisely

the suspicion that what suffered in the wise men of past ages was not a new health but a neurotic irritability, a melancholy, a weariness or resistance to life, that forced Nietzsche to closely scrutinize the men of past ages and not merely their theories. "Were they all perhaps shaky on their legs? late? tottery? decadents? Could it be that wisdom appears on earth as a raven, inspired by a little whiff of carrion?"¹⁰ In order to assess what it was that suffered in him, and what it had been in the wise men of the past, Nietzsche was driven to explore the nature of health - and to distinguish in himself the perspectives of health from those of unhealth. The marks of a great health became one of the most important recurrent topics in his notes and aphorisms. And he began to discover in ever greater detail the insidious, all-pervasive unhealth of customary existence.

Thus, the problem that we had encountered earlier: How do we know that our critique of ongoing existence is not itself in thrall to this existence? may be solved, on the one hand, by the requirement that we suffer from the customary world, and from its most acclaimed expressions no less than from its admitted lowlinesses.

But, on the other hand, a new problem has risen: How do we know that it is indeed a higher health that suffers in

us, rather than a melancholy or a neurosis or the mere fear of the lapse of time? Health always belongs to a particular being, to an integrated way of life, never to existence or life as such. A new health belongs to a new being since health is not an accidental quality modifying an unchanging substratum 'man'. If our suffering is due to a new health - rather than to a perverse discontent - then either we are destined to be ourselves a new way of life, or we are pregnant with a new being.

Our question then is: what kind of a being is it in us that experiences the ongoing world as ill? What are we destined for or pregnant with: a god, a dwarf, a monster, or something as yet nameless? Are we suffering due to "a new health, stronger, more seasoned, tougher, more audacious,¹¹ and more joyful than any previous health"? due to a destined way of being which now everywhere experiences the customary world even in its honors and rewards as a cruel network of stifling halts, debilitating distortions and harmful lies? Or - is life perhaps too volatile, too enigmatic, too unjust, or too incomprehensible for us, "too much", as Roquentin says in Sartre's novel Nausea? Perhaps fundamentally all suffering is that of a premature or that of an overdue birth: not yet ready for this life, or already cramped by it?

It is really no answer at all if we say that it is 'man', or worse - because more mendaciously idealistic - 'humanity',

that is suffering in us: for 'man' is merely the theatre where these events take place. In 'Zarathustra's words: 'man' is a rope stretched over an abyss. What suffers in him are the two poles between which he is stretched. Man conceived as a purely factual entity cannot be ill: for his illness belongs factually to him, is part of the factual man. Only an ongoing project, that is, more generally, only some kind of will-to can be ill. But this will-to can never be a will to the purely factual: that would not be a will at all.

Health, sickness, injury, suffering therefore always refer to some kind of will-to, though the "to" does not necessarily indicate an intention, a conscious project, or even a thinkable (intelligible) one, but might signify an intrinsic tendency, a tendency that nevertheless seeks, and creates, its temporary steppingstones which in turn become known to consciousness as 'intentions'. Since the "-to" of a 'will-to' does not necessarily signify a conscious project or even anything that we would be willing to own up to if indeed we became conscious of it "the intention is merely a sign and symptom that still requires interpretation".¹²

We might go farther and venture "the suspicion that the decisive value of an action lies precisely in what is u n i n t e n t i o n a l in it, while everything about it that is intentional, everything about it that can be seen, known, 'conscious', ... betrays something but c o n c e a l s

even more."¹³

We suffer most deeply when we feel denied in the very nature of our being, in the very elements of our essential existence - or of what we take to be our essential existence. But "our nature" and "essential existence" cannot have a purely factual signification for the denial of a mere fact does not give rise to suffering; rather, they signify a will-to for it is only by virtue of a will-to that there can be health and sickness, injury, suffering and contentment. Yet it is not necessary to assume that 'the self' -in whatever sense- is the author of that will. It is conceivable that such a will has no origin or cause at all. As long as "nature of our being" and "our essential existence" are understood in a purely 'worldly', i.e. temporal-historical sense, that is, as long as my will-to refers to - or constrains itself to refer to - essentially temporal, time-bound and time-binding forms so long it is precisely time itself which necessarily denies the very nature of our being, the very elements of our essential existence. In other words, as long as we regard ourselves as essentially temporal beings we necessarily suffer from time, though neither this suffering nor its cause, the will-to time-bound and time-binding forms, need be conscious as such.

However, if it were possible not to feel denied by time

in the very nature of our being, if it were possible in this human body and without any loss of human gifts to somehow affirm time itself, perhaps even to affirm it as the very nature of our being - which affirmation, in turn, might give rise to a different experience and conception of time - then we would not suffer from time.

On the other hand, the suffering from time and the palliatives this suffering devised for itself would be experienced as an illness by one who is able to affirm time. It would be an illness because his will-to finds itself in conflict with that will-against-time which underlies the suffering from time, and because the ways and the world created by that suffering, including the palliatives against it and the resentment growing from it, constitute a dynamics everywhere at odds with his affirmation of time. Thus, if it were possible to affirm time itself then such a one would find himself ill with the ongoing customary existence if that existence were essentially characterized by the suffering from time! He would be ill, however, by virtue of his greater health, that is, by his ability to affirm and integrate into his embodied being that which makes others ill, while sacrificing none of their powers or beauty.

'Zarathustra' suffers from man's smallness. But what is it that makes men, even the greatest, small? It is their inability to say and live Yes to life, an unconditional and

unreserved Yes. Wherever men pretend to say Yes they have tacit reservations about life. Men's Yes to life is mixed with a tacit No, and sometimes the No is even louder than the Yes. Men are suffering from life for life denies them insofar as they deny life in their claim to their essential existence conceived as purely temporal. Suffering, men are always on the search for palliatives besides nourishing a deep resentment against that same life from which they suffer by virtue of their No.

"I was the first", writes Nietzsche, "to see the real opposition: the degenerating instinct that turns against life with subterranean vengefulness ... versus ... the highest affirmation, born of fullness, of overfullness, a Yes-saying without reservation, even to suffering, even to guilt, even to everything that is questionable and strange in existence."¹⁴

But 'time' is a name for life in its aspect as a succession of victories, in which all victors become vanquished and join 'the past'. Therefore, "that man be delivered from revenge", revenge being "the will's ill will against time and its 'it was' "¹⁵, "that is" for 'Zarathustra' "the bridge to the highest hope and a rainbow after long storms."¹⁶ If the delivery from revenge is the highest hope then, conversely, 'the will's ill will against time' characterizes the actually ongoing ways of men. In the prologue to Zarathustra Nietzsche baptizes the highest hope for man by the name

of "overman". The contrast to the 'overman' is set by a picture of "the last man". The 'last man' represents man's highest development insofar as he is unable to free himself from revenge, from his suffering from time.

Thus, according to Nietzsche the most fundamental and most important choice that confronts man when he wakes up to his precarious position in the universe without a moral God is that between a 'highest affirmation without reservation' -an affirmation without object for all possible objects depend on an element of negation- and an attitude containing a No -for instance, by way of attaching itself to an object -, however small or secret. This is a choice that also challenges the role and importance of consciousness since it is conceivable that "the decisive value of 'an action'", for instance, whether it represents an affirmation without reservation or not, ¹⁷ "lies precisely in what is u n i n t e n t i o n a l in it". Neither can this choice be postponed: our ongoing existence is always already saying Yes or Yes-and-No. Moreover, to the extent that we are saying No to life insofar as it is time we are already suffering from time. The suffering from time is, however, imperceptible to the consciousness belonging to an existence which denies, and is denied by, time: for such a consciousness necessarily interprets all suffering as referring to further time-bound and time-binding entities and seeks its palliatives not in a revision of but in terms of

its fundamental stance. Its fundamental stance is an ill will against time out of its impotence to avert its fate in time. The will imprisoned in a fate against its will "redeems himself foolishly"¹⁸. Due to his No to life, to his foolish redemptions, to the "priestly naïveté in medicine",¹⁹ and to the toxicity of his customary palliatives man is "t h e sick animal".²⁰ He is sick in that he has become accustomed to, has himself b e c o m e, "an aversion to life, a rebellion against the most fundamental presuppositions of life".²¹ Morality, ideals, the beyond: under these names "a n t i n a t u r e" itself received the highest honors ... and was fixed over humanity as law and categorical imperative"²² so that now "the concept of the g o o d man signifies that one sides with all that is weak, sick, failure, suffering of itself."²³ "Man, suffering from himself ... but uncertain why or wherefore, (has been) thirsting for reasons ... (as well as) for remedies and narcotics".²⁴ But it "is (precisely) the means of consolation" -of consolation since "the real cause of their feeling ill ... remains hidden"²⁵ -"which have stamped life with that fundamental melancholy character in which we now live: the worst disease of mankind has arisen from the struggle against diseases It has been justly said of Schopenhauer that he was the one who again took the sufferings of mankind seriously: (but) where is the man who will at length take the antidotes against these sufferings seriously, and who will

pillory the unheard-of quackery with which men, even up to our own age, and in the most sublime nomenclature, have been used to treat their illness of the soul?"²⁶ Consequently, Nietzsche asks: "Where are the new physicians of the soul?"²⁷

The choice between the 'highest affirmation without reservation' and a partially negative attitude is in Nietzsche's thinking at once the choice between 'the great health' and a succession of diverse partial healths with their attendant partial unhealths. Man's most fundamental sickness is revenge. Revenge, however, is not a unitary event with a characteristic identity, a clearly defined syndrome, but proliferates into the many forms of **mendacity** ("Verlogenheit" -one of Nietzsche's most frequent and most important words of condemnation), petty cruelty, anti-naturalness, and conventionally practised self-deception. No manifestation of individual or social life is immune **from being** infiltrated and, eventually, perverted by revenge in some suitable form. The diversity of the forms of revenge, for instance, of the false consolations (religious and secular) against the cruel progress of time, witnesses to the ingenuity of man, an ingenuity constrained, however, into a fundamentally self-defeating framework. Revenge, in its concrete **manifoldness**, not only prevents man from attaining 'the great health' but cripples him and perverts even his highest expressions: religion, justice, sex, art become vehicles of vengefulness and desperate

indulgence. Nietzsche himself, as a philosophical physician, mercilessly hunted down and exposed many of the hiding places and highly respected conventional masks of revenge, both in religion (Christianity), justice (equality), philosophy (the ideal) and other seemingly noble expressions of the customarily ongoing existence. The deliverance from revenge, as well as from the manifold palliatives and foolish redemptions which the 'imprisoned will' devises for itself, is the work of the new physicians of the soul. These physicians serve not those various merely partial healths whose concepts constitute the range of insight and error of the customarily ongoing existence. Their loyalty is neither to man -insofar as 'man' himself is a sickness rather than a neutral substratum to whom an external quality 'sickness' is appended- nor to any of the customary moralities and ideals (Wünschbarkeiten) to the extent that these themselves are the products of man's unhealth and of the foolish attempts of his imprisoned will. Their effort goes rather towards "a reconciliation with time and something higher than any reconciliation".²⁸

"The fundamental conception of (Thus Spoke Zarathustra) ... (is) the idea of the eternal recurrence, this highest formula of affirmation that is at all attainable".²⁹ 'Zarathustra' is the teacher and proclaimer of this highest affirmation. As such he is not yet himself one of 'the new physicians' but

only the spokesman for the great health. At the same time, however, he embodies this health himself: "To understand this type, one must first become clear about his physiological presupposition: this is what I call the g r e a t h e a l t h (die grosse Gesundheit)". "The ladder on which he ascends and descends is enormous; he has seen further, willed further, been c a p a b l e further (weiter gewollt, weiter g e k o n n t) than any other human being. ... in him all opposites are blended into a new unity. The highest and the lowest energies of human nature ... (well) forth from one fount with immortal assurance. ... Here man (der Mensch) has been overcome at every moment; ... Precisely in this width of space and this accessibility for what is contradictory Zarathustra experiences himself as the s u p r e m e t y p e o f a l l b e i n g s ; ... he ... has the hardest, most terrible insight into reality, ... has thought 'the most abysmal idea', (and) nevertheless does not consider it an objection to existence, not even to its eternal recurrence - but rather one more reason for being himself the eternal Yes to all things, 'the tremendous, unbounded saying Yes and Amen'." ³¹

Thus, Nietzsche's concept of health resembles an inspired etymological exegesis of "Wohlsein und Wohlwollen" ³² ('well-being and well-willing'): "wohl" signifies affirmation,

assurance, Gelassenheit , round- and wholeness, ease; and this "wohl"-ness is both the substance (-sein) and the will (-wollen) of 'Zarathustra', and therefore of health. By contrast, that unhealth which is called 'man' consists in an adherence to only one pole in every pair of opposites and a repression of the other; it consists in a narrowness, in a lack of self, in **mendacity**, stagnation, vengefulness, impoverishment, and an indulgence in 'what is human'.

But these characteristics of unhealth, of the merely partial kinds of health, are also those of anti-nature for the squandering of overabundance, the luxurious growth of opposites and their interplay, the width of contradictions, its magnificence beyond morality and ideals (Wünschbarkeiten) are essential characteristics of Nietzsche's "pure, newly discovered, newly redeemed nature".³³

Nietzsche's concepts and visualizations of health, nature and greatness are in many ways more alien to European thinking -steeped as it is in Platonic-Christian moralisms and idealisms as well as in a fundamental dualistic tendency- than they are to the thought and experience of Buddhism, Vedānta, and Taoism, though Nietzsche's vocabulary is unmistakably European, for instance in his emphasis on the will and on history.

Even if there were no further reasons for becoming

acquainted with Nietzsche's and Buddhist thinking side by side, the former's search for 'the new physicians' alone already suggests an examination of the Buddha's 'medicines' with regard to the ills diagnosed by Nietzsche just because the Buddhists are so emphatic in their regard of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas as 'royal physicians'. Perhaps the most extraordinary **aspect and implication -- from a Western point of view--** of their consistency in this regard is that the very function of language itself insofar as the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas avail themselves of it changes in its character from the saying of being and the conveyance of information to that of a skilful apportioning of medicine and a skilful devising of magic spells for the sake of propelling the listener or the disciple 'out' of his illness 'into' his original health and nature. Among the European philosophers only Nietzsche through his uncompromising and fearless critique of the traditional verities and moralities ventured so far into that strange territory beyond truth and good and evil as to begin to reconceive the function and nature of language itself. Precisely because language never serves a neutral truth but always a certain way of life -necessarily embodied in a type of being- the man of the great health will also think differently, will rally his energies round and through different concepts. Conversely, the language of the great health is necessarily unintelligible to 'the sick animal'.

Nietzsche himself had respect for the Buddha's teaching,

but regarded him with reservation and, ultimately, considered him too to be a type of decline:" ...Christianity ... (and) B u d d h i s m ... belong together as nihilistic religions - they are religions of decadence", even though "they differ most remarkably" in that the Buddha "stands b e y o n d good and evil ..., ... proceeds with hygienic measures ..., ... prescribes ideas which are either soothing or cheering, and ... invents means for weaning oneself from all the others ..., and is... opposed .. to the feelings of revenge, antipathy, r e s s e n t i m e n t ...".³⁴

However, it appears that Nietzsche knew only about H ĩ n a y ā n a Buddhism and was uninformed about the later developments of M a h ā y ā n a and V a j r a y ā n a. If he had been aware of the later Buddhist developments centering in or growing out of the Mādhyamika critical school it is likely that he would have regarded them with a somewhat higher appreciation; in any case, he would not have called them 'nihilistic' religions.

Though reasons for regarding Buddha as one of Nietzsche's 'new physicians of the soul' -new in the West, anyway - will be given later, we can make a quick 'carat test' with regard to the Buddha's original occasion for 'retiring from the world': what in him was it that suffered from life? Was he really one of those 'types of decline', was it melancholy, resentment, or some neurosis in him that

suddenly broke out into suffering from life?

As we have said earlier, for Nietzsche to take seriously anyone's misery at life-as-we-know-it, that **which in him** is suffering must be a new health, a new height for man, a superior and more uncompromising instinct for purity. Let us briefly review the traditionally reported circumstances of prince Siddharta's 'retirement from the world' as well as some of the reasons traditionally reported as having been given by him concerning his 'home-leaving'.

First of all, it is significant that the Buddha's childhood and early manhood are said to have taken place at a royal palace in the care of proud and loving parents who did everything in their power to protect their son from misery. His father wanted him to be absolutely spared the sight of life's dark sides, and went so far as to have all flowers always replaced before they showed any signs of wilting. Moreover, the future Buddha is described to us as the most skilful archer in the kingdom, as married to a beautiful woman, and as possessing an exquisite body and a splendid temperament and intelligence. In sum, we are obviously to imagine the young prince Siddharta, the future Buddha, to be in possession and command of the greatest health and lovelinesses that the customarily ongoing existence is able to imagine and produce, without enemies and suffering from no unfulfilled worldly ambition.

In view of his, by all normal standards, enviable

endowments and everyday circumstances it is reasonable to suppose that we are meant to think of the young prince as harboring no resentments or frustrations due to a lack of possessions, skills or affection, that is, due to any normally conceivable reasons.

Therefore we must imagine the shock to be terrible, both in himself and even more so to his parents and friends, when this embodiment of health and power suddenly finds himself suffering from life after having for the first time caught a glimpse of life's dark side, in the forms of an old man, a diseased man, and a dead man, as well as having seen a monk, the embodiment of freedom from the war between life's opposites.

From the traditional account of his standing in the world of men we are likely meant to be assured that when prince Siddharta, finally nauseated by the sight of his sleeping dancing girls in exhausted disarray after their performance, decides at once to leave his whole customary life and to 'retire from the world' what was suffering in him was neither a longing for a longer life, a craving for more possessions, an aspiration to greater political power, nor any lack of affection or support on the part of parents, wife or friends, nor the eruption of a long-smoldering melancholy or madness, nor a sudden drop in vitality rendering the customary world overwhelming but still unchallenged as the standard and

fulfiller of all desires, but was, in fact, the premonition of a greater health beyond the reach and competence of his customary world.

Clearly, unless we do postulate the sudden outbreak of some madness in the young prince -and from certain points of view the whole of Buddhism can indeed seem a benign madness- the quality of the circumstances reported to us by tradition as leading up to and coloring the moment of his decision to 'retire from the world' unequivocally suggests that the future Buddha's turn-about was untainted by any touch of what worldly wisdom could diagnose as infirmity.

Thus, the Buddha-to-be was perhaps n o t one of those Nietzschean sages who were 'shaky on their legs, tottery, decadents', 'types of decline, symptoms of degeneration' even though a decision in this regard will have to wait until the nature of and the teachings concerning the extinction (nirvāṇa) of ill have been more closely examined.

Perhaps, then, prince Siddharta was overcome by suffering from the world as he knew it by virtue of a sudden deepening and widening in him of man's health and dignity. To him as well as to 'Zarathustra' the world that had borne them, life as they knew it, had become an illness. It had become so on account of their pregnancy with a greater health and a greater worth for man. This new health and worth was 'greater', however, n o t in the sense that any further

alterations, accumulations, rearrangements, or distillations within the customarily ongoing world could possibly add up to it. On the contrary, along with suffering from life as they knew it they also found themselves nauseated by that which their customary existence offered them as its health, its medicines and virtues. This state of radical nausea, of an involuntary, almost physiological incompatibility of the whole man with the entire, normally subconscious, customarily ongoing maelstrom of points of contact, trades in needs, alignments of perception, patterns of appetite, consumption and frustration, canons of agreement and ambition, fashions of pleasure and praise, a state if itself free from or at least not reducible to any wordly infirmities, when translated into objectifying language means: life itself, more accurately, life as we know it, the very ongoing existence itself, both at its highest and lowest points, is an illness and a debasement. "To him that magnificent apartment, as splendid as the palace of Sakka, began to seem like a cemetery filled with dead bodies impaled and left to rot; and the three modes of existence appeared like houses all ablaze. And breathing forth the solemn utterance, 'How oppressive and stifling is it all!' his mind turned ardently to retiring from the world. 'It behooves me to go forth on the great retirement this very day,' said he; and he arose from his couch ..."³⁵ Somehow, so the traditional account goes, the

sight of his dishevelled dancing girls was the drop that made the bucket overflow: prince Siddharta could no longer help seeing life as he knew it as an illness of sorts, though precisely n o t in any way that could be remedied by and within the world as it is normally known and lived. It is remarkable how 'Zarathustra' and the future Buddha agree in stressing the oppressive and stifling character, the smallness and unworthiness of the world they know, even in its most desired positions and its most acclaimed expressions. Entire kingdoms, the highest honors, spectacular exploits, desirable possessions, the most coveted pleasures, secure dependencies, are suddenly felt to be suffocating, to be intolerably unclean, to be reeking with an as yet nameless unhealth; but suffocating and stunting - of w h o m, of what? Not of prince Siddharta: for 'prince Siddharta' is part of, is actually identical with, that world which stifles him! Who or what, then, is 'him'? What in prince Siddharta is suffering from 'prince Siddharta'? To be consistent with our claim at the beginning of this chapter, that a specific problem is correlative to a specific sensibility - sensibility being the sentience aspect of an ongoing way of life - and consistent with our later assertion that it is only a greater health which suffers from this very world itself as we know it, that in prince Siddharta which is suffocated by 'prince Siddharta' and by all possible rearrangements

of 'prince Siddharta's world cannot be named through anything belonging to that world. It must be 'something' that needed a radically wider, deeper, and freer world such that no permutation of this world would do. Anticipating our discussion in the next chapter, and with a view to the actual later development of the prince into the Buddha, it can be said that what suffered from 'prince Siddharta' was purity, non-supportedness, śūnyatā (or: the Middle Way) itself. By analogy, that in 'Zarathustra' which could not help but find the customary world as well as 'Zarathustra' -the role of the prophet and idol- unbearable was: Dionysus; the confinement within the facts and values of the world as well as within 'Zarathustra' being the supreme rule of Apollo, or rather, being an attempt at such a rule.

Such a conclusion, however, -to refer suffering to strange 'principles' like śūnyatā or Dionysus- would be impossible for that anthropocentric modern fashion of thinking which ascribes everything in man to 'man'. In other words, neither Buddha nor Nietzsche were humanists in any sense.

Thus, prince Siddharta and 'Zarathustra' are seized by m e t a p h y s i c a l nausea at this world as a whole including all the improvements possible within it. To this odd company there also belong prince Hamlet and Sartre's Roquentin. It clearly is a nausea that cannot be remedied by socio-economic 'improvements' such as those envisaged

by Marx and his fellow empiricist humanists. Consequently, there arises the question to what extent the zeal for socio-economic 'improvements' is actually a misinterpreted budding metaphysical insight and impulse (the reverse of the materialist interpretation of religion!). Metaphysically grounded or not, the experience of normal existence as claustrophobic, stagnant, and impure by 'Zarathustra' and prince Siddharta is nevertheless a 'physiological' reaction, as Nietzsche calls it with a deliberate materialist malice, sooner than a moralistic, neurotic, theological, or idealistic one: purity, śūnyatā, Dionysus are not abstract ideal principles but the very marrow, so to speak, of ongoing existence. For instance, Nietzsche writes concerning the beginning of his pregnancy with "Zarathustra", "I find as an omen a sudden and profoundly decisive change in my taste".³⁶ And he says that he "was the first to discover the truth by being the first to experience lies as lies -smelling them out. -My **genius** is in my nostrils."³⁷ The same imagery of the sheer physical repulsiveness of the customarily ongoing existence is notorious in Buddhist literature, presumably, as with Nietzsche, to emphasize the non-speculative, strikingly vivid, immediately moving -one could say: aesthetic, perhaps even kinesthetic-, non-moralistic character of the ill of the world.

'Samsāra' is the Buddhist name for the everyday experienced as oppressive, for the stifling round of finite containments,

each born to be dying, the staccato of desperate emotional investments which ignobly truncates the true life of man, subjecting it to an endless succession of stunted versions of itself. Etymologically, the word means as much as 'completed motion': a movement bound, spell-bound, within an endless mirror cabinet of inescapable patterns, birth leading to death, death to birth again, and so on, endlessly. A contemporary term expressing above all the emotional connotation that the word "samsāra" has for the Buddhist is "rat race": it conveys the same idea of a noxious mixture of desperate infatuation, closed repetitiveness, stagnation, and violently paced helplessness. But the all-important difference between "samsāra" and "rat race" is that the Buddhist word is spoken from a 'perspective' where life itself as we normally know it, including its most desirable expressions -symbolized by prince Siddharta's childhood circumstances-, is felt to be a rat race, worthy of being abandoned as such, not in favor of Nothing, as Nietzsche seems to have thought -how seriously, we do not know- but in exchange for a truly wholesome and befitting life. The traditional image for that new life is the lotus flower: "Just as a blue, red or white lotus, although born in the water, grown up in the water, when it reaches the surface stands there unsoiled by the water - just so, brahmin, although born in the world, grown up in the world, having overcome the world, I abide unsoiled by the world."

Wherein does the 'rat race' consist? It consists, simply and plausibly enough, of arising and perishing, of pursuing pleasurable things and avoiding unlikeable things, and of orienting oneself by the things of this world. But isn't this the whole of existence as we know it? Precisely! Pursuing pleasurable (or good) things - desire; avoiding unlikeable (or bad) things - aversion; orienting oneself by the things of this world - delusion (ignorance); these are called 'the basic afflictions' or 'the debile structures of existence' (kleśas) by the Buddhists and are regarded as the roots of all further miseries. But the basic afflictions themselves are said to be rooted in the belief in an enduring self, in the adherence to the ideas of 'mine' and 'I', in possessive claims: "the cycle of birth and death (samsāra), springs from holding the view that the person is real",³⁹ Whereas when "'I' and 'mine' have wasted away both inwardly and outwardly possessive attachment comes to an end and from its cessation personal re-birth ceases."⁴⁰ "But if ... there is ... no rebirth ... (that) is the stopping of this whole mass of suffering."⁴¹ If there is no suffering then illness has ceased, since the idea of an illness from which there is no suffering -not even in the wise- is senseless. In samsāra the very means and occasions of satisfaction are at once the cause and ground for anguish, frustration, and

despair. Suffering (duhkha) is therefore by no means the opposite of pleasure or satisfaction. On the contrary: for instance, precisely to the degree to which something meets our expectations is it a source of anxiety. But this does not mean that we ought to turn away from the things and occasions of this world, especially from the sources of satisfaction: for then we would still be orienting ourselves by the things of this world and expect our satisfaction from their opposites, or from opposing them. Insofar as a turning away from the things of this world is still an action-for-the-sake-of and conditioned by the putative natures of things it no more escapes suffering (duhkha) than does 'the ordinary uninstructed person'. This failure of asceticism to bring forth a redemption from suffering was experienced by the Buddha-to-be himself during his apprenticeship to the two ascetic hermits: regarding their teachings he concluded, "This doctrine does not lead to aversion, absence of passion, cessation, quiescence, knowledge, supreme wisdom, and Nirvāṇa, but only as far as the realm of nothingness ... and the realm of neither perception nor yet non-perception."⁴²

Suffering (duhkha), as the Buddhists understand it, is therefore not comprehensible as actual pain or despair, nor as the opposite of satisfaction, and also not as the anguish of man's freedom of choice in the existentialist sense.

Its fundamental all-pervasiveness lends it rather the character of a universal metaphysical substance. At the same time it is certain that the concept of metaphysical substances is not tenable in any interpretation of Buddhist thought. Moreover, suffering is not strictly universal in that there is (the possibility of) a release from it, as proclaimed in the Buddha's Third Noble Truth. The homogeneous ubiquity, so to speak, of suffering, is distinctly a Buddhist notion and has not been seen with the same unflustered coolness by Nietzsche. But despite -or perhaps because of- the near-universal reach of suffering it is "only the wise whose delusion has been destroyed (who) realize that existence is duhkha."⁴³ The reason "the immature man ... does not know the duhkha nature of existence"⁴⁴ is that his exclusive emotional investment in time-bound and time-binding things, the hope he places in as yet unrevealed aspects of existence, blinds him to their duhkha nature, that is, more accurately, to the suffering inherent in his very hope itself. He does not realize that no beings arise and perish but "simply suffering ... comes to be, suffering ... perishes and wanes"⁴⁵ and that therefore his emotional investment in beings is the perpetuation of (his) suffering.

A further aspect of samsāra is karma. 'Karma' means both action, volitional action, the vast network of mechanisms by which actions and effects are linked to each other, and

especially the inevitable coming-to-fruition of each past act in the future, i.e. the inescapable exposure to the full impact of past action. Thus, 'the past' -which qua ongoing fruition of past events is, of course, not past - dominates the present. With regard to the unregenerate ways of the customarily ongoing existence, 'karma' indicates that 'unfreedom of the will' which characterizes the activities of those who live under the spell of the past or in thrall to factors of existence, such as customs, beliefs, objects, emotions, praise and blame, personal identity, good and evil. To the extent to which a life proceeds under such spells it is fettered to certain continuities of material happenings and as such it is in thrall to time. Acts are karmic, belong to samsāra, when they occur within the context of the ongoing world being held together by the 'view that the person is real', i.e. by the assumption of personal identity. The assumption of personal identity, of temporal being, involves an unconditional adherence to certain **characters of being and thus compels the so assumed 'one' to** invest himself exclusively into time-bound and time-binding forms, for instance, facts and values. To the degree that a personal identity is upheld, facts and values relative to it are equally persistent. Karmic action refers itself to facts and values. Because of their identity - relative

to the assumed personal identity - one cannot escape the fruition of action impinging on them, for one continues to relate oneself to 'them', thus submitting to all that comes from 'them'. Within the stance of a personal identity one has no choice but to relate to 'them' since without persistent facts and values personal identity could find no substance and would collapse.

Paradoxically, then, the assumption of personal identity makes a genuine present impossible for to have such requires precisely a recovery of a not-yet-committed, serene and totally mobile, that is, calm empoweredness out from the temporal maelstrom of intentions, duties, hopes, and occupations. The normal way and concept of personal identity is just therefore a peculiar absence of 'oneself'.

The Buddhist concept of samsāra seems to be a perverse outlook on life for it denounces as ill those very factors of which life consists, as far as we normally know: self, things, desires, hopes, aversions, calculations, will. It proclaims the shocking thesis that our customary concepts of health and human worth, as well as all the thinking and activities based on these, even though perhaps not entirely false are, in any case, essentially incomplete and, being incomplete while regarded as sufficient, have been unable to prevent "the s i c k l i n e s s of the type of man we have had hitherto, or at least of the tamed man".⁴⁶

A crucially important inference regarding the nature of human suffering, of the human predicament, forces itself upon us from the fact, on the one hand, that Nietzsche and the Buddhists insist on a physiological-medical imagery to characterize the unsatisfactoriness of the customarily ongoing existence -while deliberately avoiding a more traditionally moralistic, idealistic or soteriological approach- and from our assumption, on the other hand, that that in them which experienced the normal life world as ill is already a greater health. The inference is that insofar as that 'great health' belongs to man e s s e n t i a l l y man-and-his-life-world is ill precisely to the extent to which -speaking with Nietzsche- he has not yet b e c o m e w h a t h e i s . Because man has not only not yet become what he is but is always already investing himself in what-he-is-not man is b e s i d e himself, in Greek: paranoid. And there is an unmistakeable element of paranoia in that misery which 'Zarathustra' and the Buddha discern at the normally invisible basis of the customarily ongoing existence: a -normally unconscious- sense of being hunted down by time, a consequent smoldering ill will, and a propensity for toxic palliatives and ineffectual infatuations.*

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If the trend of the present analysis of man's predicament is correct, then Marx's thesis that religion is opium for the people appears confirmed, in a sense, while

Because Nietzsche and the Buddha diagnose man's predicament as a paradoxical incongruity between what man is factually and what man is in truth they proclaim the cure for 't h e sick animal' to consist in a decisive shift - a shift from his fixations in 'facts and things', in 'good and evil', and in 'I' and 'mine' - into his right mind, that is, since -in their view there is no difference between the two-, into his true nature. The implication is, of course, that the ordinary world, the factual world, is somehow false, and that it is precisely insofar as man adheres and belongs to that ordinary, factual -and ritual- world that he has not yet become what he is.

his derivation of the need for intoxication from inadequate social provisions shows itself to have falsely taken for the real ground of man's misery only one of the expressions of and compensations (namely, inordinate social greed) for man's basic illness.

- 1) J 225
- 2) FW 316
- 3) J 271
- 4) J 270
- 5) Z-III On Old and New Tablets 14
- 6) EH-WIASW 8
- 7) J 271
- 8) GM-I 12
- 9) GM-II 19
- 10) GD-The Problem of **Socrates** 1,2
- 11) FW 382
- 12) J 32
- 13) *ibid.*
- 14) EH-BT 2
- 15) Z-II On Redemption
- 16) Z-II On the Tarantulas
- 17) J 32
- 18) Z-II On Redemption
- 19) GM-I 6
- 20) GM-III 13
- 21) GM-III 28
- 22) EH-WIAAD 7
- 23) *ibid.*, 8
- 24) GM-III 20
- 25) GM-III 15
- 26) M 52
- 27) *ibid.*
- 28) Z-II On Redemption
- 29) EH-Z 1
- 30) EH-Z 2
- 31) EH-Z 6
- 32) FW 382
- 33) FW 109
- 34) AC 21
- 35) HCW, p. 61
- 36) EH-Z 1
- 37) EH-WIAAD 1
- 38) CBT, p.105: Anguttara-nikāya II 37-39
- 39) Pra-XVIII 340
- 40) *ibid.*, 349.8
- 41) CBT, p.71: Samyutta-nikāya II 65-66
- 42) HCW, pp. 336-338
- 43) Pra-XXIV 475
- 44) *ibid.*, 476
- 45) CBT, p.80: Samyutta-nikāya I 134-135
- 46) GM-III 13

III. "the e r r o n e o u s n e s s of the world in which we think we live is the surest and firmest fact that we can lay eyes on"*

Through suffering the customarily ongoing world is experienced as an illness. A closer examination of this world, and of the illness, reveals a fundamental falseness as radical as that of the prisoners in Plato's Cave- of the world we inhabit and 'perform'. An acquaintance with the 'theses' of Buddhist dialectical inquiry allows us to see and acknowledge the strange results of Nietzsche's scepticism. The unfamiliar (non-) picture of the (non-) world emerging through the efforts of an uncompromising scepticism points towards the need for a new m a n to live in that (non-) world.

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We have said that t h e i r suffering from the world as customarily known eventually comes to mean to 'Zarathustra' and to prince Siddharta that it is not they themselves who are ill but the ongoing world, or rather, that the ongoing world is their illness. The experience of a seeming infirmity of oneself gets turned around into a diagnosis of ill somehow inhering in that ongoing world, although it is admitted that this ill is normally imperceptible, inconceivable in terms of the normal transactions of men and the world, and 'a truth only for the wise'.

'World' in this sense is a dynamic character, not an assembly of objects or an array of facts. Neither is it external or internal, objective or subjective, but is that wherein object and subject first occur, and occur in such a way that the object is that which appears relative to a subjectivity kept fixed.

The sense and point of attributing ill to the world rather than to oneself is not to pretend oneself uninfected by its sickness but is rather that insofar as one actually i s ill the cure is to be sought not in a readjusting and returning to that customarily ongoing world but in a radical overcoming of that world altogether.

Still, their suffering from the world of normal human existence would be madness after all or a fatal flaw in their psychosomatic constitution if indeed the world in truth w e r e ,

fundamentally even though perhaps not yet in scientific detail, as we normally think it, if, in other words, any truly radical step out of the customarily ongoing ways of men necessarily were a plunge into Nothingness. As we have seen, even Nietzsche seems to have held the view that the Buddhist prescription amounted to just that.

However, both Nietzsche and the Buddhists emphatically characterize this **stepping out of and overcoming the customary** world as at the same time a step i n t o our original nature, as a becoming who -or what- we are **in truth**.

In view of the tradition of certain words we must guard against taking the reference to 'our original nature' here to imply an anthropological differentiation between the natural and the artificial, a distinction between the empirical man and his Platonic essence, a historical comparison à la Rousseau between the savage and the citizen, a Kantian distinction between phenomenon and noumenon, or the idea of some underlying or hidden stratum producing 'us' as we know ourselves.

Nor is it implied by speaking of 'our original nature' that this 'nature' is o u r s , is specific to us. The phenomenon of 'ourness', of 'self', as well as that of consciousness, may well have a 'nature' which cannot be thought in terms of 'mine' and 'thine'. The step into 'our original nature' is meant rather as a rapprochement with what we are in truth. Here again,

'truth' is not a certainty about something, a primordial disclosedness of something, a correct belief, or what we 'really' are underneath the mask of personality.

Both Nietzsche and the Buddhists regard the nature of man's illness, namely, of the ill man, as a fundamentally false relationship to the truth of existence. Normally, man is that false relationship. The customarily ongoing existence consists, somehow, of a step 'out' of the original nature of man, 'away' from what we are in truth, and into a false relationship to that truth. However, in their view, these 'errors' which spell-bind the normal world do not consist of insufficient data, false beliefs or mistaken calculations such that additional information, true beliefs or correct results would put the ongoing human existence on its way to recovery. More radically, the customary human existence is e s s e n t i a l l y in 'error' so that a cure would alter the very character of human existence. It would therefore do so in ways, and result in traits, inconceivable by and unrealizable within that existence, since the ongoing substance of health is different from that of ill, and the healthy man is a different m a n than the sick one. "To translate man back into ... that eternal basic text of h o m o n a t u r a, ... Why did we choose this¹ insane task?"

But Nietzsche answers his own question in innumerable formulations which attempt to pierce the heart of man's

illness. He chooses 'this insane task' because he sees
 "Der Mensch, e i n g e s p e r r t in einen eisernen
 Käfig von I r r t ü m e r n , eine Carikatur des Menschen
 geworden, krank, kümmerlich, gegen sich selbst böswillig,
 voller Hass auf die Antriebe zum Leben, voller Misstrauen
 gegen alles, was schön und glücklich ist am Leben, ein
 wandelndes ² Elend..." (My emphasis).

The Buddhist answer is similar: he sees the ordinary
 man "holding a speculative view (dr̥ṣṭi), the wilds, wriggling,
 scuffling and fetter of speculative views (dr̥ṣṭi). Fettered
 by this fetter, the ordinary uninstructed person is not freed
 from birth, from ageing and dying or from grief, sorrow,
 suffering, lamentation and despair"; ³ we "err about like
 antelopes on the evil paths of this forest, of this jungle,
 of this p r i s o n -this ineluctable samsāra- paths full of
 the pitfalls of f a u l t y v i e w s which those astray
 follow." ⁴ (My emphasis)

The value of holding up Buddhist thought as a mirror
 next to that of Nietzsche is that it gives us not only the
 inspiration but above all the courage to take Nietzsche seriously
 on his own terms, which we would hardly be able to if we
 assimilated him into our Western background, that is, by
 means of the Greco-Christian paradigms. Without the
 encouragement from an already established tradition, such as
 that of Buddhism, whose outlook differs no less radically from

what we are accustomed to, than Nietzsche's, a reading of Nietzsche is irresistibly drawn to regarding him either as a metaphysician, a nihilist, or - a poet.

Whereas to Nietzsche's searches and researches a metaphysical intent could still be ascribed -for instance, by Heidegger- with a measure of plausibility, Buddhist thinking and teaching from its very beginnings in the sermons of the Buddha expressly proceeds in the service of man's reconvalescence into a great health, his consecration, and his initiation into his true nature as into that of all things, rather than for the sake of 'truth', 'knowledge', 'improvement', 'utility', or 'progress'. Thus it shares with Nietzsche's passion the unflinching directness and incandescent purity of intent which refuses to be side-tracked into embellishing man's disease, dispensing consolation, justifying man's compromises, locating guilty ones, or rallying around social reform programs. The Buddha declares that he explains only what "is connected with the goal, is fundamental to the Brahma-faring, and conduces to turning away from, to dispassion, stopping, calming, super-knowledge, awakening and nirvāṇa."⁵ Nevertheless, as thinking it cannot articulate itself without polarities and without a tension direction for which, however, it takes the distinctions of illness (duḥkha) and nirvāṇa, ignorance (avidyā) and enlightenment, duality and

śūnyatā, rather than those of not-being and being, falsehood and truth, evil and good, uninformedness and knowledge, or conservation and progress. The concept of "being", on the contrary, always is unambiguously linked with illness and so are all those modes of thinking and conduct which depend on or imply that concept. "Why do you harp on 'being'? It is a false view ... Here no 'being' is got at." Instead, "it is simply suffering that comes to be, suffering that perishes and wanes, ... (and) naught else than suffering is stopped."⁶

The stretch between illness (duhkha) and (its) extinction (nirvāṇa) without the concepts of 'being' or 'the good' can seem too narrow a basis for thinking and more suitable for escapists and other misfits - until it is realized how our very being is steeped in illness. Then the task of a thinking that wishes to lead man out of his misery changes profoundly in character: from serving the security and advantages of the ongoing existence in terms of its own concepts and values it begins to serve a transmutation of that existence itself as well as of all its sensibilities. But an attempt at a transmutation would again proceed under the spells of the ongoing existence if it were to take any of its orienting elements or definitions from that existence. A thinking in the service of a transmutation must therefore go against the grain

of those basic characters which both define and maintain the pre-transmuted state -the customarily ongoing existence- in itself. The most distinctive common denominator, the very symbol of, as well as the crucial support for 'good' and 'evil' within, the normal everyday is the concept of 'being'. It is so not only once it has become the philosopher's trademark but already in the very fabric of everyday life whence, in turn, the philosopher distills both his rarefied version and its importance. Metaphysics, as the attempt to fix the features of being, to comprehend the truth of existence through judgements, is not the philosopher's invention or prerogative but a spontaneous tendency of the human mind and, as mind, inherent in everyday living.

However, even a thinking which does not refer itself to any beings as its support or validation but which nevertheless serves as a valid guiding thread in our lives must be regarded as a form of knowledge. For that very reason it is necessary to distinguish between knowledge and what the Buddhists call "prajñā", the former connoting any way of thinking that supposes itself justified by, aimed at, and grasping hold of real beings, the latter signifying, not just a way of thinking, but a way of living which nowhere assumes itself supported by, in touch with, requiring, or leading to, the reality of beings. The latter, avoiding both the thesis that any something is and the thesis that nothing is, goes by the name of "The

Middle Way" (Mādhyaṃika). On the Middle Way it is not the same to believe that p, on the one hand, and to think p and act as if p, on the other hand. From the standpoint -or rather, on the way- of prajñā the axiom does not hold that "p = 'p' is true", for the simple reason that not anything is held to be true (as such). Through prajñā all things step into the light of their own nature without being distorted by being viewed, in the manner of knowledge, as a means to our ambition. For example, it is the way of knowledge which presumes that "to a fiction there surely belongs an author" while it is the way of prajñā that replies, "w h y ? Doesn't this 'belongs' perhaps belong to the fiction, too?"⁷ When therefore, the Buddha says, "I see no other single hindrance such as this hindrance of ignorance, obstructed by which mankind for a long time runs on and circles on (i.e., in saṃsāra)"⁸ the ignorance in question is the lack of s a v i n g 'knowledge', not a scarcity of information or the insufficiency of available scientific knowledge. But is the saving 'knowledge' knowledge or prajñā? What is the nature of this saving 'knowledge': Does it have for its object something eternal and unchangeable, or something wholly good, or something indubitably certain? Does it preserve that very schema of 'knowing' which calls for an object? Does it grasp hold of another world, a better world which is thoroughly good, wholesome, and which rests in

its original nature? Does it expound the ways of true being?
Does it instruct us in the characters of our original nature?
Does it preserve eternal truths?

On the contrary. From the beginning it is made clear that not only is the bringing forth of the true and original man not dependent on but is incompatible with the establishment or knowledge of truths. The "saintly wise man ... does not ... claim to possess or to indubitably cognize any element of existence whatever."⁹ Subhuti, among the Buddha's disciples the foremost spokesman -according to the Mahāyāna- for "the Buddha's might"¹⁰ claims that there "is nothing to understand ... For nothing in particular has been indicated, nothing in particular has been explained ... no dharma at all has been indicated, lit up, or communicated."¹¹ In the same vein, Nāgārjuna, the strictest dialectical expounder of the Buddha's Middle Way, says that "no 'Truth' has been taught by a buddha for anyone anywhere."¹² And Candrakīrti, his commentator, continues: "There is no true doctrine concerning nirvāṇa ... and there is no final triumph over saṃsāra for those who search persistently for nirvāṇa as something existent."¹³ The reason for this paradoxical, indeed, from a Greek and Christian standpoint hardly intelligible, 'state of affairs' is that the "Truth, properly understood, is devoid of a reality of its own, (and) enlightenment, properly understood, is (also) devoid of a reality of its own."¹⁴ In other words, the

ultimate teaching of the Buddha is not about anything!

The saving 'knowledge', then, whatever the nature of its efficacy and 'content', is most certainly not a species of knowledge but is a kind of prajñā. If by "scientific" we mean: basing itself on, aiming at or serving a reference to (at least some) beings regarded as real, then the Buddhist prajñā and its correlative use of language is not scientific. Its purpose is not to know the world or to explain its ways - namely, to do so in the service of other purposes such as (technological) manipulation within and for the sake of the customarily ongoing world- but to act as a medicine against its illness and to 'ferry' man over into a great health and into his original nature.

But how is it possible to 'ferry' man over into the great health by means of an instruction where there 'is nothing to understand .. (where) nothing in particular has been indicated ... explained ... or communicated', especially when as a result of this 'ferrying over' there is not anyone who is established in the great health just as there is no one who can grasp the perfect wisdom (prajñāpāramitā) which serves as the 'ferry'? What are we to think of that great health when its embodiment, the Buddha, replies to the question whether he is a human being, "No, indeed, ... I am not a human being."¹⁵ Is this 'cure' perhaps worse than the 'disease'? If it is true in the Buddhist case too that the 'substance' of the healed man is different from

that of the ill man, must we not conclude that it is Nothing since there is 'nothing to understand', 'no 'truth' has been taught', nirvāṇa 'is not something existent', and since on the other shore of the great health and original nature "No wisdom can we get hold of, no highest perfection, no Bodhisattva, and no thought of enlightenment either"¹⁶? That is, "there is no individual as such who has gone beyond. There is neither a shore here nor there; it is merely a manner of speaking to say you have crossed over. Neither do the words you utter exist, nor does what you speak about exist, nor does he with whom you speak exist nor he who comprehends."¹⁷

A cure is determined by the character of the illness and by the nature of health. If thinking is to act as a guide out of man's ill and to 'ferry' him over into his great health and original nature then it can make positive prescriptions, reveal something to be understood, disclose beings, and teach requisite 'truths' only if such fundamental schemata as 'understanding/explaining something', 'knowing a truth', 'being in the world', and 'being one who grasps wisdom' remain valid within the context of the great health and original nature. In the Buddhist view, the 'substance' of the ill man is **clinging and ignorance (avidyā)**. Are knowledge -as distinct from prajñā-and the wish 'to be taught something' themselves forms of clinging? Is the very view of oneself as a 'human being' a happening of ignorance?

Is the reliance on 'truths' -even if for the sake of redemption- a feature of the ongoing illness? Is all action-for-the-sake-of both an expression and a cause of suffering? Is the very 'being this-and-this particular person' already a descent into illness?

If so then knowledge, 'being human', purposeful action, having a personal identity, and the reliance on 'truths' cannot serve as a basis for the great health or as reference points by which to 'become who we are', by which to coincide with our original nature.

In our everyday life we will things, we intend to do things and occupy ourselves with things, things both present at hand and imagined. A more non-committal description of our customarily ongoing existence can hardly be given, and yet it is concerning precisely this seemingly innocuous tapestry of everyday life that the Buddhists say: "That which we will and that which we intend to do and that with which we are occupied, this is an object for the support of consciousness. If there is an object there is a foothold for consciousness. With consciousness growing in this foothold there is rebirth and recurrent becoming in the future. If there is rebirth and recurrent becoming in the future, ageing and dying, grief, sorrow, suffering, lamentation and despair come into being in the future. Thus is the arising of this whole mass of suffering."¹⁸ Clearly, on the one hand, if there is a consistent

occupation with things then there will arise the concept of 'myself' as 'the one who' is the center of these relations with things, while, on the other hand, if there already is a concept of 'myself' there will always be things, relations and horizons correlate to it. This unity of things in the world and 'the one who' relates to them - a unity which in the previous chapter was referred to as "karma" - has **been most thoroughly seen and strongly** articulated by Heidegger in "Being and Time". By an astonishing coincidence of insight Heidegger, too, unveils a specific inescapable anguish pertaining to being 'one who' relates to things in the world, as well as the essentially temporal, and predominantly futural, significance of this anguish. However, due to taking 'thrown' Dasein, namely, being-in-the-world, that is, being a 'particular one who' relates to beings in the world - i.e., karma - as the starting point, base level, and ceiling of his ontology Heidegger could have arrived neither at the link between the supportedness (intentionality) of consciousness and illness nor at the possibility of a fundamental release from this illness or anguish. How, then, are we to understand the Buddhist notion of an essential link between birth and illness, the claim that "ill is birth again and again",¹⁹ while "Nirvāṇa" - the extinction of ill, the entry into the great health and our original nature -

"(is) the utter extinction of ageing and dying"²⁰? A r e we not born? A r e we not thrown beings-in-the-world? How can our health consist in not even being born? A m I not this being? And, as this being, how can there be for me 'the utter extinction of ageing and dying'? If these questions have solutions -and the Buddhists claim they do- it is certain that with regard to them, and in regard already to understanding the meaning of these questions, an ontology such as Heidegger's in "Being and Time" leaves us in the lurch. There, each of us i s a particular, thrown being-in-the-world, and the best we can do about our fundamental anguish as such thrown Daseins is to convert it into an alert resoluteness which takes full possession of our short span of life and refuses henceforth to be the puppet of mere drifting opinions and projects heedless of the anguished seriousness of the briefness and frailty of being-in-the-world.

It is possible to 'ferry' man over into the great health by means of an instruction where not anything in particular is explained or pointed out and where no 'truth' is given as a foothold only if all explanation and reliance on things pointed out and on 'truths' themselves are errors and part and parcel of man's ill and false nature, - a n d if the opposite of, or rather, the cure from, an error is not necessarily a 'truth' or knowledge. Does the concept of 'error', or that of 'delusion',

imply 'truth' as its opposite? It does not if both assent and negation, both acceptance and rejection, both Yes and No -that is, insofar as they are applied to any determinate particular- belong to 'error' or 'delusion'.

It is a fundamental and unambiguous Buddhist tenet that the customarily ongoing existence is essentially based on a species of error, indeed, that it is a species of error itself. "'The everyday' means total concealment. (The) .. ignorance arising from the utter concealment of the true nature of things is called the everyday."²¹ And "ignorance, (in turn,) is the root cause of ill (duhkha), of the entire conglomerate of afflictions from birth on."²² But the saving 'knowledge', the opposite of that fundamental ignorance, has no object of its own. This is so because "the exhaustive totality of words and transactions which are based on the distinction between knowing and the thing known, naming and the thing named, and so on, is what is meant by the truth or reality of the everyday personal world."²³ The Buddhist name for 'the everyday personal world' is 'samvṛti'. Knowledge-which-has an-object belongs to the ill world, is part of man's illness itself. Consequently, the curative 'knowledge', the saving prajñā, cannot consist in the revelation or cognition of a saving object or truth, for the correlative knower would still be ill, his 'substance' still being clinging (to a special saving object or truth) and ignorance (the operation of error-activities).

Instead of functioning within the schema of knowing-known, and thus correlative to an unredeemed knower, the redemptive 'knowledge' must act rather as a sword cutting through a knot: through the knot of ignorance, **delusion** and clinging.

For "Samsāra endures as long as the entanglement in the twin dogmas, that things are real or that they are not, endures."²⁴ In the customarily ongoing world so entangled,

"things which do not exist in themselves appear in fact to do so to the immature, common people who are in the grip of the illusory notion of 'mine' and 'me'".²⁵ More specifically, anyone "who, having foisted on things this notion that they have self-existent natures, affirms or denies it and ...

insists upon them stubbornly ... will be fettered in the cycle of unregenerate existence (samsāra)."²⁶ The curative

prajña, therefore, acts as an un-doing sooner than as a doing, as a conscious not-knowing (quite possibly in Socrates' sense!) sooner than as a knowing. Its strange non-reliance upon knowledge and non-engagement in an everyday personal world (samvṛti), its subtle avoidance of these two decisive factors of the world of ill (samsāra), is also suggested by the consistent characterization of nirvāṇa as a cessation or coming to rest, namely, of ill ongoing. True wholesomeness is the abiding in the true nature of things, while illness is the abiding in a false nature of things. The 'ferrying' over of man into the great health takes place by un-doing, 'de'-knowing

(his abiding in) the false nature of things 'back' - or 'forward' - into (an abiding in) the true nature of things. This is possible because 'the ill' is at the same time 'the not-ill', because "there is no ontic difference whatever between samsāra and nirvāṇa", because, as "the revered one has said ..., 'Samsāra, ... which consists of birth, decay and death, is the highest existence'." ²⁷

But this doctrine, that "samsāra and nirvāṇa are in essence one", ²⁸ seems even less intelligible than the doctrine that the very customarily ongoing existence itself is, in some sense, an illness: with regard to the latter view it is possible, at least, to imagine a healthier existence and to embark upon man's cure and transformation by means of such strategies as social reform, technological progress, improved education, and genetic engineering. But how could illness and health be 'in essence one'? On the other hand, only if they are in essence one can the curative 'knowledge' be **one** which presents no new truth or object. If their essences were different then the redemptive 'knowledge' would have to point out and grasp those special characters which belong to health rather than illness. Our perplexity, however, concerning the identity of the nature of samsāra and the nature of nirvāṇa relies upon one crucial tacit presupposition: that the everyday, the customarily ongoing world, is real as such, is real precisely

in respect of those characters which in its own opinion are fundamental to it, and that man is as he is known in that world according to those characters. For if the everyday were not real as such but were a misunderstanding of the true nature of things, as well as an associated 'malpractice', then the essential identity of samsāra and nirvāṇa would be no more -but also no less- puzzling than a happening of stage magic. For a magician's act can be perceived in two fundamentally different ways: in the manner of the audience who is taken in by his performance, or with the appreciation of one who knows his tricks. Or perhaps we should liken samsāra to the disappointing experience of one who is deceived by an itinerant magician whom he does not know to be such, losing money in bets with him, as well as missing his watch afterwards; while we would think of nirvāṇa as like meeting that same itinerant magician but being cognizant of his tricks and enjoying the performance - and keeping our watch too.

How real then, is the customarily ongoing world in respect of those characters which in its own understanding are fundamental to it? Does the sort of understanding which belongs to the everyday world abide in the truth of things? What does the healing prajñā reveal concerning, or do with, those fundamental characters and understandings? Is the analogy of a magician's act fitting? How does knowledge,

insofar as it has an object, belong to ill? How would the supportedness of consciousness lead to 'the arising of this whole mass of suffering'? And, how is it that ill is associated with the ways of the customarily ongoing existence, namely, if the analogy of the magician is an appropriate one, with (exclusively) following the lead of his clues?

Probably the most concise refutation, among Buddhist thinkers, of any belief in the everyday was performed by Nāgārjuna. We shall therefore summarize his argument concerning the fundamental characters of the customarily ongoing existence.

These fundamental characters are: entity, self, good and bad, causality, time. Normally we believe that entities come into being and perish, that they interact, for instance, causally, that they succeed each other in time, that some are good and some are bad, that we can act upon them, and that we can know truths about them. We also suppose ourselves to be perishable entities, and we pursue good things, avoid bad things, and orient ourselves by facts. We believe our suffering to be caused by losses, disappointments, and injuries, and our happiness by gains, satisfactions, and securities. We presume that we can do things, that we think, experience joy and sorrow, and have certain properties. Such might be Nāgārjuna's sketch of the characteristic

framework of the customarily ongoing existence.

Generative of these fundamental characters and of this basic framework is the central myth -because of its special status one cannot call it an assumption- that things have their own natures. This myth is the first metaphysics in that it presumes to have fixed certain features of being, to have grasped hold of a corner of truth by means of certain judgements. In Greece this spontaneous metaphysics found its consummate expression in Plato's theory of Ideas. But Plato did not invent it; it seems, rather, to be an innately spontaneous naïve view. The enormous significance and fertile power of implication of this central myth can, however, only be appreciated against the contrast of a radical alternative and its ramifications, in turn. After all, even modern science still believes that (certain) things -e.g. 'fundamental' particles, radiation, or energy- have their own natures, that, therefore, there are laws of nature, so that, consequently, explanation is reduced to prediction. But it could be that only falsification makes possible prediction, while an adequate account effectively dissolves the situation as far as the physicist is concerned.

Nāgārjuna, in his argument to exhibit the mistakenness of the everyday view of the world, draws upon two principles of argumentation: the logic of non-contradiction, and the simple

evidence of solid common sense. Both the everyday view and the various theories of rival philosophical schools are dismissed on grounds of either ignoring the simplest common sense or implying contradictions. Methodically, his argument proceeds by insisting upon strict concreteness of reference. In this manner, his own reasoning, which fits itself completely to the actual ongoings, is able to emphasize the contrast to a reasoning which tacitly presupposes the inherence in beings of (their) own natures. The net effect, of course, is not to exhibit any new facts, or to prove anything about 'reality' -for both 'facts' and 'reality' are based on the customarily ongoing frame of reference- but to clear up the way things are by dispelling the customary unconscious leanings towards and beginnings of delusion.

Normally we believe, for instance, that entities (svabhāva)* come into being, perish, and undergo diverse alterations during their existence. But in order to speak of 'alterations' we must posit something that remains the same. This something is precisely that which is normally thought to come into being, and to perish. In the case of myself this something is, of course, I myself. With respect to entities

* In contrast to the Greeks and the moderns, Indian thinkers never used the distinction between essence and existence.

in general this something is said to be that which the entity in question i s . And a "characteristic which is invariable in a thing is commonly said to be its essential (or own) nature; that is, it is not conjoined with any other thing. For example, heat is said to be the essential nature of fire because in all experience it invariable accompanies fire. Heat is not the essential (or own) nature of water because it arises from extraneous conditions and because it is something artificially produced."²⁹ Thus far the notion of essential nature is perfectly uncontroversial; in a sense, so far it represents no more than a figure of speech, an abbreviative formula of thought, an organization of experience, an accentuation of perception, and a guide for simple discriminative action. The controversy begins when we ask whether that essential, own nature is something real or unreal, whether the being in question h a s this nature or lacks it, whether such natures 'endure' even while the appropriate entities are absent, endure perhaps eternally, and whether, in fact, there i s a being named by that nature, Continuing his example of fire, Candrakīrti, Nāgārjuna's commentator, unequivocally claims, "But if this invariable essential nature is something real, then because of its invariableness it could not become other. After all, coldness cannot become a property of fire. Thus, if we accept an essential nature in things, alteration is not possible. But,

and here he appeals to simple sensory evidence, "alteration is directly perceived in things so there can be no essential nature."³⁰

In other words, if a being undergoes alterations during its existence then there must be something that remains the same, namely, that being which undergoes these alterations, that is to say, that nature by virtue of which a given entity is this being rather than some other one, by virtue of which this being can be said to have endured. At the same time, if this invariable essential nature which supposedly pertains to the actual being -that actual being which, as we have said, continually undergoes certain changes- is something real then because of its invariableness it could not become other for that would be a contradiction. But if the being in question failed to remain the same then its nature, being both invariable and real, would still endure -since not to endure would mean a change in its characteristic as nature- while at the same time the altered being would now have a different nature as well, namely, one characteristic of its new identity, also real and invariable. But this is logically impossible. 'Thus, if we accept an essential nature in things, alteration is not possible.' It is not possible because, in Nāgārjuna's reasoning, the reality of an invariable nature means its enduring as this nature; such an enduring is necessarily permanent since any 'perishing' or 'vanishing' would imply a

variation on the part of the invariable, and thus a contradiction. "Real change of the nature of something is not logically possible. ... (B)ecause of the unchangeableness of a true nature, change would never be logically possible."³¹ But it is plainly evident that there is alteration, even if that is "said (only) with reference to the experience of change as understood by others."³² Consequently, beings have no essential particular natures. That is to say, there is not anything that remains the same during alterations: the alterations do not pertain to, qualify or modify an enduring or underlying identity. This means that it is actually not at all a (namely one) being which undergoes changes. Therefore, no entity at all has come into being since at no time i s there an entity. But to speak of non-enduring entities makes no sense; thus, if we suppose that the invariable essence or own nature supposedly pertaining to beings is real then we must conclude that there are not, have never been, and will never be any beings.

On the other hand, if we suppose that the invariable essence or own nature of an entity is not real then it follows that any given entity cannot in reality have any nature (of its own, i.e. essential nature) since it makes no sense to say of beings that they have unreal natures. But it is by virtue of their essential nature remaining the same that we speak of beings remaining self-identical, and therefore speak

of beings at all since 'non-enduring being' is a senseless expression. Since beings do not in reality have any particular essential natures, 'beings' themselves cannot be said to exist. Thus we must conclude once again that there are not, have never been, and will never be any beings.

It follows that I myself, regarded as a being, also do not have an essential nature (of my own). Consequently, it cannot consistently be said that I, as this particular entity, came into being, endure and shall perish. Thus, I cannot claim to be a self. Not being a self, how can I ascribe to myself the power to act, thinking, suffering and joy, how can I 'have' qualities? Neither cogito, nor sum: "If the self is non-existent how will anything be one's own?"³³ Thus "here is no self, no real person, no birth."³⁴ Hence also is "there ... no one who can grasp (the perfect wisdom)."³⁵ This complete absence of being in things is named "śūnyatā" by the Buddhists. Significantly enough, this absence of being in things is equated with "the exhaustion of all theories and views".³⁶ Candrakīrti comments, "The exhaustion (nihsaranam), the ceasing to function of all ways of holding to fixed concepts stemming from theories or views (dr̥ṣṭi) of any kind whatsoever is the absence of being in things."³⁷

Moreover, "If ... one defines time as 'dependent on things' then insofar as things are not real, time, being based on them,

is necessarily not real either."³⁸ In a previous argument Nagarjuna reasons that time independent of things does not make sense either; "thus ... there is no time."³⁹ But in the absence of beings and time, causality is impossible too.

Finally, as regards good and bad, these are customarily attributed to beings or other enduring characters. Since such do not exist, and since, moreover, there is no 'one who' (e.g. myself) can be said to pursue good and avoid bad, 'good' and 'bad' are inapplicable notions as well.

According to Nāgārjuna's extremely terse reasoning, then, -of which we have given only a brief sketch- the entire structure of the customarily ongoing existence, rooted as it is in the inconsistent or counterevidential notion of being, shows itself to be untenable when taken strictly seriously on the basis of its own two most fundamental principles, those of non-contradiction and unsophisticated solid common sense. In "projecting the notion of self-existence and so creating the everyday world"⁴⁰ the customarily ongoing existence -including its scientifically sophisticated elaboration- is itself the fundamental falsification of the truth of existence, the fundamental step 'out' of the original nature of man. In other words, it is the so-called waking mind belonging to normal existence that conceals the truth of things.

But, all is not lost; for "(t)hat which, taken as causal or

dependent, is the process of being born and passing on, (samsāra) is, taken non-causally and beyond all dependence, declared to be nirvāṇa." ⁴¹ That is, as we have said before,

"there is no ontic difference whatever between samsāra and nirvāṇa." ⁴² Prajñā, the saving 'knowledge', need not

strain to grasp hold of divine or rare and elusive truths, need not stretch itself after esoteric facts. Ignorance (avidyā) consists in constructing the everyday world through projecting and enacting the notion of self-existence.

Prajñā consists in unravelling and illuminating this process: the absence of being (of particular self-existent natures) in things is not again an attribute of things or a 'truth' or 'fact' to be discovered. Rather, the "exhaustion (nihsaranam), the ceasing to function of all ways of holding to fixed concepts stemming from theories or views (dr̥ṣṭi) of any kind whatsoever is (itself) the absence of being in things." ⁴³

The non-functioning of ignorance is itself the entry into the great health, the coincidence with our original nature. But

"those for whom the absence of being is itself a theory they (are) declared to be incurable." ⁴⁴ In view of the ontic

coincidence of samsāra and nirvāṇa the customarily ongoing existence cannot be said to be a separate ill reality, or a separately real illness. Any material manipulation for the sake of restoring man to his right mind and into his great health would merely continue the fatal indulgence in beings and thus

perpetuate the fundamental ill. The essential identity of samsāra and nirvāṇa bears, therefore, a striking analogy to a magician's act as perceived by those who are deluded by his tricks into believing in them as the events which they seem to be, and as seen by those who are not so, for "All compound things are not what they pretend to be and are therefore unreal"⁴⁵ while customarily taken by the unenlightened as real. It is appropriate to call the analogue to that which through prajñā is the way things truly are, and which through knowledge is the customary everyday world, 'a magician's act' since it is not possible to 'explain' the feats of the magician by recourse to the elements and events which he presents and describes and which are vividly perceived by his audience, without falling prey precisely to the delusion which his tricks are able to produce. The audience's attempt to 'explain' the magician's feats in terms of what he has presented and declared to them corresponds in the customarily ongoing world, however, to the endeavour of scientists to 'explain' the events of this universe in terms of 'fundamental' elements and 'laws of nature' ! From a Buddhist perspective, then, the scientifically instrumented and choreographed endeavour to free man from his miseries fails to extricate man from his fundamental ill health and false nature, as do, for the same reason, social reform, political reorganization and moral improvement.

Our excursus into Buddhist thought has shown us that the highest 'truth', more accurately, the highest teaching, need neither be nor convey knowledge, and that an overcoming of the ill world and the transformation of 'the sick animal' into an embodiment of a great health may at the same time demand a step from the familiar world of being into a strange (non-) world characterized by the absence of being and all the ramifications of that absence. We shall see that without such a model of intrepid investigation and uncompromising conclusions bound by no promises to fulfill familiar preconceptions we should hardly have dared to take Nietzsche seriously even where he himself most emphatically demands that of us.

Immediately after his question "Why did we choose this insane task? (i.e., of translating man back into nature) Nietzsche writes: "Or, putting it differently: 'why have knowledge at all?'".^{45a} 'Putting it differently' says: the task of knowledge as Nietzsche understands it is somehow related to the endeavour of 'translating man back into nature'. Knowledge can have a redemptive function. The cure is to 'translate man back into nature' while a certain kind of knowledge acts as a strong medicine or catalyst. But the reason man is to be translated back into nature is that "the many vain and overly enthusiastic interpretations and connotations that have so far been scrawled and painted over that eternal basic text of h o m o n a t u r a ..., ..(those) siren songs of old

metaphysical bird catchers" have made man ill: ^{45b} "Der Mensch ist das wahnsinnig gewordene Tier". ⁴⁶ 'To translate man back into nature': this is the formula for the intent animating Nietzsche's whole philosophy. The German word "zurückübersetzen" has connotations lacking in the English term, among them also the literal meaning 'to ferry back across (the river)', which would be a precise rendering of the Buddhist metaphor for their own task: "-yāna" in the three Buddhist Yānas means (ferry) vehicle! Thus, the German term has not only the sense of 'restating' but also of regaining: when one ferries accross the river one literally reaches the other shore, not merely, as in 'translation', another formulation!

But what is the nature of this saving 'knowledge'? Does it have for its object something eternal and unchangeable, or something wholly good, or something indubitably certain? Does it preserve the very schema which calls for an object? Is knowledge-which-has-an-object itself a part of that veil over homo natura? Must the saving knowledge know man's original nature? Must this nature be knowable? Or is it perhaps revenge itself, 'the will's ill will against time and its 'it was', which first posits the eternal and unchangeable, the good-in-itself, the permanent true nature, the indubitably certain? But if so then what other than cognizing a special object does this saving knowledge do? After all, did we not say that the ongoing world is ill, -and must there not therefore

be another world which is better, perhaps a true world, in any case a wholesome world for this saving knowledge to grasp hold of and to lead us to, as into a promised land? And, finally, who will be capable of that redeeming knowledge? Is it, like the results of scientific investigation, available to all who wish to employ it in their lives?

It is for the sake of answering questions such as these according to a different model than the one which irresistibly guides our reasoning as long as we remain within the Greco-Christian tradition that we sought inspiration and encouragement in the central philosophy of Buddhism. The model which we wish to avoid is the one that held St. Augustine in its grip when he wrote in his treatise against the Academicians that "nothing more perverse, nothing more foolish and absurd can be uttered than that a wise man is wise and that, at the same time, he does not know wisdom. Therefore, either the Academician is not wise or the wise man will assent to something ... If you say that the wise man cannot be found, we shall no longer discuss this subject with the Academicians .. And so I think that the wise man certainly ... has apprehended wisdom ... and is giving assent to that without the apprehension of which he would not be wise."⁴⁷

Rather than to follow St. Augustine we shall attempt to read Nietzsche's "Why have knowledge at all?" by keeping

in mind the distinction between knowledge and prajñā, but which is, of course, not one that he himself made.

The saving 'knowledge' restores man to the great health insofar as it is able to translate man into his original nature, into 'that eternal basic text of homo natura'. Let us turn the question concerning the putative object of the saving 'knowledge' into the question of how the ongoing customary existence is deviating from that original nature and falling into ill.

According to 'Zarathustra', the fundamental ill whose overcoming is the bridge to man's highest hope is revenge, the will's ill-will against time. At the same time, our ill seems to be due to an overlay of 'many vain and overly enthusiastic interpretations ... over that eternal basic text of homo natura'. Is the ill the same in both cases, and are revenge and the falsifications of man's original nature two aspects of it? How deep do these falsifications go? What is their relationship to the saving knowledge? If the falsifications associated with man's ill go so deep as to infect even language, and thus thinking, can a step out of the ongoing existence be thought at all? W h e r e is this 'eternal basic text of homo natura'? And wherein consists that 'reconciliation with time and something higher than any reconciliation' which is to deliver the will from revenge, - especially if we do not presume that there is anything to be reconciled with, anything that the

saving 'knowledge' might have as its proper object and point out to us?

In his study on Nietzsche Heidegger decided to render 'the will to power' as Nietzsche's answer to the question for an *essentia* and 'the eternal recurrence' as his formula for the *existentia* of the world. But such an assignment of the two most venerable traditional functions in European philosophical thought to the two conceptions which Nietzsche most emphatically held to be unprecedented both in import and in impact rests on one small assumption: namely, that, on the one hand, Nietzsche was still seeking knowledge to fill in these categories, and that, on the other hand, he intended his two foremost teachings to do just that.

In other words, an interpretation like Heidegger's of Nietzsche's two most striking teachings can see his thought as the culmination of European metaphysics only because it has already assumed that his knowledge wants to grasp ultimate truth, that his teachings want to answer metaphysical questions: it is this assumption which permits the subsumption of the 'will to power' and 'eternal recurrence' under the categories of '*essentia*' and '*existentia*' understood as a schema of ultimate being. There are indeed passages which seem to confirm this assumption.⁴⁸ But is the purpose of Nietzsche's way of knowledge the discovery of truth? Is the will to truth Nietzsche's

'last' will, his innermost will, so that his foremost teachings may be taken as the highest accomplishment of that will to truth?

Nietzsche calls truthfulness, intellectual cleanliness 'the last morality' which he 'still knows how to live'⁴⁹. But does he believe that the will to truth can arrive at any truth, or at a final truth? Perhaps the will to truth necessarily discovers only - lies? Perhaps "the destruction of an illusion does not produce truth but only one more piece of ignorance, an extension of our 'empty space', an increase of our 'desert'",⁵⁰ while "'knowledge'" is merely "the measuring of earlier and later errors by one another"?⁵¹ Could it be that the inevitable fate of truthfulness is to **deflate pretences endlessly**, unmask lies, destruct falsehood, and to lift deceptive spells without ever arriving at any truths of its own? Does the morality of truthfulness finally question not only the claims of categories such as 'existentia' and 'essentia' but even the will to and the faith in truth itself? In any case, "the e r r o n e o u s n e s s of the world in which we think we live is the surest and firmest fact that we can lay eyes on".⁵²

Indeed, the morality of truthfulness, 'the last morality' which he 'still knows how to live', demands that "the value of truth must for once be experimentally c a l l e d i n t o ^{52a} q u e s t i o n", and poses "the question 'w h a t i s t h e

52b

meaning of all will to truth?" In other words, far from subscribing to the will to truth Nietzsche's guiding star and energy is of a different kind. But does not an investigation into the value of truth presuppose that some truths can be arrived at concerning this value? Nietzsche asks for the meaning and value of truth - not for the truth of truth. Perhaps meaning and value are not the kind of things that can be ascertained? We are not even sure that they depend on truth at all - they may be allied rather to will and illusion, in one word: to 'life'. Nietzsche certainly regarded 'life' as his vantage point; even The Birth of Tragedy was already his first attempt at his task "to see science under the optics of the artist, and art under that of life".⁵³ Since Nietzsche is still speaking then what is he doing with language if not formulating 'the truth'? If his teaching is not metaphysics what is it? Poetry? If not 'truth' - or the adequacy of the thought to the object - then what validates his thinking? In the utter absence of being in things, language must take on - or reveal, rather, since it had mistakenly been believed to function through reference to real entities - an unfamiliar character. In the previous chapter we mentioned that the Bodhisattvas, the 'royal physicians', use language rather as one dispenses medicines and casts spells. Nietzsche envisages the true philosopher as creating and legislating those values and horizons within which the normal everyday proceeds,

-and as b r e e d i n g , superior m e n by means of suitably chosen 'doctrines'. The idea of the Eternal Recurrence, for instance, he explicitly held to be primarily a means of decision, separation, and cultivation; "wahr d.h. hier den Typus Mensch emporhebend ...".⁵⁴ Nietzsche is hardly interested in neutral 'truths'- if indeed there are such. "Ich s u c h e für mich und meines Gleichen den sonnigen Winkel inmitten der jetzt wirklichen Welt, jene sonnigen Vorstellungen, bei denen uns ein Überschuss von Wohl kommt. Möge dies jeder für sich tun und das Reden ins Allgemeine, für die 'Gesellschaft', beiseite lassen!"⁵⁵

The belief in a neutral 'truth' valid for all presupposes the possible separation of theory from practice. But this separation is possible only if independent bases can be found for each. A basis for theory independent of practice could be found only in beings. But what if precisely beings are nowhere to be encountered - nowhere, that is, apart from a specific practice i n t e r m s of which putative beings can be delineated and in tacit reference to which concepts can have meaning? Nietzsche was acutely aware of the strange fact that the concept of a being needs for its meaningfulness as well as for its 'truth' to refer not to a being but to a certain practice, i.e. to a specific ongoing individuated will to power. Consequently, a 'purely' theoretical investigation really amounts to l i v i n g by two standards. This is, perhaps, defensible in the case of the scientist, but never in the philosopher. The latter he exhorts,

"Not to live with two different standards!- Not to separate theory and practice"⁵⁶

Even though Nietzsche saw that his own task was still more critical than creative, more preparatory than legislative -to be a 'prelude to a philosophy of the future', -in his s c e p s i s he knew his time had come. But a scepticism, too, just as well as the creative and medical use of language in the absence of being, can proceed only if it is sure of its path - though not necessarily of its stations or goal-, its morality, its virtù, by other means than the reliance on truths. If we define scepticism as that morality of truthfulness which does not presume -neither in thought nor in action- that any truth can be found and which is nevertheless sure of its path without falling into mere arbitrary self-assertion or into "that mobile scepticism which leaps impatiently and lasciviously from branch to branch"⁵⁷, then Nietzsche is not only a sceptic but t h e sceptic after the Pyrrhonists and after Montaigne. But his scepticism is not a s c e p t i c i s m ; the scepticist -to use a word distinguishing him from the sceptic- "being a delicate creature, is frightened all too easily; ...Yes and No - that goes against his morality;"^{57a} "For scepticism is the most spiritual expression of ... nervous exhaustion and sickness;... balance, a center of gravity, and perpendicular poise are lacking in (his) body and soul."^{57b} Whereas Nietzsche seeks, and by all means attempts to live, "the scepticism of audacious manliness"

which "does not believe but does not lose itself in the process",^{57c}
 and which is certainly "beyond the bourgeois ... Yes and No"^{57a}
 but not for that reason averse to living, to thinking, or - to
 commanding. "But what we get hold of is no longer anything
 questionable but rather decisions. ... I am the first who is
 a b l e to decide."⁵⁸ Therefore Nietzsche -the sceptic-
 is not inconsistent when he admits, "The formula for our
 happiness: a Yes, a No, a straight line, a goal,"^{58a} for h i s
 Yes and No are not the assent to facts and values which those
 live who "chew pebbles (and) ..lie on their bellies before small
 round things (and) pray to everything that doesn't topple over"^{58b}
 but are the Yes and No of command and creation and of lovers'
 play.

The saving 'knowledge', then, seems to be less a knowledge
 of a saving thing or being, or of something ultimate and eternal
 by virtue of a relationship to which there is a cure from the ill
 of the ongoing world, than the morality of truthfulness, this
 ongoing "virile scepsis"^{58c} itself: that purity -or, perhaps, that
 good metabolism- which has freed itself both from the "whole
 virtuous uncleanness of the modern Yes and No",^{58d} from the
 'indigestion' of dogmatism, and from the 'diarrhea' of scepticism.
 'Saving knowledge' thus seems to be some sort of coming clear
 of precisely those 'many vain and overly enthusiastic interpretations...
 (which have overlaid) the eternal basic text of homo natura' rather

than a knowledge of anything that saves. Insofar as the 'saving knowledge' consists in a 'virile scep sis', and insofar as 'virile scep sis' is already the ongoing act of a health which is sure of its path without relying on any truths, the 'saving knowledge' is the action of health with, and with regard to, precisely that which constitutes the ill world's fetter and sickness. According to the same reasoning, the opposite of, the release from, superstition would not consist in a true belief or a better -e.g. a more scientific- theory instead of false beliefs or primitive theories but in a "grossartige E n t s a g u n g und ... (einem) fortwährenden S i e g ü b e r u n s",⁵⁹ namely, over our tendency to freeze "useful u n r e a l i t i e s"⁶⁰ into 'truths'.

Nietzsche's scep sis has for its purpose neither the spread of indifference nor the justification of wantonness nor, as for Descartes, the establishment of certainty. Its function is rather quasi-physiological: as if to restore a wholesome functioning to the organism; to promote circulation where it was blocked; to still bleeding and other excessive drainage; and to stimulate the appetite while remedying insatiability. Thus scep sis is both a means to and already itself the action of health, while it k n o w s no more - in the sense of referring itself to no entities or events beyond those which constitute the ongoing world and its ills - than the sick man does.

The morality of truthfulness, then, serves not the establishment of truths or the discovery of moralities but the bringing forth of the healthy man. "Let us not underestimate this: we ourselves, we free spirits, are ... an incarnate declaration of war and triumph over all the ancient conceptions of 'true' and 'untrue'." ⁶¹ Nietzsche's innermost will can therefore not be characterized as a will to truth, least of all as a will to determine the universe ultimately with regard to a fixed schema of *essentia* and *existentia*. His will, rather, as he himself says unambiguously, is "the act of a tremendous purification and consecration of humanity" which he attempts positively through teaching the overman, analytically and poetically through characterizing the overman's way of being from the inside, as it were, and negatively through a critique of those ways and concepts which constitute or express the illness of the ongoing customary world. Such an 'act of tremendous purification and consecration of humanity' is clearly not an act of metaphysics as metaphysics has traditionally understood itself.

In view of the word 'consecration', and in view of the great health consisting not in a restoration to but an overcoming of the customarily ongoing world, 'health' does not mean: health of man as we know man. The degree and kind of a man's health constitute his very substance. The healthy man is characterized by Nietzsche as a 'homo natura'. What kind of a 'substance', then, is 'natura'? Deliverance from revenge is the bridge to the

highest hope. Revenge is, therefore, in some sense the opposite of that 'substance' which nature is and which characterizes 'homo natura'. Revenge is the 'nature', the substance of the customarily ongoing world, that is, of man as we know man. Revenge is "the will's ill will against time and its 'it was'" ^{61a}. The will's ill will against time and its 'it was' is, then, the 'nature' of the ill world, the 'nature' of anti-nature or un-nature (Unnatur). As this un-nature it is the substance of unhealth.

The ongoing unhealth is also a debasement of man: this is implied by the word 'consecration'. Revenge exiles man both into ill and into ignobility.

Morality, ideals and time are the central elements in that unnature which constitutes the illness and debasement of the customarily ongoing world. But the deliverance from revenge, that is, from ill-will against time, is the very bridge itself to man's highest hope: to his consecration, to his health, and into his true nature.

How is man ill from time, or ill with time? In man as we know man "the will itself is still a prisoner". "'It was' - that is the name of the will's gnashing of teeth; ... That time does not run backwards, that is his wrath; ... and on all who can suffer he wreaks revenge for his inability to go backwards." ^{61b} The will imprisoned in time "redeems himself foolishly", that is, ignorantly and clumsily entangling himself only deeper in his

predicament. His predicament is that time goes against his will, that is to say, his will goes against time; "that which was' is the name of the stone he cannot move." So the will 'redeems himself foolishly', for instance, by taking to positing something eternal unchangeable - a cause, being, substance, good, justice, punishment- and attaching himself to these products of "man's best reflection" as if therein he had foiled time's covetousness. But "evil ... and misanthropic(is) all this teaching of the One and ... the Permanent" for they are mere palliatives against the will's wrath and displeasure and fail to redeem the will. How, then, can the will be freed from its prison and delivered from its foolishness? To "recreate all 'it was' into a 'thus I willed it' -that alone should I call redemption", 'Zarathustra' teaches. But who is this 'I' that can say: 'Thus I willed it'? Insofar as I am this particular individual I am subject to time and its 'it was': I am one of those 'it was'. Insofar as I am this particular individual, the will, who "is an angry spectator of all that is past", is also an angry spectator of my life. Thus, insofar as I take myself to be in truth, in original nature, this particular individual, that is, an objective fact -one of those which get described by 'it was' - I am unable to say: 'Thus I willed it', for I take the 'it', namely, myself, to be real as such already before any willing on my part. Consequently, I must s u f f e r my

passing away in the twofold sense of having to **endure it passive-ly** and of being an angry spectator of it. I as this particular individual can therefore never "redeem those who lived in the past and ... recreate all 'it was' into a 'thus I willed it'"⁶² for by taking myself as originally and truly this particular individual I have already turned myself, too, into an 'it was' who is thus in need of redemption himself. But to take myself to be this particular individual means: to ascribe 'my' will to myself as this individual. To ascribe 'my' will to myself presupposes taking myself as an 'it was', for if 'myself' were itself a creation of the will then this will could not be ascribed to 'myself', to its own creation. The will's ill will against time is thus a product of the will's being mine, more cautiously said: of the will's 'mineness'. One of the foolish ways in which this imprisoned will redeems himself is by positing an eternal soul as a compensation for the melancholy spectacle of seeing its 'mineness' pass away. In a similar way it is the author of "all this teaching of the One and the Plenum and the Unmoved and the Sated and the Permanent".

How can the will be unharnessed from his folly, freed from his prison, and how can he unlearn the spirit of revenge? Mere reconciliation of the will with time, that is, reconciliation of my will with time, presupposes and preserves the duality of

the 'mineness' of will and time. Such a reconciliation can be noble, like that of Montaigne, who says, "I am ready to let go of life without melancholy, but as something essentially elusive, not as something annoying, tedious."⁶³ It can also be mendacious and comfort itself with the idea of an eternal afterlife for oneself. But what is "higher than any reconciliation? For that will which is the will to power must will something higher than any reconciliation."^{63a} Higher than any reconciliation is the overcoming of the duality itself. But a duality can be overcome only if it is not an ultimate fact, only if it does not define the situation down to its deepest depth or up into its highest height, only if it is not a duality in truth or not at all levels of truth. The 'mineness' of the will is the will's prison, or perhaps we should say it is one of the walls of its prison, other walls being 'values' ("the great dragon... on (whose) every scale shines a golden 'thou shalt'"),⁶⁴ 'facts', 'truth', 'man's (special) nature', and the separation of opposites. 'Mineness' can be overcome only by not ascribing the will to 'myself' and ascribing 'myself', instead, to the will. Once again, we are confronted with a "terrifying Either/Or: 'Either abolish your reverences or - y o u r s e l v e s'","^{64a} for it is manifestly impossible to abolish time in order to overcome the fatal duality. The reverence in question here is that of the custom - a custom at once grammatical, cultural, and intensely emotional - of

ascribing the will to 'myself', of conceiving myself as the author of my actions.* "The latter" -to abolish ourselves- "would be nihilism; but would not the former also be - nihilism? This is o u r question mark."^{64b}

Even if the will is no longer to be ascribed to 'myself', but rather the other way around, "it is not at all necessary to get rid of 'the soul' at the same time ... -as happens frequently to clumsy naturalists who can hardly touch on 'the soul' without immediately losing it."^{64c} Instead, "the way is open for new versions and refinements of the soul-hypothesis"^{64d}. Should 'myself', then, and the world that concerns me, be fictions? "And if somebody asked, 'but to a fiction there surely belongs an author?' - couldn't one answer simply: w h y ? Doesn't this 'belongs' perhaps belong to the fiction, too? Is it not permitted to be a bit ironical about the subject no less than the predicate and object? Shouldn't philosophers be permitted to rise above faith in grammar?"^{64e} And, above other reverences too? Perhaps to abolish our reverences need not be nihilism but could be-philosophy and other uncanny ways 'beyond the bourgeois Yes and No'?

In any case, the 'I' that is able to say 'thus I willed it' cannot be 'myself' as this mortal individual, nor as 'my eternal soul' for that one is only mendaciously added on to the passing spectacle by the speculative ill-will against time. Since the will

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This reverence has even been enshrined in a 'necessary postulate of practical reason' by Kant as the autonomy of the will in rational beings.

in 'thus I willed it' is not to be ascribed to any 'myself' if the will is to be redeemed, the will must be simply itself. The will itself must thus be understood as prior to any 'myself'. As prior to any 'myself' and as the 'one' for whom all 'it was' is a 'thus I willed it' the will is prior to time. But what is the nature of a will that no longer acts in time, which is therefore free from ill will against time, and which creates both the truth of entities and the individual who in turn claims the will as his own, thereby subjecting himself to time and plunging into revenge? Then, what is the nature of time? And, is it that will, perhaps, which is our original nature, or an aspect of it? If it is then it is clear how 'mineness' cannot be thought for our original nature. In that case 'that which is higher than any reconciliation', namely, the overcoming of the duality of the 'mineness' of will and time, the redemption from revenge, cannot be accomplished within the customarily ongoing world. It cannot be accomplished there for that world is based on the ascription of will to 'myself' and therewith on the melancholy which is inseparable from the will's being imprisoned in time. The imprisonment in time being due to the ascription of will to 'myself', the accumulation of data, the improvement of theories, the rectification of beliefs, or the correction of calculations within the ongoing customary world of 'myself' and time is impotent to deliver man over to his original nature, cannot 'translate (or ferry) man back into the

eternal basic text of homo natura'. But, since the phenomenon of 'mineness' cannot be thought for our original nature if that nature is the will itself, 'the eternal text of homo natura' does precisely not signify an eternal essence belonging to u s , a Platonic pattern of m a n . In other words, man's nature is 'the same' -if 'sameness' may be said of what is prior to any entity- as that of any other animal or thing. Wherein, then, do animals, men and things differ? They differ in what is being willed in and through them. Nietzsche speaks of the 'what' of these differences as 'quanta' and 'ranks' of power.⁶⁵ However, these differences do not 'belong' to men, animals, or things because the will is not 'theirs', is not ascribed to them. Thus acknowledging 'the same' nature in man as in all other beings, man is able to stand "with intrepid Oedipus-eyes and sealed Odysseus-ears, deaf to the siren songs of old metaphysical bird catchers who have been piping at him all too long, 'you are more, you are higher, you are of a different origin!'"^{65a} But it is not only the will that is faultily ascribed to 'myself': consciousness, too, is not 'mine', i.e. there is no 'one' continuing through or underlying it; there is no 'one' underlying the series. As Omar Khayaam says in his Rubaiyyat : this costly spectacle is shown to no one; -and yet shown it is.⁶⁶ Again, we are encouraged in this conclusion when in Candrakīrti's previously quoted Prasannapadā we read that "the way of

attaining reality ... is the utter cessation of the 'I'

and the 'mine'".⁶⁷ 'Myself' is an extremely complex unity,
in whose movements "gibt es keine Einheit 'welche strebt'" .⁶⁸

As a matter of fact, "All unity is unity only as organization and cooperation, as a pattern of domination that signifies a unity but is not a unity."⁶⁹ And, "the interpretation itself (which conceives of unities) is a form of the will to power".⁷⁰

The experience of the illusion of 'willing' and 'myself' as unity is at the basis of our categories of our false understanding: entity, causality, substance. Just as in the case of positing an underlying 'myself', "If I say 'lightning flashes', I have posited the flash once as activity and a second time as a subject, and thus added to the event a being that is not one with the event but is rather fixed, is , ... To regard an event as an 'effecting', and this as being, that is the double error, or interpretation, of which we are guilty."⁷¹

We have seen how time is a central element in man's false nature (Unnatur). Tied up with the suffering from time are the ascription of will to 'myself', that is, the belief in myself as the author or cause of my actions, and the notion that man has a different or higher origin or nature than animals or things. The prevalence and the seeming 'need' of ideals in order for man to be man express this latter notion. But perhaps there is a sense in which ideals contribute to the ruin of man rather than

to his virtù, elevation or redemption! "Mein Schlusssatz ist: dass der w i r k l i c h e Mensch einen viel höheren Wert darstellt als der 'wünschbare' Mensche irgend eines bisherigen Ideals; ... dass das Ideal bis jetzt die eigentlich welt- und menschverleumdende Kraft, der Gifthauch über der Realität, die grosse V e r f ü h r u n g z u m N i c h t s war..."⁷²

The most decisive oversight of the ideal is typically the neglect of the bodily reality of man. The bodily reality suggests a proximity between men, animals and things which those ideals that suppose a higher or different origin or nature in man must deny. But since it cannot be denied in the body those ideals are forced to speak of an immaterial soul whose nature is separate from and higher than that of the body. Consequently, the needs and natural movements of the body are not those of the immaterial soul, and, being different, are in conflict with it. In this conflict the soul's needs and demands are reckoned as having priority even though this priority is rarely enacted with consistency. But even though the theoretical -or theological- priority of the soul over the body is usually not enacted with consistency the conflict is sufficient to disturb the integrity of the bodily reality of man. The higher rank of man's status being theoretically -theologically- derived from his immaterial soul the very conception of what constitutes bodily integrity therefore is usually separated from man's highest functioning, that is to say, is constructed in disregard of man's

uniqueness and special possibilities of value, from a comparison with animals and things alone. Thus, under the influence of the ideal man's bodily integrity comes to be conceived narrowly in analogy with beings other than himself, namely, in analogy, on the one hand, with beings whose nature he is believed to share with regard to his body, and, on the other hand, with beings- or a being- whose nature he is believed to share in his soul. Thus, instead of regarding all beings as having the same nature the ideal - the idealist - regards man as having two natures: that of the animal and things, and that of immaterial beings. As a result man's bodily integrity is first conceived in a false analogy with that of animals and things and then, under this conception, gains ascendancy in men's thinking as the belief in man's immaterial nature dwindles. The belief in a higher or different origin or nature of man thus has the curious consequence that man is regarded either in total neglect of his bodily being or in purely material terms, i.e. in strict analogy with animals and inanimate things. The latter view, however, of necessity derives its concept of "nature" exclusively from a contemplation of animals and inanimate things, which concept is then adduced to make scientific 'sense' of man. Through a peculiar dialectic the belief in a separate nature of man results in a denial of man, but a nature whose concept denies - because excludes - everything specifically human. This r e d u c t i o n of man

is then hailed as an overcoming of the old superstitious anthropocentrism. Thus the attempted elevation of man by the ideal through assigning to him a special nature results in the debasement of man through a dialectical assimilation of man's nature to that of all other beings whose nature, in turn, has been conceived by the methodical omission of what reveals itself specifically through man, such as: will to power, luminous eternity, joy, absence of being. In consequence, the concept of the nature of beings other than man - animals, plants, minerals, planets, etc. - also incorporates a debasement of these beings just because their nature has been construed as if separate from that which most clearly and specifically manifests itself in man but which in man has been assigned to his special nature.

Once the belief in man's immaterial nature has lost its force in the life of man his nature appears debased in its unabashed analogy to animals and inanimate things, since their nature, in turn, is excluded from participation in that which formerly had been assigned to man's immaterial separate nature. "The l i e of the ideal has so far been the curse on reality; on account of it, mankind has become itself mendacious and false down to its most fundamental instincts - to the point of worshipping the o p p o s i t e values of those which alone would guarantee its health, its future, the lofty r i g h t to its future."⁷³

In view of this link between man's debasement, man's unhealth

-due to his false concept of bodily integrity-, and man's idealism -his belief in his separate nature and his reliance on ideals to support the claims of his higher nature against those of the body, more accurately, against the claims resulting from the falsely construed bodily integrity-, the 'consecration of man', his recovery into the great health, and the achievement of a true concept of his nature -or at any rate the release from all false concepts of it, as opposed to all ideals supposing man to be 'more, higher, of a different origin'- are inseparable tasks.

The deliverance from revenge is therefore the bridge to man's highest hope in that, teaching him 'reconciliation with time and something higher than any reconciliation', it overcomes the mendaciousness both of the belief in a separate nature or origin of man and of the correlate narrow, debased concept of nature; that is to say, it overcomes both idealism and materialism:

"matter is as much of an error as the God of the Eleatics."⁷⁴

After both man and nature have been freed from their false concepts it is possible to "begin to 'naturalize' humanity in terms of a pure, newly discovered, newly redeemed nature"⁷⁵

which, however, is as far from the scientific concept of nature as it is from the Christian concept of creation.

Morality, next to time and idealism, is the third element in the trinity of man's unnature. "Morality" in Nietzsche's parlance usually connotes that way of thinking which projects its

concept of value opposites into the being of things, events and acts. Its logical extreme is therefore Manicheism. "Diese Denkweise, mit der ein bestimmter Typus Mensch gezüchtet wird, geht von jener absurden Voraussetzung aus: sie nimmt das Gute und das Böse als Realitäten, die mit sich im Widerspruch sind (n i c h t als complementäre Wertbegriffe, was die Wahrheit wäre), sie rät die Partei des Guten zu nehmen, sie verlangt, dass der Gute dem Bösen bis in die letzte Wurzel entsagt und widerstrebt, - s i e v e r n e i n t d a m i t t a t s ä c h l i c h d a s L e b e n , welches in allen seinen Instinkten sowohl das Ja wie das Nein hat. Nicht dass sie dies begriffe: sie träumt umgekehrt davon, zur Ganzheit, zur Einheit, zur Stärke des Lebens zurückzukehren..."⁷⁶

Nietzsche calls this way of thinking and living "the hemiplegia of virtue"⁷⁷ because it denies the inextricable mixture of good and evil in all things, in life itself, and therefore demands of man "dass der Mensch sich an jenen Instinkten verschneidet, mit denen er Feind sein kann, schaden kann, zürnen kann, Rache heischen kann..."⁷⁸ It is a hemiplegia in that 'half' of all existence, and, as part of it, 'half' of man -namely, that half which can do evil - is paralyzed in order to prevent the enacting of evil. Its presupposition is that good and evil things and actions have different natures. Insofar as it regards as evil that which harms man its presupposition is that evil -that which

harms man- is less, lower, or of a different origin than man,
 With the way of ideals, then, it shares the belief that that
 which furthers man in his specific humanity and realizes his good
 is of a different nature than that which harms man or is indifferent
 to his values. But since life itself so obviously consists in the
 unabashed thriving of a luxurious diversity of beings and impulses
 most of which are either harmful or indifferent to man's good
 the moral way of thinking -and living-, "jene Erkrankung und
 ideologische Unnatur welche diese Doppelheit ablehnt",⁷⁹ must
 suppose that life and man's good not only have different natures
 but conflict. In this conflict morality teaches that man ought
 to obey the imperatives of the good rather than the instincts
 of life. These instincts, by virtue of the assumption of separate
 -and therefore conflicting- natures in good and evil, are assumed
 to be either incidental or plainly opposed to man's good and as
 such inessential to or detracting from man's realization of it.
 Being inessential, at best, for and detracting from, at worst,
 man's achievement of his true good the logically moral strategy
 is to cultivate a profound and 'instinctive' distrust of life's
 own movements as well as either a habitual repression of the
 instincts in favor of acting morally or a cold-bloodedly
 Machiavellian manipulation of life's instincts in order to achieve
 the moral good. Kant postulated not only the concept of a causal
 self and the belief in man's separate and higher nature but also
 the logically moral strategy as 'enlightened truths'. For reasons

such as these Nietzsche said of him: "The instinct which errs without fail, a n t i - n a t u r e as instinct, German decadence⁸⁰ as philosophy - t h a t i s K a n t !"

When a moral world order cannot be substantiated, however, man's nature comes to be assimilated again, by a dialectic similar to that in the case of idealism, to that of all other beings and events. The concept of nature, however, under which these other beings and events are subsumed still incorporates the slander and denial of man's distinctive good woven into it by idealism and morality. For instance, "We misunderstand the beast of prey and the man of prey (for example, Cesare Borgia) thoroughly, we misunderstand 'nature', as long as we still look for something 'pathological' at the bottom of those healthiest of all tropical monsters and growths, or even some 'hell' that⁸¹ is supposed to be innate in them" Since the tradition of 'looking for something 'pathological' at the bottom of all tropical⁸² monsters' goes back to the venerable Plato, if not further, the whole of our customary judgment, sentiment, and outlook bearing a decisive idealist-moralistic slant, "die Entmenschung der Natur und dann die Vernatürllichung des Menschen, nachdem er den reinen⁸³ Begriff 'Natur' gewonnen hat" still remains a task which has not only sentiment, habit, 'culture' and philosophy but also language against itself.

Here too the deliverance from revenge acts as the bridge

to a reconvalence from time-honored errors - which have become the very basis of 'culture' - inasmuch as it leads to the abandonment of the view of separate natures in men, animals and all other beings and events, and therewith to the dissolution of the conception of good and evil as realities, as beings or events of different natures. The "good and the evil action cannot be called good and evil in themselves, but only in the perspective of what tends to preserve certain types of human communities".⁸⁴ All beings and events, good and evil, human and non-human, have the same nature. In that alone already there lies a certain release from the paranoia of the 'good man' who "sieht sich wie umringt vom Bösen und unter dem beständigen Ansturm des Bösen".⁸⁵ The resulting calm after the storm of the moral world order has subsided brings on "a kind of s e c o n d i n n o c e n c e".⁸⁶ Moreover, the release from revenge and from the paranoia of the 'good man' for the first time also reveals the possibility of a t r a n s m u t a t i o n of 'evil' into 'good', a possibility which Plato, for instance, saw only in the direction from 'good' to 'evil' - such as the philosopher's strong nature being corrupted by bad circumstances and becoming the source of greater evil than any weaker nature would be capable of - but not in the direction from 'evil' to 'good', as is evidenced by his insistence in The Republic on a one-sided diet of 'good' impressions for the city's youth. The sameness of the

nature of all things means that each thing does not have an own nature, that is, d o e s n o t h a v e i t s e l f f o r i t s n a t u r e : things and arrangements do not have eternal duplicates or warranties à la Plato's Ideas.

The nature of all beings and events being the same, it follows that what "mankind has so far considered seriously" -namely, good and evil, 'the nature of man', self- "have not even been realities but mere imaginings."⁸⁷ That is, "Not t h i n g s but opinions a b o u t t h i n g s t h a t a r e n o t e v e n t h e r e have so disturbed and upset⁸⁸ (verstört) man!", have turned him into 'the sick animal' - but also into m a n -: "It is by invisible hands that we are bent and tortured words."⁸⁹

But as we have already said with regard to the motives of Nietzsche's scepticism it would not only miss his point but would misunderstand his thinking into the very opposite of its purpose to suppose that this second innocence and the thesis of the sameness of the nature of all things is to serve as a licence for all that is bad, for all the "wild dogs (that) want freedom ... (and) bark with joy in their cellar when your spirit plans to open all prisons."⁹⁰ The dissolution of the moral world order does not neutralize all value distinctions: "Beyond Good and Evil ... this does not mean 'Beyond Good and Bad'."⁹¹ On the contrary, "there is nobody from whom I want beauty as much as

from you who are powerful: let your kindness be your final self-conquest. Of all evil I deem you capable: therefore I want the good from you."⁹²

The purpose of the realization of the sameness of the nature of all beings and events is not the untrammelled growth of monsters finally freed from the inconvenient constraints of morality but is to provide a basis for the dualistically impossible redemption of the fundamental unhealth and conflicts in man. Man "subdued monsters, he solved riddles: but he must still redeem his own monsters and riddles, changing them into heavenly children."⁹³ Even "the liberated spirit must still purify himself. Much prison and mustiness still remain in him: his eyes must still become pure."⁹⁴ "Nur dem v e r e d e l t e n M e n s c h e n d a r f d i e F r e i h e i t d e s G e i s t e s gegeben werden; ... er zuerst darf sagen, dass er um der F r e u d i g k e i t willen lebe und um keines weiteren Zieles willen".⁹⁵ By the same token the abandonment of the view of different natures in beings and events serves not a -social or metaphysical- egalitarian desire but the p a t h o s o f d i s t a n c e. "Chief viewpoint: establish d i s t a n c e s but c r e a t e n o a n t i t h e s e s."⁹⁶ For it is precisely the customary living under time, ideals and morality which not only does not permit the redemption of the monsters and dogs in man but also everywhere creates false equalities between men, actions, and events as well as between different expressions of

oneself such that they get referred to one and the same 'I',
-and then exacts loyalties to these false equalities and entities.

The most important distances to be opened, however, are
'i n s i d e' man: "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', the continual
'self-overcoming of man', to use a moral formula in a supra-
moral sense."⁹⁷ "Precisely in this width of space and this

accessibilitiy for what is contradictory, Zarathustra experiences
himself as the s u p r e m e t y p e o f a l l b e i n g s".⁹⁸

The loyalty to false unities and equalities, especially to the
putatively solid 'I', makes not only the reconvalescence from
man's sickness but also the attainment of greatness impossible:
for the pathos of distance, in turn, serves to prevent the higher
-most importantly, the higher 'i n' man- from degrading itself
to becoming an instrument of the lower. Within the pathos of
distance the task is: "Das neue Grosse nicht über sich, nicht
ausser sich sehen, sondern aus ihm eine neue Funktion unser
selbst machen."⁹⁹

This is possible only once the pathos of
distance has dissolved the indiscriminate idolatry of 'I'. The
pathos of distance pulls the rug out from underneath any sort
of humanism, less in order to assert differences b e t w e e n
men than to explode the idolatrous unity of 'man' and 'I' so as
to reopen the question of the relations of supremacy 'w i t h i n'

man. It is first as an expression of these 'inner' relations of supremacy that there are decisive differences b e t w e e n men.

The destruction of the view of different natures in men and other beings opens the possibility of transmutation and leads to the pathos of distance. Thus it is able to undermine the indiscriminate and mendacious worship of 'man' that has dominated and blinded Western politics and philosophy since Machiavelli, to name a distinctive landmark, and to reopen, for the first time since the Greeks, the q u e s t i o n of the highest good and of man's destiny. Under the rule of time, ideals and morality man is incapable either of true virtue -"virtù ... that is moraline-¹⁰⁰ free"-or of true greatness, greatness that is not merely the astounding spectacle of "an inverse cripple", such as that of¹⁰¹ "an ear as big as a man".

Deliverance from revenge, through the release from the prison of time, truth, ideals and morality is, in Nietzsche's view, the event necessary for a cure from that sickness and smallness which is the customarily ongoing world, which i s the 'Mensch' to be overcome. The deliverance from revenge, however, is not a simple 'event' but an extremely complex process precisely since revenge "has so far been man's best reflection"¹⁰² and has infiltrated all movements of human existence through the proliferation of its false consolations, poisonous palliatives, distorting concepts, desperate hopes, and ideals. The recovery

of intellectual probity (Redlichkeit) after a solid history of mendaciousness and misguided cruelty in the name of 'truth' -both moral and metaphysical- is a more than Herculean task. That which is 'higher than any reconciliation' is not to be achieved in a wink: every atom, so to speak, of human existence must be purified and realigned, however subtly, in the process of translating and ferrying man back into nature. This reconvalence is necessarily the transition to a different type of man. At the same time, the difference cannot be defined morally, in terms of ideals (Wünschbarkeiten), biologically-materially (scientifically, n a m e l y , in terms of the distorted concept of nature which remains over from the dualism after its ideal part has been abolished), historically (in terms of temporal events or 'inevabilities'), or metaphysically (in terms of relations to a transcendent being or of knowing transcendental truths). In other words, the entire customary language, both philosophical, theological scientific and everyday is incapable of rendering a concept of the type of man who is free from ressentiment and from its moral and other expressions. This suggests that language, as well as the capacity for sentiment and vision, is inseparable from a specific way of life, that is, from a type of being. And we turn to ponder once again that guess which Nietzsche formulated in the preface to The Joyful Wisdom : that "what was at stake in all philosophizing hitherto was not at all 'truth' but something else - let us say, health, future, growth

power, life",¹⁰³ -and that means: for a particular ongoing existence, that is, type of man, in each case. If a type of man, a particular ongoing existence, is defined, in each case, by its 'i n n e r' relations of supremacy -or by its lack of discrimination in that respect- then it follows that all philosophizing hitherto was a self-articulation of a type of relations of supremacy with a view to expanding its dominion. Conversely, a radical change of doctrines would require a different ~~for~~m of existence if life is not to perish. A suitable form of doctrine, then, will not only articulate the man of the great health but will also put such strain and pressure on 'the sick animal' as to force him to certain fundamental political, physiological and practical decisions. "It is only beginning with me that the earth knows g r e a t p o l i t i c s", writes Nietzsche, "But my truth is t e r r i b l e; for so far one has called l i e s truth."¹⁰⁴ In what words, then, does the new form of existence, the great health, speak for itself?

- 1) J 230
- 2) WKG VIII₃ 15(73)
- 3) CBT, p.74: Majjima-nikāya I 8
- 4) Pra-XXII 443
- 5) Cūla-Mālunkya Sutta I 431-432
- 6) CBT, p.80: Samyutta-nikāya I 134-135
- 7) J 34
- 8) CBT, p.70: Itivuttaka
- 9) Pra-XXV 541
- 10) Aṣṭ, p.92: I 25
- 11) Aṣṭ, pp.98-99: II 38-40
- 12) Pra-XXV 538
- 13) ibid., 540
- 14) Pra-XXII 443
- 15) CBT, p.104: Anguttara-nikāya II 37-39
- 16) Aṣṭ, p.9: I 5
- 17) Pra-XII 244
- 18) CBT, p.71: Samyutta-nikāya II 65-66
- 19) CBT, p.79: Dhammapada 153-154
- 20) CBT, p.93: Suttanipata 1093-1094
- 21) Pra-XXIV 492
- 22) Pra-XXIII 469
- 23) Pra-XXIV 493
- 24) Pra-XV 276.3
- 25) Pra-XXV 523
- 26) ibid., 537
- 27) ibid., 535
- 28) ibid., 536
- 29) Pra-XII 241
- 30) ibid.
- 31) Pra-XV 271
- 32) ibid., 272
- 33) Pra-XVIII 346
- 34) Pra-XXII 444
- 35) Aṣṭ, p.99: II 41
- 36) Pra-XII 247
- 37) ibid.
- 38) Pra-XV 387
- 39) ibid.
- 40) Pra-XV 264.4
- 41) Pra-XXV 529
- 42) ibid. 535
- 43) Pra-XII 247
- 44) ibid.
- 45) Pra-XII 237
- 45a) J 230
- 45b) J 230
- 46) WKG V₂ 11(77)
- 47) St. Augustine, Contra Academicos III
- 48) For instance J 36 and J 186
- 49) M-Preface 4
- 50) WM 603
- 51) WM 520
- 52) J 34
- 52a) GM-III 24
- 52b) GM-III 27
- 53) "Versuch einer Selbstkritik" der
"Geburt der Tragödie", Kröner p.32
- 54) WKG VIII₃ 14(6)
- 55) WKG V₂ 11(38)
- 56) WM 458
- 57) J 208
- 57a) J 208
- 57b) ibid.
- 57c) J 209
- 57d) J 34
- 58) EH-TOTI 2
- 58a) AC 1
- 58b) WKG VIII₃ 20(135)
- 58c) J 209
- 58d) AC 1
- 59) WKG V₂ 12(9)

- 60) WM 711
- 61) AC 13
- 61a) EH-BT 4
- 61b) Z-II On Redemption
- 61c) ibid.
- 61d) ibid.
- 61e) ibid.
- 62) ibid.
- 63) **Montaigne, Essays III 12**
- 63a) Z-II On Redemption
- 64) Z-I On the three Metamorphoses
- 64a) FW 346
- 64b) ibid.
- 64c) J 12
- 64d) ibid.
- 64e) J 34
- 65) WM 1024
- 65a) J 230
- 66) Stanza # 57
- 67) Pra-XVIII 340
- 68) WKG VIII₃ 22(20)
- 69) WM 561
- 70) WM 556
- 71) WM 531
- 72) WKG VIII₂ 11(118)
- 73) EH-Preface 2
- 74) FW 109
- 75) ibid.
- 76) WKG VIII₃ 15(113)
- 77) ibid.
- 78) ibid.
- 79) ibid.
- 80) AC 11
- 81) J 197
- 82) Republic IX
- 83) WKG V₂ 11(211)
- 84) WM 789
- 85) WKG VIII₃ 15(113)
- 86) GM-II 20
- 87) EH-WIASC 10
- 88) M 563
- 89) Z-I On the Tree on the Mountainside
- 90) ibid.
- 91) GM-I 17
- 92) Z-II On Those who are Sublime
- 93) ibid.
- 94) Z-I On the Tree on the Mountainside
- 95) MA ii ii 350
- 96) WM 891
- 97) J 257
- 98) EH-Z 6
- 99) WKG V₂ 13(19)
- 100) AC 2
- 101) Z-II On Redemption
- 102) ibid.
- 103) FW-Preface 2
- 104) EH-WIAAD 1

IV. "I have presented such terrible images to knowledge
that any 'Epicurean delight' is out of the question.
Only Dionysian joy is sufficient ..."*

"... this victor over God and nothingness - h e
m u s t c o m e o n e d a y."**

Man's illness has shown itself to
reside in the difference between the
fact of man and the truth of man.
The cure -both the overman and the
Bodhisattva- consists in embodying
the truth of existence while creating
and playing its facts and values

* WM 1029

** GM II 24

Our present explorations embarked on the experiment of suspecting a basic unsoundness, rather than a lack of knowledge, goals, meaning, resources or values, at the center of 'the human predicament'. Leaning on the discoveries of Nietzsche and the Buddhists we discerned a fundamental falseness in ordinary existence; we saw that the customarily ongoing world is a false relationship to the truth of existence. We also acknowledged that we suffer from this false relationship in as much as while we are in thrall to it our own nature -- or rather, that which under the spell of that relationship we take to be our nature -- is essentially denied by the nature of the world as it is experienced and comprehended in that relationship (time), even though this suffering is normally unconscious and expressed only in miseries with a -- seemingly -- concrete occasion, and 'is a truth only for the wise'.

We can now venture a reasoned answer to the question we asked at the beginning: Is it a lack of the right goals or values, or a scarcity of resources, or an insufficiency of organization or knowledge which generates 'the human predicament', so that progress in these and related areas would imply a gradual reduction of 'the predicament', perhaps asymptotically tending to its complete resolution in the future, granting good will, social stability and hard work? On the other hand, if such lacks are not the kernel

of 'the predicament' and progress is not its solution, why are they not?

The essence of our answer is immediately clear: the adherence to projects and values, to the manipulation of resources and the reliance on organization and knowledge not only fail to come to grips with the basic falseness of ongoing existence but entrench us more deeply in it by remaining captive of that type of existence which is maintained through reliance on the concept of being and 'the view that the person is real'. 'Progress' and 'improvements' provide 'the sick animal' with further toys, distractions, palliatives and intoxications but fail to ferry it over (zurückübersetzen) into its original nature and great health. In Buddhist parlance, all 'improvements' are duhkha, and from Nietzsche's point of view they are the proliferating and increasingly complicated expressions of resentment and decadence.

Illness can not be defined, according to what we have said, simply by pains or other objective processes. By the same token, it is not the bare objective fact itself of those concrete activities considered to be 'improvements' that condemns them to being mere ramifications of the ongoing 'predicament' and translations of it into up-to-date dilemmas. Rather, it is the *r e l i a n c e* that is placed on these ramifications, namely, the reliance on them with regard to

and for the sake of adequately encountering, recognizing, extending our sensibilities into, understanding and dealing with the human 'predicament' that renders them mere extensions of the illness. That reliance condemns all reform and 'progress' to be mere complications of the 'predicament' because, as we have seen, the elements and systems of everyday existence when taken to constitute and articulate the truth of existence are the currents and nodes and body of man's unhealth, untruth and antinature (Unnatur), are the ill and deluded man himself. The reliance on progress is a systematic side-stepping of the task of attaining the great health and of the "'Hinaufkommen' - in die starke sonnen-reine furchtbare Natur und Natürlichkeit des Menschen, welche mit grossen Aufgaben spielen darf, weil sie an Kleinem müde würde und Ekel empfände."¹ In other words, the reliance on progress -- of knowledge, organization, technology, and the rest of modern man's pride -- is a substitute for the man that is necessary, for the man who is the incarnate resolution of the 'predicament'. The reliance on certainty, values and facts substitutes for the adequate man a herd animal, a laughable creature who is not one but many. This reliance continues that "'selflessness' -- that ... was hitherto called 'morality', continues 'the morality that would unself man'.² The search for meaning and values deserts living in exchange for obedience

to a cause, and freedom in exchange for conformity to law: rather than live one wishes to serve a cause, i.e. be the effect of a cause. It is neither reason nor life that seeks ultimate values and ends but it is wanting-to-support-one's-life-by-certain-fixities which seeks them. "The 'believer' does not belong to himself, he can only be a means, he must be u s e d u p, he requires somebody to use him up."³ In effect, the quest for support in new values, socio-economic improvements, technical innovations and additional knowledge equates truth with what gets articulated through the ongoing everyday, and good with the desirable achievements of that existence -- a fallacy which Plato never tired of attacking.

But if we do not follow the ideology of positive thinking -- 'positive' both in the sense of persuading ourselves that we are ultimately successful when we achieve the goods of the ongoing everyday, as well as in the sense of conceiving and planning that success exclusively through positive concepts, that is, concepts which assume ultimate entities and processes involving beings -- and if negative thinking is only too obviously a cul-de-sac, then what remains to be done? By means of scepticism we have recognized an irremediable falseness in the concepts and assumptions supporting the transactions of the customarily ongoing existence. Is it possible to extract ourselves from that falseness by means of the very same scepticism? But what would an

"extraction" amount to if it is not the attainment of some certainty about something somewhere, the provision of some basis, however modest? Has our scepticism, irreproachable though it may be as an uncompromising morality of truthfulness, transported us into the desert of nihilism instead of ferrying us over into the great health and 'the basic text of homo natura'?

In the transition from our initial naïve realism and its associated fantastic metaphysical exaggerations and moralistic distortions there is a stage at which the very falseness itself of what had hitherto been reckoned to be real is reified, taken for an answer to the questions which one has not yet relinquished, and proclaimed as the ultimate principle. As Candrakīrti says, "one who, not seeing the due distinction between the two truths (that is, between the conventional and the ultimate truth) in this way, grasps at the lack of self-existence in all composite things and dwells on it, eager for liberation, either he imagines that all composite things do not truly exist or that the absence of self-existence in them itself exists like a thing (kāmcid bhāva-tas)."⁴ Certainly, such "an experimental philosophy" as Nietzsche lived it "anticipates experimentally even the possibilities of the most fundamental nihilism".⁵ At that stage falseness is taken in isolation from that whose falseness it is, is seized upon as (if) itself a concrete given

and treated as one's support. But his one-sided position is even more insidious than that of the original naïve realism together with its metaphysical and moral pendants. "Being feeble-minded is destroyed by the misunderstood doctrine of the absence of being in things, as by a snake ineptly seized or some secret knowledge wrongly applied", says Nāgārjuna,⁶ while Nietzsche speaks of "the ravages worked by 'l'habitude d'admirer l'inintelligible au lieu de rester tout simplement dans l'inconnu'"⁷. Nihilism consists in the grasping hand (or rather, mind) finding nothing -- and taking Nothing to be what it found! It is the stage where the new second-level insight into the falseness of the everyday eats away at and dissolves things, sentiments and knowledge presented by the remnant of one's naïve realism as fast as they arise and actually prevents the experience of their true-- rather than their metaphysically adulterated -- concreteness. Just like naïve realism and its associated metaphysical elaborations, this stage too is a distortion of the actual truth, but a distortion in the reverse direction, so to speak. It is a sort of self-consciousness on the part of falseness, the stage where things-not-being-what-they-used-to-be spoils one's joy and innocence with them. In Zen Buddhism this is called the phase of when "mountains are no longer mountains". But though Nietzsche's experimental philosophy anticipates the

most fundamental nihilism, "this does not mean that it must halt at a negation, a No, a will to negation."⁸ The insight matures such that the negative is seen in the positive while the positivity of the positive is by all means acknowledged without, however, as in the previous naive realism and its metaphysical appendices, being exaggerated into a positive behind the positive, into a reality behind the concrete one. The solidity of the world in naïve realism was actually based on a metaphysical overshooting of the actual concreteness. It overlooked the real nature of concreteness which is not once more (like) the solidity of things. Only between the two extremes of metaphysically hardened solidity and nihilistically dissolved actuality is a genuine supportedness and concreteness to be found which is not the fantastical, theoretically exaggerated 'reality' of the first "mountains are mountains" stage. By the same token the nihilistic denial of value measures the concrete nature of preciousness with its former metaphysically inflated standard -- and naturally finds it lacking. Nietzsche thought that "wenn man den Wert falsch angesetzt hat, so erscheint, bei der Einsicht in diese Falschheit, die Welt entwertet".⁹ "Conclusion: The faith in the categories of reason is the cause of nihilism. We have measured the value of the world according to categories that refer to a purely fictitious

w o r l d."¹⁰ Nihilism breaks out because "das ausgelöschte Jenseits schickt dem schlecht Entzauberten einzig Kälte herüber; es verstärkt seinen Abstand vom Realen, ... das Leben, das Handeln total entwertend."¹¹

The only one, according to Nietzsche, who steers clear of this wicked dilemma, of both the ill everyday -- the world of 'positive' thinking -- and the fatal nihilist reaction, is the overman. The purpose of scepticism and of 'anticipating experimentally the most fundamental nihilism' is not, as with Descartes and others, the location of reasonable beliefs or rockbottom certainties -- "Not doubt, c e r t a i n t y is what drives one insane "¹² -- but is to make the overman n e c e s s a r y: for man, the sick animal, the embodiment of revenge and mendacity in their manifold subtle and respected expressions, is "not free to have any conscience at all for questions of 'true' and 'untrue': to have integrity at t h i s point would at once destroy him."¹³ The "decadents n e e d the lie -- it is one of their conditions of preservation."¹⁴ It is not possible "to 'n a t u r a l i z e' humanity in terms of a pure, newly discovered, newly redeemed nature"¹⁵, to "translate man back into nature"¹⁶ simply by means of believing certain propositions about nature; "man reaches nature only after a long struggle -- ... daring to be immoral like nature."¹⁷ Revenge was to be overcome through 'something higher than any

reconciliation', through an overcoming of the basic duality itself between 'myself' and world/time. But the duality consisted in maintaining two concepts of being ('myself' and 'world'/'time') such that some properties and actions were attributed to one while denied to the other, and vice versa. This precluded even a "temporary identification with the principle of life."¹⁸ The duality is properly abolished only when the "mythology ... (which) separates that which effects from the effecting ... (and which always adds) to the event a being that is not one with the event but is rather fixed, i s, ... (when) that ... double error ... of which we are guilty"¹⁹ has come to a stop. In Nietzsche's thought and life this error comes to a stop in the concept of Dionysus.

There is a sense in which that which the concept of Dionysus grasps, or rather points to, as an ecstatic unity is named mundanely and from the point of view of a limited situation through the concept of "the will to power". That the will to power is not someone's, protects it from being (misunderstood as) merely the self-assertion and self-expansion of a given unit. For instance, both sympathetic receptivity, friendship and self-sacrifice immediately make sense as manifestations of the will to power if we do not wrongly construe the will to power as one's will to power over the other. They make sense as the achievements

of more inclusive relations. At the same time, it goes without saying that destruction as well as the absence of sympathetic receptivity, friendship and self-sacrifice also make sense as will to power. In other words, "the will to power" as little as "causality" serves to name or explain anything but provides rather a schema in terms of which a certain type of perception, description, and explanation is first possible. In contradistinction to the schema of "causality", the "will to power" does not involve the concept of time, at least not that of things-passing-away. Instead, "the will to power" provides a manner of framework of perception and description strictly within the eternal Now. For this reason, as well as because of its non-reference to permanent entities, its ultimate indifference with regard to good and evil, and its being the true nature of all beings and events it is possible to treat the concept of "the will to power" as an attempt to continue speaking at the point where the 'double error' has come to a rest in the ecstatic 'vision' of Dionysus.

Has Nietzsche's scepticism, his morality of truthfulness, arrived at the truth of Dionysus, of 'the will to power', then? Must he not suppose "that this also is only interpretation -- and ... (that we) will be eager enough to make this objection?"²⁰ If he must -- "well, so much the better"²¹ for this is precisely the strange insight of a

completed scepticism: that the most severe truthfulness does not lead to the discovery of truths, to any theory. "There is something about 'truth', about the s e a r c h for truth; and when a human being is too human about it -- ... I bet he finds nothing."²² Instead, scepticism shows us the strange 'artistic' nature of 'truth' and the power of the first word. The reward of the most severe truthfulness is not any truth about anything but the spontaneity of apparition-invoking, suggestive and appropriate speech which, moreover, can no longer be attributed to 'myself' or any other real entity because "myself" as well as all other beings and relations are first posited in speech, in the 'double error'. "Before there is 'thought' there must have been 'poesis' ("Bevor 'gedacht' wird, muss schon 'gedichtet' worden sein"); the construction of identical cases, of the appearance of sameness, is more primitive than the knowledge of sameness."²³ This is more radical than Kant for the very entities which Kant presupposes -- 'reason', 'man', etc. -- have in Nietzsche's view themselves the status of fictions, so that Kant's entire 'architectonic of reason' is a question-begging enterprise: mind (-as such) cannot be modelled in terms of (productions-of-, i.e. concepts-of-) mind.

Thus, at the pinnacle of scepticism speech (language) itself enters a phase of nihilism where every possible word and construction seem to be hopelessly committed to false

realities, corrupt, absurd, pointless at their very inception, so that the very impulse to speech is paralyzed* just as action is impossible during the nihilistic stages of nothingness and valuelessness. More accurately, however, what is impossible at this intensity of scepticism is any action that first demands to have before itself a pre-given model, that will not go forth unless there is precedent -- of value, fact or object -- to which it can accommodate itself, into which it can fit itself. But 'a value', 'a fact', 'an object' is simply a command given by someone else, a command to which one's consciousness and entire sensibility responds -- quite unconsciously -- by molding itself to it completely, thus perceiving in terms of the command. This eagerness for a command in terms of which it may open to and go forth into the world, this unwillingness to risk a projection 'of its own' -- a perfectly unconscious attitude -- is the definition of the 'camel' in Zarathustra's speech on the three metamorphoses. The summit of scepticism, however, reveals the hypnotic bondage of speech and destroys the camel's naive realism and willing accommodation to more or less anonymously floating commands: the camel is driven into its desert. "In the loneliest desert, however, the

* This nihilistic paralysis of speech is acutely described by Hugo von Hofmannsthal in his "Der Brief des Lord Chandos".

second metamorphosis occurs: here the spirit becomes a lion who would conquer his freedom and be master in his own desert. Here he seeks out his last master: he wants to fight him and his last god; for ultimate victory he wants to fight with the great dragon."²⁴

Thus, action and speech are possible at the summit of scepticism only if there is a willingness to command, to go forth without a precedent, to mold the-world-before-it-has-any-mold without a model, to invoke apparitions without reliance on real entities, that is, to do so without permission or desire for approval. But what is in the way of such a step from obeying to commanding is 'the great dragon'. "Who is the great dragon whom the spirit will no longer call lord and god? 'Thou shalt' is the name of the great dragon. ... 'Thou shalt' lies in his way ... and ... speaks: 'All value has long been created, and ... there shall be no more 'I will'."²⁵ Therefore, "why is there a need in the spirit for the lion? Why is not the beast of burden, which renounces and is reverent, enough? To create new values -- that even the lion cannot do; but the creation of freedom for oneself for new creation -- that is within the power of the lion. ... To seize the right for oneself to new values ("Das Recht sich nehmen zu neuen Werten") -- that is the most terrifying acquisition ("Nehmen") for a reverent spirit that would bear much."²⁶

In other words, even the summit of scepticism is not sufficient to free us from the overpowering attraction of the spells of the customarily ongoing world and of the free-floating hypnotic commands, or from our reverences: a decisive shift from obeying to commanding, from explaining to defining, from duty to experiment, from perceiving to seeing, from having thoughts to thinking, from burden to play, from reverence to love, -- and from time to fate is necessary. It is this shift from time to fate in the 'heart' of man which first institutes -- intellectually, emotionally, experimentally -- for him that which under the name of "fatum" determines one of Nietzsche's most important vital conceptions and criteria for a life well-lived: "amor fati". However, at this stage the phenomenon, the task, and the sense of "amor" has not yet become apparent: the amor of amor fati is the fruit of the last metamorphosis. The present shift is the action of what is leonine in us: by means of it we seize the right for ourselves to new values. Actually, to speak of "seizing the right" does not put the matter sharply enough yet: for precisely the concern about having or not having certain rights before it will act is the camel's nature. Rather, what is lion-like in us overcomes the addiction to justifications altogether. Clearly, at this crucial stage it all depends on who or what one is: "at the bottom of us, really 'deep down', there is, of course,

something unteachable, some granite of spiritual f a t u m, of predetermined decision and answer to predetermined selected questions. Whenever a cardinal problem is at stake, there speaks an unchangeable 'this is I'."²⁷

What is leonine in us will, as it were, r e a d y us for creating, commanding and loving and protect us from falling back under the spell of the customarily ongoing world or into a reverence through given doctrines, but by itself it does not yet confer the power of speech or of action: in the ancient terminology of doer-doing it would be necessary to say that it is first the impulse and influence of a divinity -- either of a high or of a low rank -- which causes the happening of speech or of action. In any case, at this stage of scepticism and in this delicate 'moment of truth' where one's fate is revealed it makes no sense whatsoever to attribute the arising of speech or action to "oneself": "oneself" has become the most useless of words.

In 'Zarathustra's speech on the three metamorphoses Nietzsche avoids the diction of doer-doing and introduces, instead, the image of the child: "Why must the preying lion still become a child? The child is innocence and forgetting, a new beginning, a game, a self-propelled wheel, a first movement, a sacred 'Yes'. For the game of creation a sacred 'Yes' is needed: the spirit (Geist) now wills h i s o w n will, and he who had been lost to the world now

conquers ("gewinnt") h i s o w n world."²⁸ Although the word "spirit" occurs it is clear that no particular being, indeed, no entity at all separate from the willing, innocence and sacred 'Yes' itself is intended: that word has far too little use and emphasis in Nietzsche's writings to justify our taking it seriously as a subject and author of the various happenings of willing of which Nietzsche speaks. In addition to the lack of use and emphasis on "spirit" as a subject and/or doer any such construction is also excluded by Nietzsche's own critique of that primitive "faith in grammar".²⁹ Consequently, "innocence and forgetting, a new beginning, a game, a self-propelled wheel, a first movement, a sacred 'Yes'" are simultaneous characteristics or aspects of willing-his-own-will as of conquering-his-own-world, where "his" again refers to the willing itself, not to some owner or author or underlying being. That is to say, the happening of speech or of action at the summit of scepticism, in the 'void' or the pristine receptive clearing or the luminous bridal chamber prepared by scepticism, is a happening at once of innocence and playfulness and sacred affirmation, of undivided power and of attaining what uniquely -- and by a sublime right, one is tempted to say, if the happening were not altogether beyond 'right' or no 'right' -- belongs to that power. That which is 'higher than any reconciliation' with time and which is, thus, the key to the deliver-

ance from revenge is the lion's b e c o m i n g the child, and that means: the happening of speech, creation, action at the summit of scep sis. The condition "at the summit of scep sis" protects the happening from being subtly appropriated by, in terms of, and for the sake of some lingering schema of entitativeness or purposive distortion (such as revenge, for instance).

When, therefore, the 'double error' -- of separating a doer from the doing and positing the doer to **exist self-identically** -- comes to a stop in Nietzsche's thought and life ecstatically in the concept of Dionysus (and mundanely in "the will to power"), this concept must not under any circumstances be taken to signify an explanation of, or a naming of something underlying, or a hypothesis concerning the cause of, the ongoing world and the happening of will, for precisely all the grammatical, logical and other schemata presupposed in explanation, naming (of determinate particulars) or hypothetical reasoning have come to a stop at the summit of scep sis. Consequently, the 'name' of Dionysus happens in an atmosphere free from grammatical implications, and therefore also free from grammatical, explanatory, or other claims and intentions which would presuppose the intact operation of the normal schemata of thought and experiential organization. Thus, Nietzsche's scep sis has n o t arrived at any truth concerning Dionysus.

On the other hand, the concept -- and not only the concept but, paradoxically, the intense 'experience' -- of Dionysus makes it possible to speak of the living essence of the overman without recourse to the notion of 'self' or to determinate -- and therefore essentially irrelevant -- particulars of the world. Since "Dionysus" signifies what-happens -- or what is recognized as happening -- at the summit of scep sis, and since this happening does not waste itself into an abyss of Nothingness but goes forth to and is inseparable from a 'living' luminosity, it is possible to obtain a concept of that 'living' luminosity and to assign to it a name whose symbolic meaning is just as intimately related to that of "Dionysus" as what-happens-at-the-summit-of-scep sis is to the luminous embrace into which it expends itself. This name is "Ariadne", which literally means "the luminous one" or "the shining one". "The union in love of Dionysus and Ariadne" is, then, a different name for the innocent, playful, sacred happening of speech and action at the summit of scep sis. Since it is, however, not a real name, namely, not an ontological designation, it is senseless to b e l i e v e in Dionysus and Ariadne or to use their concept to explain the world. On the other hand, the essence of the overman, of the one who has reconvalesced into the great health from the customarily ongoing ill and false relationship to the truth of existence, can be

characterized as "the eternal love of Dionysus and Ariadne".

The overman, therefore, cannot be comprehended in terms of actions of a self ("Ich"), for instance as the Kantian causality of one's free will, or as distinguishing himself from man ("dem Menschen") by his choice of values or projects. The language of 'values' is decisively fettered to the camel stage since it can conceive of differences between men and actions only in terms of the prescriptions and precedents which they follow. Thus it is unable to render intelligible the overcoming of man's 'predicament' and the attainment of the great health both of which make obsolete, or secondary, the question of value, namely, the q u e s t i o n : 'What shall I do?'. The question 'What shall I do?' is not yet the highest approach to life but is merely the noblest action of the camel. Kant's Categorical Imperative is the noblest burden the camel can take upon itself, the most sublime master it can find -- and serve as a slave. A higher approach than that question -- and than that obeisance -- is the metamorphosis into the child, is "to be oneself the eternal joy of becoming". This second innocence is a more radical freedom than that of acting from (Kantian) duty for it is an emancipation also from oneself, from the 'I' ("Ich"), and from the craving to acquire (moral) worth. Perhaps this is the reason why Nietzsche never wrote a 'Transvaluation of all values': values belong to man and

do not define overman. And, what is the use of prescribing to man when one's task is to bring forth the overman?

But Dionysus as the active 'principle', a s that which happens (everywhere) -- once this happening is conceived as needing neither cause, substratum, subject, motive, project, nor doer -- is the happening not only of just, beautiful, pleasing, welcome events but of a l l things, and that includes the worst. Therefore Nietzsche must say: "my truth is t e r r i b l e".³⁰ If Dionysus is a god he is not a god like the Christian one: it is impossible to pray to or worship him. It is only possible "to be o n e - s e l f the eternal joy of becoming, beyond all terror and pity ("Über Schrecken und Mitleid hinaus, die ewige Lust des Werdens s e l b s t z u s e i n") -- that joy which included joy even in destroying."³¹ That which is higher than any reconciliation with time, the deliverance from revenge, can be attained only by an "affirmation of passing away a n d d e s t r o y i n g, ... by saying Yes to opposition and war ... along with a radical repudiation of the concept of b e i n g."³² Only he has attained something higher than any reconciliation with time, has overcome the basic duality of myself-and-time/world, who "does not merely comprehend the word 'Dionysian' but comprehends h i m s e l f in the word 'Dionysian'".³³ Once the duality is overcome and

the identification achieved, "Man no longer needs a 'justification of ills'; 'justification' is precisely what he abhors: ... he now takes delight in a world disorder without God, a world of chance, to whose essence belong the terrible, the ambiguous, the seductive."³⁴ "Es ist ein Zeichen von Wohl - und Macht gefühl ... ob er überhaupt 'Lösungen' am Schluß braucht".³⁵ The attempts at justification are merely postponements of facing up to the terrible, to the contradiction of all our hopes and investments, without reservation or resentment: in these attempts one identifies not with spontaneous happening as such but only with reasonable happenings, namely, only with reason, and is forced to somehow subsume the terrible under the reasonable in order to overcome the duality and one's ill will against the unreasonable. Even a temporarily successful attempt of justification is therefore bound to live in dread of irreconcilable future discoveries. But such a conditional affirmation and smoldering fear of future refutations is revenge itself: an ill will against the raw happenings of this world so far as they take no notice of our preferences. Besides, any attempt at justifications whatsoever implicates one in a faith in the ability of thought to express eternal features of real being -- a faith which, in Nietzsche's view, is merely the traditional lack of intellectual in-

tegrity in philosophers. He who has overcome revenge, however, "a spirit who has b e c o m e f r e e stands amid the cosmos with a joyous and trusting fatalism, in the f a i t h that only the particular is loathsome, and that all is redeemed and affirmed in the whole -- h e d o e s n o t n e g a t e a n y m o r e. Such a faith, however, is the highest of all possible faiths: I have baptized it with the name of D i o n y s u s." ³⁶

This faith is not a pious inactivity but i s the author-less and owner-less happening of activity at the summit of scepticism after the fundamental shift from obeying to playing and commanding, from reverence to love, and from time to fate: it is the shift to unconditional affirmation. But this affirmation is not an assertion, namely, not of anything, not even of 'oneself', even though in the case of man this author-less and owner-less activity happens in the shape of body and in the form of mind. This organic, quasi-substantial unity of individual being receives in Nietzsche's thinking the name of "self" ("Selbst") as distinct from the phenomenon of "I" ("Ich"). Usually, Nietzsche identifies this self with the body ("Leib"), understood not as a physical occurrence knowable by scientific means but as that concrete life which is individually available. The self, this body, is the bearer of the great reason ("die grosse Vernunft") as distinct from the little reason of the I

which operates by principles, i.e. by conceptual substitutes for the spontaneous wisdom of the body. Therefore Nietzsche writes, "this 'return to myself' ("Rückkehr zu m i r")", that is, the return from following the ideal and from the morality of selflessness, "meant -- a supreme kind of recovery." One becomes wise and attains genuine health only by listening to the self. And yet, the unconditional affirmation of the faith of Dionysus is not a will to self-preservation. On the contrary, it is precisely one's individual "Untergang" which is also affirmed in that faith: only revenge insists on the ultimate preservation of the individual. The faith called 'Dionysus' is, of course, not a denial of the everyday protection of oneself, as the entire problem of revenge and its overcoming is not a matter of deciding everyday purposes and schedules but of first and last questions, of both the ground and the blood and the sky of one's everyday existence. It is t h e r e that one has abandoned all consolation and mendacious wishfulness in favor of 'being oneself the eternal joy of becoming'.

Because this truth, as distinct from the traditional fairytales, is terrible in that its joy must incorporate wholeheartedly the very negation of oneself, of all hopes and investments, "any 'Epicurean delight' is out of the question" for it has not yet seen to the bottom of the matter and is altogether too indulgent in both its assumption of

and its servitude to 'self': "Only Dionysian joy is sufficient".³⁷ By virtue of its unconditional affirmation Dionysian joy is an unsupported joy: an ecstatic consciousness -- and more than consciousness: joy is a blessed luminosity dancingly embodied -- not dependent on any putative beings. The overman is thus "allem Abschied voran"³⁸ and has his home, or rather his dwelling, in the "reinen Bezug"³⁹ sooner than in personal identity, national loyalties, economic imperatives or culture: for they assert only themselves and repel their own negation, they and their successes express not the truth of life but only an organization, that is, a perspective, of life. The overman, like Plato's wise man, is not any "Wünschbarkeit" -- nor is his concept to be gained through any bouquet of facts and values -- but is a possibility which is laid out in the very truth of things itself, more accurately, which is the embodiment of the truth of things: the utter repulsion of mendacity in any form and a joyous union with fate. The overman's dwelling, "allem Abschied voran", in the "reinen Bezug" not only does not exclude but necessarily involves his participation in the finitudes of life, for there must "be that over which one dances and dances away".⁴⁰ Though he "is necessarily a sceptic ... Great passion, the ground and power of his existence ... employs

his whole intellect ... (and) gives him courage even for ... convictions ... as a m e a n s; ... Great passion uses and uses up convictions, it does not succumb to them -- it knows itself sovereign."⁴¹ The 'passion', however, is not 'his' -- the (any) individual's -- for precisely any sentiment and movement that imagines 'I' ("Ich") as its source, owner and ultimate justification and reference point has been overcome through scepticism and through the deliverance from revenge. That 'passion', then, is Dionysus himself -- which name explains nothing but permits a way of speaking in order to prevent misunderstandings. Still, it i s a passion: it is love both of and for fate, amor fati. As the faith baptized with the name of Dionysus this love is not a mere contemplative dwelling -- for instance, an "amor intellectualis Dei" à la Spinoza -- but is the love of a mistress called "fate". Fate, as we have said, corresponds to the accomplished shift away -- thanks to what is leonine in us -- from obeisance, imitation, time, reverence, values and facts. It corresponds to unconditional affirmation -- not assertion -- at the summit of scepticism -- and therefore it appears not as beings or values, in t h e i r time, but as "abyss of light"⁴² in i t s 'time', eternity, which is a 'time' not of things-passing-away but of innocence and exuberance.

More accurately, it is only fate as it corresponds to the lion's seizing the right to new values that can be loved; there also is a fate, in Nietzsche's view, that corresponds to the camel (stage) and which can only be borne. This fate is called "the eternal recurrence of the same": "existence as it is, without meaning or aim, yet recurring inevitably without any finale of nothingness."⁴³ It is, as is necessary since it corresponds to the stage of the camel, "the most extreme form of nihilism: the nothing (the 'meaningless'), eternally!"⁴⁴ for when the camel finds no meaning prescribed and no task commanded it takes no-meaning and no-task to be its load -- and its honor. Is it mere perversity, then, that lets Nietzsche call "the idea of the eternal recurrence ... (the) highest formula of affirmation that is at all attainable"?⁴⁵ It would be if its meaning and experience were attainable only in the time of things-passing-away, and there as a long, eternal lane leading backward on which everything that can happen has happened before,⁴⁶ an idea which Nietzsche/'Zarathustra' calls his "most abysmal thought", one that "would change you as you are or perhaps crush you."⁴⁷ But the view of time as the passing-away-of-things belongs to revenge in that it is the expression of the attribution of the will (as well as of experience, thought, consciousness, etc.) to 'myself'. In other words, it corresponds to an identification not with "the

eternal joy of becoming" but with the pleasures and pains and activities of being individual. It is on this individual existence in time that the idea of eternal recurrence exercises "the greatest stress" ("Schwergewicht"): it places the greatest load ("Schwergewicht") on it, namely, on the camel. But once the camel 'speeds into its desert' and there undergoes its metamorphosis into the lion, and once the lion seizes 'the right to new values' and makes the happening of innocence, playfulness and creation possible, time as the passing-away-of-beings correlate to the camel stage also undergoes a metamorphosis and becomes the 'time' of innocence and exuberance: eternity. This eternity, however, bears a different face than did 'the most abysmal thought' with its meaningless, eternal lanes backward and forward: for Dionysus it bears the face of Ariadne, "the shining one", "ein so reines, durchleuchtetes, verklärt-heiteres Gesicht".⁴⁸ With her the 'eternal recurrence' has become a marriage, in view of her 'Zarathustra' sings: "Oh, how should I not lust after eternity and after the nuptial ring of rings, the ring of recurrence? Never yet have I found the woman from whom I wanted children, unless it be this woman whom I love: for I love you, O eternity."⁴⁹ It is beholding her that 'Zarathustra' sits "jubilating where old gods lie buried, world-blessing, world-loving"; that "the earth is a table for gods and

trembles with creative new words and gods' throws"; that "even the greatest evil is worthy of being used"; that the "coast has vanished, (that) now the last chain has fallen from ... (and) the boundless roars around" him; and that 'Zarathustra' swims "playfully in the deep light-distances, ... the bird wisdom of ... (his) freedom ... (speaking) thus: 'Behold, there is no above, no below! ... Sing! Speak no more! Are not all words made for the grave and heavy? Are not all words lies to those who are light?'"⁵⁰

There are, then, two conceptions of eternal recurrence. One corresponds to the individual caught in time, knowing himself and his best to pass away, meaninglessly, and to recur eternally, equally meaninglessly. The other corresponds to having-overcome-revenge and being-oneself-the-eternal-joy-of-becoming: there the question of meaning does not arise because that question belongs to the camel stage at which one only acts *a f t e r* a precedent and only in obedience to a purpose or a cause, that is, only as the effect of a cause, and where one "must be *u s e d u p*."⁵¹ The eternal joy of becoming is, therefore, neither meaningful nor meaningless: that distinction applies only once a framework of beings, and therewith of time, is posited; and, this positing itself is one of the creative delights of the eternal joy of becoming.

Thus, the concept of the eternal recurrence establishes

as it were, a watershed: it divides those to whom it presents only an eternal lane going backward and forward, a lane on which everything that can happen has already happened, from those to whom it promises "the nuptial ring of rings" with that eternity which is an abyss of light.

In his notebooks Nietzsche wrote many attempts to give the idea of the eternal recurrence -- in the sense of an eternal lane going backward and forward -- a scientific foundation from the two premisses of infinite time and finite quantum of existence. But, following his own reasoning elsewhere, it should be quite clear that this is an absurd attempt: on the one hand, for everything that science can know happens within a 'cycle' of recurrence, while, on the other hand, that which becomes apparent in a rapture such as 'Zarathustra's vis-à-vis eternity can hardly find its adequate expression in scientific deductions. In any case, Nietzsche presented the idea in his published writings only as a doctrine, that is, as a teaching. According to Ecce Homo this doctrine is the "fundamental conception"⁵² of Thus Spoke Zarathustra. Zarathustra is a book of teachings, and 'Zarathustra' himself is the teacher of the eternal recurrence. But 'Zarathustra' also proclaims the overman: "I shall show them the rainbow and all the steps to the overman."⁵³ The 'rainbow' is "a rainbow after long storms", "the bridge to the highest hope":⁵⁴

the deliverance from revenge. The doctrine of the eternal recurrence is "the great disciplining and breeding idea: the races that cannot bear it stand condemned; those who find it the greatest benefit are chosen to rule."⁵⁵ It is "a new weapon ... to provoke a fearful decision".⁵⁶ It is, as "an ecstatic nihilism, ... a mighty pressure and hammer with which ... (the philosopher) breaks and removes degenerate and decaying races to make way for a new order of life, or to implant into that which is degenerate and desires to die a longing for the end."⁵⁷ It is a cultivating idea for to "e n d u r e the idea of the recurrence"⁵⁸ one must be something more than man ("Mensch") since man -- the metaphysical and moral animal -- i s that way of being which relies on beings and on the good-in-itself and which in this reliance is bound to revenge and prevented from 'becoming himself the eternal joy of becoming'.

Thus, the doctrine of the eternal recurrence is itself a splendid example of that new way of language which becomes possible -- and necessary -- once the faith in beings, and therewith the naive appearance of naming has been eradicated. Normal thought proceeds with a view to s u c c e s s (for its 'truth' is merely the success of certain correspondence operations, and of certain productions) whereas Nietzsche's thought proceeds with a view to the g o o d, more precisely, with a view to the "enhancement" of man. It cannot

proceed with a view to 'truth' in the sense of a 'correspondence to beings' for the assumption of 'beings' has been suspended by scepticism. Moreover, the assumption of 'beings' belongs to the camel stage at which one will not act without a precedent -- and what is the 'correspondence of thought to beings' but the insistence on a precedent? At the summit of scepticism, and once what is leonine in oneself has 'seized the right to new values', one "first creates truth".⁵⁹

That creation is not arbitrary: it proceeds to lay out visions and the world such that a higher type of man finds himself in them -- and such that they need the higher man. But the enhancement of man, in Nietzsche's sense, proceeds not according to moral principles or ongoing social projects or "Wünschbarkeiten" but according to the one thing necessary: the deliverance from revenge through the destruction of the world of 'beings', 'myself', 'good and evil' and 'time', and the identification with the eternal joy of becoming, and according to the one direction provided by existence itself, a direction not dependent on any 'beings' or particular circumstances: towards greater quanta of power. 'Power' and 'will to power' can, however, never be referred to 'myself' as a primary reference point or anchoring point for action once 'myself' is left behind -- as a support for and organizing concept of one's way of being -- in the deliverance from revenge. Since I ("Ich") am no eternal entity nor

an acting unity or center but only a phenomenon, and since my self ("Selbst") is not the cause or owner of my action -- which conception would commit the 'double error' -- but is the happening of spontaneity itself in this shape (body) and this form (mind), "myself" as a concept can in no way support an (mis-)understanding of "the will to power" as necessarily a will to power for oneself, e.g. over others. On the contrary, the consummation of the spontaneity of the will to power happening in the shape of this body and in the form of this mind might take the expression of a ('self'-)sacrifice of this individual, or of its immediate inclinations. Thus, a genuine morality can very well be understood in terms of the will to power.

Speech at this level, then, proceeds, first with a view to settling man in the truth of things, and second, with a view to bringing about greater quanta of power (without an owner, subject, author or doer of power), such as, for instance, more inclusive relationships. Clearly, speech here takes on a deliberately educational and p o l i t i c a l character. Moreover, in the absence of 'beings' all concepts represent p h a n t o m s rather than beings. Thus, "when truth enters into a fight with the lies of millenia, ... The concept of politics will have merged entirely with a war of spirits; all power structures of the old society will have been exploded -- all of them are based on lies",⁶⁰ that is, serve the degradation of man, for, "Ultimately, it is a matter of

the end to which one lies."⁶¹ "Genuine philosophers (finally,) ... are commanders and legislators: they say, 'thus it shall be!' They first determine the Wither and For What of man With a creative hand they reach for the future, and all that is and has been becomes a means for them, an instrument, a hammer. Their 'knowing' is c r e - a t i n g , their creating is a legislation, their will to truth is -- w i l l t o p o w e r."⁶²

We have now outlined Nietzsche's concept of the overman -- the man who i s the cure from the sickness and smallness of the customarily ongoing world. But the picture is a strange one and we certainly do not recognize either ourselves or any of our traditional ideals in it. In view of its strangeness -- even though there is a striking, and probably not at all coincidental, continuity from Plato's * metaphysics and to rewrite his concepts of 'truth' and 'being' and 'good' in a more 'existential' fashion such that they do not depend on eternal beings/Being -- we are likely to register the idea of the overman as an unsuccessful attempt on the part of Nietzsche to escape from and to go one up on the Greco-Christian ideals of man. Within a stream of consciousness -- intellectual, emotional, volitional -- involuntarily patterned by the Greco-Christian paradigms the idea of the overman does not make s e n s e: we irresistibly

* picture of the wise man: it is only necessary to omit his

feel, and think, that something essential is left out in that picture: either God, or self, or morality, or truth, or reality, or any combination of these.

In order, therefore, to add more weight to the claim that the idea of the overman does indeed deserve to be taken seriously, i n i t s -- i.e. Nietzsche's -- o w n t e r m s I shall also lay out the essentials of the Buddhist concept of the Bodhisattva, that being -- or rather, that way of being -- which most purely embodies the cure from that illness which the normal everyday is, and which, too, is incomprehensible against our own background but at the same time shows certain affinities with the overman.

"Bodhisattva" literally means: "enlightenment-being", that is, a being that strives for enlightenment, or a being whose essence is enlightenment. The Bodhisattva is the unique outcome -- according to the Mahāyāna school -- of the Buddhist critique and analysis of existence. Like the overman, he is not so much a k n o w l e d g e of the truth of existence as an e m b o d i m e n t of that truth for, in a strict sense, that truth c a n not be known but only lived. But since it is lived consciously and 'deliberately', so to speak, that truth can, after all, be said to be known in some sense by the Bodhisattva. Because it can in some sense be known the Bodhisattva is said to be enlightened (or striving for enlightenment). However, the

sense in which he can be said to know the truth of existence is not that of a cognitive relationship for the obvious reason that existence cannot become an object for any existing being or for itself. The sense in which the Bodhisattva does know the truth of existence is rather a negative one: he knows ('it') in the sense that he cannot be fooled by any false ideas concerning the nature of existence. But which ideas are false, indeed, are necessarily false concerning the nature of existence? All ideas which make assertions concerning (putative) beings. But that eliminates all that can be said by means of language! In any case, any c o g n i - t i v e employment of language will, then, necessarily falsify the nature of existence. It is for this reason that the Bodhisattva must be considered, rather, to be an embodiment of the truth than a cognitive grasp of it. He embodies the truth precisely in that he avoids, on the one hand, being side-tracked into notions of being and taking them to render the truth of things, and in that he nevertheless continues, on the other hand, to live in the world and among men and to speak a s i f he believed in beings.

With regard to his continued presence among men and in the world the Bodhisattva's 'knowledge', his embodiment of the truth, is therefore not negative -- as it is in relation to all cognitive claims of thought -- but is positive. It is, moreover, eminently positive since his transactions are

no longer screened by false concepts of beings and are no longer attached to projections of 'good' and 'bad' or distorted by serving as a means to his ambitions, but proceed, instead, in response to things having stepped into the light of their true nature.

At the beginning of chapter III we have defined "prajñā" as that way of being for which all things step into the light of their own nature rather than into the shadow of finite intentions and a preoccupation with projects. Prajñā is also called "The Middle Way" since it avoids the assertions concerning beings both that they are and that they are not, as well as avoiding the clinging to either samsāra or nirvāṇa. It is the (Bodhisattva's) way of "considering one's stay in samsāra as similar to a stroll in a park".⁶³ Another way of defining it would be: an inwardly luminous, everywhere open-ended, non-grasping way of being such that the so-being of every object is taken into account at the same time as its non-existence as a being (entity) is clearly realized. Prajñā is aware of things both in the light that they throw on each other and in the light of no-thing-ness. Since śūnyatā is the Buddhist term for the absence of being in things prajñā is the ongoing relation to things' distinctiveness in view of their śūnyatā. Thus, prajñā is the Bodhisattva's embodiment of the truth of existence.

However, since prajñā, by its nature, does not cognize

any truths it is incomplete, in fact, literally impossible, without a 'purpose' inhering in it or one to which it is put. Language being the formulation of what is seen it cannot in the Bodhisattva's use of it represent the cognition of beings. Thus, his speech as well as his prajñā require, or must upon closer examination exhibit, a further determining element. This incompleteness of prajñā -- and language -- by itself, due to the absence of being in things, exactly corresponds to the peculiarity of Nietzsche's use of language which 'first creates truth' and which found its guiding determination not in some correspondence to beings but in the establishment of man in truth and in the creation of greater quanta of power. However, like the overman the Bodhisattva cannot base his 'purpose' on any notion involving (the assumption of) beings. His activity must have a direction independent of beings, without any reliance whatsoever on facts, values, or entities. This direction is compassion ("mahā-karunā"). Just as Nietzsche's orientation towards greater quanta of power was not externally added on to the nature of things but represented, so he thought, the inherent tendency everywhere to be seen in the truth of things once we were able to look 'past' our notions of entitateness, causality, time, etc., so compassion, in the Buddhist view, is not a principle of action added on to living in the presence of truth (prajñā) but belongs essentially to it rather

than as an external purpose. Compassion is that 'purpose' which is inseparable from living in such a way that for it all things step into the light of their own nature. Compassion, however, has no beings in view: "Although they (the Bodhisattvas) fetch suffering beings out of the three places of woe, yet they never have anywhere the notion of a being."⁶⁴ Whereas if "Beings are ... imagined, a self is imagined, -- the practice of wisdom (prajñā), the highest perfection, is lacking"⁶⁵ and, consequently, genuine compassion is impossible, giving rise, instead, to the clumsy and unsatisfactory happenings of pity and (more or less naïve) egocentricity.

At the same time, the Bodhisattva's compassionate actions, proceeding in the light of prajñā, also partake in that absence of reliance on a notion of beings. His action is called "upāya" -- skilful means. Thus, skilful means, like prajñā, is impossible without that decisive step out of holding the world together by the assumptions of personal identity and the existence of beings. 'Personal identity' and 'existence of beings' never were truths but always were means in certain pursuits. Together with the relinquishing of these pursuits (as the central definition of one's way of being) their associated concepts and ways of sensibility (e.g. perception) also come to an end (as the basic organization of the dynamic sentience of one's way

of being). Since only certain rigid structural features but not liveliness as such -- both active and sensible -- is removed thereby the step out of the personal world is not a step into nothingness but into the inseparable couple of prajñā and upāya whose way is compassion. In the case of the overman too the step out of the temporal-personal form of existence into 'being oneself the eternal joy of becoming' represented the entry into a non-personal realm both of activity and of sensibility whose movement nowhere could be attributed to 'oneself' (as its author or owner) and which was, therefore, beginningless and endless. Like the overman the Bodhisattva retains the concept of 'oneself' as an indicative notion representative of no (causal) reality but useful for certain clearly delimited purposes within conventional transactions. That is, for both the overman and the Bodhisattva 'oneself' remains a type of phenomenon and a purposive designation w i t h i n and on the 'basis' of, rather than determinative of, their 'first and last' supra-personal movement. The Bodhisattva's upāya-action which does not conform to the patterns of putative beings makes it that he "appears as if he broke the prohibitions while delighting in pure living and being apprehensive at committing even a minor fault."⁶⁶

Again, like the overman the Bodhisattva i s a cure from the illness of the normal everyday since that illness

was mediated through an adherence to the assumption of personal existence and of the reality of beings both of which have come to an end in the Bodhisattva who orients himself by means of prajñā which lets things appear in their truth. Their truth, however, is that no beings appear: śūnyatā. Thus, the Bodhisattva, the embodiment of truth, actually lives with two 'truths': the 'truth' (saṃvṛti), by means of language, in terms of putative beings allowing him to formulate his vision with respect to given limited purposes, and the truth of that first limited employment of both language and 'the person'. The formulation of the second truth (paramārtha) does not serve to convey finite intentions or cognitions about objects (mundane or transmundane), but to induce -- like a medicine -- the release from finite intentions and cognitive structures into that luminous, non-grasping, open-ended way of being which is called 'prajñā', or rather: prajñā-upāya.

Thus, for both the overman and the Bodhisattva theory and practice have no independent bases but are inevitably mutually interdependent, and their common employment, in turn, serves either to enhance or to degrade the way of being in the situation at hand. Their interdependence gets normally overlooked because they are so intimately interlocked and because we normally do not have a different vantage point in practice from which our normal theory

-- our habitual constructions by means of thought and speech -- could be seen in its bias. Consequently, the seeming theoretical independence of a Descartes, for instance, is actually the involuntary extension of his unconscious theoretical bias -- a bias due to his 'morale par provision', namely, to a fundamentally unaltered practice -- into new applications. This is especially clear to us today with regard to his 'proofs' of the existence of self and God: his conclusions were simply presupposed in his unconscious theoretical bias which, in turn, stemmed from the fundamental continuance of 'business as usual' in the 'morale par provision'.

Both in Nietzsche's and the Buddhist view the degrading tendency of the normally ongoing theory-practice couple -- a couple untouched even in scientific research, as in the case of Descartes -- is due to its ('self-imposed') restriction to and reliance on the conventional, finitely purposive 'truth' and its lack of redemption into the freedom from both finitude and purpose, that freedom which, at the same time, positively is the beginninglessly, endlessly ongoing way things truly are. Because theory and practice are eternally inseparable (there being no independent bases -- beings or purposes/values -- for either), while representing distinct 'principles', their enlightened form and union (and their enlightened form is their complete union in the embodi-

ment of truth) is symbolized in Vajrayāna Buddhism as the love embrace of upāya (male, active) and prajñā (female, receptive). This icon presents a remarkable parallel to the love union of Dionysus and Ariadne ("the luminous one", eternity) in Nietzsche's ecstatic conception of the eternal recurrence as it is expressed most beautifully in the two chapters "Before Sunrise" and "Seven Seals" of Zarathustra.

This enlightened union of theory and practice in the lives of the overman and the Bodhisattva would seem to be able to overcome both the ethical and the metaphysical dilemma mentioned in chapter I. We had encountered these dilemmas as soon as we had decided to make the experiment of suspecting a fundamental unsoundness permeating both the totality of everyday transactions and the moralities and ideals growing out of this totality with a view to 'improving' it. We recall that the ethical dilemma consisted in the problem of finding an attitude for our investigation which avoided both taking sides in the ongoing conflicts and condemning existence as a whole. The metaphysical dilemma, on the other hand, was opened up for us by the problem of steering clear both of naïve realism, together with its metaphysical off-shoots, and of nihilism. These two dilemmas represent the inevitable difficulties which theory and practice find themselves beset with when each seeks an independent basis for itself in dependence on which it could

build up, and by reference to which it could justify, all its further expressions. The grasping for an independent basis is always betrayed by its search for the unconditioned, for that which has absolute primacy; more accurately, it is betrayed by its search for the unconditioned within either theory or practice. Even the positivist referral of all theory for its verification or falsification to experience still assumes that primacy is to be found, if not in any theory then at least in experience. On the assumption that theory or practice must have an anchoring point in some element of absolute primacy the two dilemmas are insoluble and are bound to generate an oscillation between condemnation, despair, nihilism, and other -isms (e.g. traditional metaphysical and religious doctrines).

These attachments to some (putative) element of primacy are themselves expressions of the ongoing illness since the latter is (the inevitable suffering from) a false relationship to the truth of existence consisting in seizing upon some elements of the ongoing existence -- theoretical, grammatical, experiential, metaphorical -- and treating them as representing eternal features of real being. There inevitably is suffering from this relationship, as we have said in chapters II and III, since under its spell that which appears to us to be our nature is essentially negated by the nature of the world as it appears correlatively.

Thus, the attempt to resolve the dilemmas by taking a stand in some element treated as absolute remains a mere extension of the ongoing unsoundness. When any elements -- theoretical, grammatical, experiential, metaphorical -- are treated as absolute (e.g. as ultimate horizons) and are taken to be the basis and the justification of all further moments of theory and practice the resulting hierarchy permits both perception and explanation. Permitting perception and explanation, the character of existence as a magical performance fades, to be replaced by its emerging character as a lawful, rational, and more or less scientifically explainable complex event in time (somewhat in the sense of Kant's "transcendental illusion"). In chapter III we have likened this latter way of experiencing the magic act of existence to being deceived by an itinerant magician whose performance persuades one to take it seriously in terms of its own claims about itself.

The great, all-pervasive unsoundness of the ongoing everyday is, then, exactly correlative to the apparitional character of existence as (more or less) rational, namely, correlative to its character appearing to be such that at least in some of one's knowings one believes to have grasped hold of an ultimate truth of existence. Unsoundness as defined in this way characterizes both the normal everyday and the madman, and the latter to a greater degree than the

former, -- which is precisely the reason why the madman is more deranged than the citizen of the normal everyday.

Both the Buddhists and Nietzsche agree in their view that the rational character of the world does not belong to its essence. They seem to be able to extricate themselves from the ethical and the metaphysical dilemma by virtue of avoiding all final taking of position, either theoretically or practically, thanks to their completed scepticism, and by not letting either theory or practice settle into an independent basis of its own: the Buddhist by walking the Middle Way, and Nietzsche by dancing in Dionysian joy. In their embodiment of the truth theory and practice interdepend mutually and serve, in turn, both to establish men in the truth and to enhance the situation at hand. In other words, the (comprehendingly lived) difference between truth and fact (i.e. cognitively grasped 'truth') solves the metaphysical dilemma, while the (comprehendingly lived) difference between the Bodhisattva's compassion (mahākaruṇā) and the overman's creative delight, on the one hand, and the pleasures and emotions of the everyday, on the other hand, solves the ethical dilemma. These crucial differences which provide the clue for the resolution of our two dilemmas are clearly not ontological differences, just as the Buddhist does not admit an ontological difference between samsāra and nirvāṇa and Nietzsche refuses any two-world theory.

The differences correspond rather to those between a magic show falsely and truly taken. By the same token, the materialistic world cannot be redeemed by the addition to it of spirit, eternity, truth, values, Being or God: nothing is missing, for to speak of a lack is to maintain the everyday in its own claims while locating its inadequacy outside of it and in terms of its own (mis-)understandings. It is more accurate, instead, to view the ongoing everyday itself as false or -- going beyond a merely theoretical criticism -- as ill. The profane world does not also need a sacred world or element, but 'the profane' as a whole needs to be redeemed -- or rather, cured -- less into sacredness than into that health which has abandoned the distinction between sacred and profane.

We have seen in chapters II and III that the great health coincides with the abandonment of the standpoint that the person is real: for the Buddhist, because the afflictions are rooted in the belief in the permanent self; and for Nietzsche, because time as things-passing-away, and consequently revenge, stem from ascribing the will to myself. The character of the world as a rational whole collapses once the view that the person is real no longer holds the world together. Through the dissipating fog of rational (as well as mythical) constructions the magical character of the world reappears for

an exuberant innocence. The 'predicament' never was one in truth but only in fact -- correlative to the world appearing as beings, facts and values. Then we are able, like the master in Goethe's poem "The Sorcerer's Apprentice", to bring to a rest the spirits which, once summoned, had been unceasingly performing their increasingly injurious labor, for instance as technology. The spirits are brought to a rest in that they are known as spirits and as having no basis of their own but as belonging exclusively to a certain practice, to certain purposes.

The life of ill can be likened to a dream, and that life's rewards and medicines as continuations of the dream, while health is the waking up from the dream -- to the dream. Then I find that "among all these dreamers, I, too, who 'know', am dancing my dance; (but) that the knower ... belongs to the masters of ceremony of existence".⁶⁷

Thus it can be said that the great health coincides with living in such a way that the world appears as a magic performance. In that presuppositionless delight free from finitude the metaphysical and the moral quest of man can be redeemed.

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- 46) Z III On the Vision and the Riddle 2
- 47) FW 341
- 48) MA I 638
- 49) Z III The Seven Seals
- 50) *ibid.*
- 51) AC 54
- 52) EH-Z 1
- 53) Z Prologue 9
- 54) Z II On the Tarantulas
- 55) WM 1053
- 56) WM 1054
- 57) WM 1055
- 58) WM 1060
- 59) EH-Z 6
- 60) EH-WIAAD 1
- 61) AC 56
- 62) J 211
- 63) Vim, p. 115
- 64) Ast, XII 270-274, p. 31
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- 66) Vim, p. 82
- 67) FW 54

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I have just had word that Prof. Sprung's The Prasannapadā of Candrakīrti will be published by Routledge & Kegan Paul in 1979.

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