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Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche was born in Prussia. His father was a Lutheran pastor and his mother was the daughter of a Lutheran vicar. (Nietzsche himself was confirmed in 1861.) Five years after Nietzsche's birth his father died from complications of a brain disease or injury. As a youth Nietzsche received a classical education and studied philology at the Universities of Bonn and Leipzig. More than once he attempted military service, but this was made impossible by his health, which was never robust (he had poor vision and suffered severe migraine headaches). When his attempt to join the cavalry failed, he volunteered as a medical orderly and became severely ill after being trapped behind enemy lines with patients. His undistinguished military career was offset by his brilliant—if brief—scholarly career. At the extraordinarily early age of twenty-five he was offered a professorship in classical philology at the University of Basel. Most of Nietzsche's work was written during a sixteen-year period that began in 1872. About halfway through this period his failing health forced him to resign his teaching position. After that he traveled extensively, hoping to find a climate suitable to his poor constitution. Nietzsche's one serious marriage proposal (to Lou von Salomé) was rejected. In 1889 he collapsed in the streets of Turin and never regained lucidity. He was cared for by his mother and then by his sister Elizabeth Förster, an antisemite and proto-Nazi who attempted to use her brother's writings for her cause in spite of his own vehement rejection of antisemitism and German nationalism.

Much of Nietzsche's work was influenced by and a response to the writings of the German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860). Hence, before we examine Nietzsche's philosophy, it is best to consider Schopenhauer's views. To facilitate our discussion the reader may wish to read the excerpt from Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Representation* (1818) provided in this chapter.

SCHOPENHAUER

Arthur Schopenhauer developed a Kantian perspective according to which the perceivable, phenomenal "objective" world is structured by the mind or "subject" according to various categories. For Schopenhauer these categories were time, space, and causality, and as the result of their imposition, the phenomenal world is a world of diversity and plurality. Because the subject or knower does the structuring, the subject is prior to the world of diversity and is something indefinite—neither a unity nor a diversity. As Schopenhauer says, "neither plurality nor its opposite, namely unity, belongs to [the knower]."[1] This is not to say that we have no access to the world of things as they are in themselves; Schopenhauer rejected Kant's claim that this world is forever beyond our grasp. In Schopenhauer's view the reality behind the phenomenal world is *will;* the thing-in-itself is *will.* Each of us has access to will through intuition, and the will you intuit is the same will that I intuit.

Schopenhauer portrays the will as a blind, irrational force. Showing the influence of David Hume's (1711–1776) claim that reason is the servant of the passions, Schopenhauer portrayed reason as an instrument shaped by will to accomplish its ends. Moreover, anticipating Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), Schopenhauer emphasized that will often pursues goals that are hidden from consciousness.

One of the things the will tends to keep hidden is that our existence—indeed, the existence of everything there is—is pointless because it is willed finally for no reason at all. To a large extent the will keeps us

from noticing that existence is pointless by filling our lives with consuming ambitions that feel important because they feel urgent. These ambitions, including the craving for life itself, give us the illusion that life's purpose is to attain happiness. On closer examination, however, we can see that all of our desires are the product of will, and because will is baseless, so are our ambitions. Unthinkingly, we take it for granted that the ends we will to achieve, including our desire to exist, have objectively given value, and then we go about seeking the means to achieve our ends. In doing so, we never question whether the things we want really are good. If we did, we would find that the only reason we think that the things we desire are good is that we desire them. If nothing has objective value, however, there is nothing to pursue for its own sake, nothing that is capable of inspiring our lives, for example. Will is blind in that it wills the continuation of existence for no reason. Existence is not for the sake of anything, and thus it and the will for existence are meaningless. Our lives are like those of other animals who struggle desperately. In the end these animals are attempting to perpetuate their kind, yet their existence comes to nothing except a new generation of animals engaged in the same pointless struggle.

Not only is our existence pointless, but what goes by the name of happiness is not worth having. For happiness consists in the satisfaction of desires, but neither desiring nor satisfying a desire is worthwhile. To desire is to be in the unpleasant condition of wanting and craving—the condition of being incomplete. To desire is for us to perceive ourselves as insufficient, inadequate, and wanting. When we desire, we strive to find something to fill the void. But the attempt to fill the void is in vain. We perceive the short-lived satisfaction as our finally being released from craving, but immediately we find ourselves in the grip of another craving. The pursuit of happiness amounts to a series of experiences of emptiness and inadequacy that is never ended, and so the pursuit of happiness is really a form of suffering. Indeed, will itself is suffering.

Nonetheless, reason enables will to grasp will's nature and realize the inescapable truth about the nature of will; namely, that it is suffering. This suffering manifests itself in the life of each individual. Salvation for each of us requires that (1) we identify with the will that manifests itself in each of us, thus ceasing to take seriously our individuality, (2) we see that will is suffering, (3) we see that the best thing would be for will not to exist, and so (4) we (will that will) cease to will. In this way we become passive, indifferent pure intellects that mirror the world around us. Such indifference is about the best we can hope for.

SCHOPENHAUER AND NIETZSCHE

Nietzsche's earliest works include much generous praise for Schopenhauer and show that initially his approach to philosophy was heavily influenced by his predecessor's. In Nietzsche's first book, *The Birth of Tragedy Out of the Spirit of Music* (1872), Schopenhauer's influence is at its strongest. In this book Nietzsche attempts to explain why the ancient Greeks were fascinated by tragedy as a form of art. At one level Nietzsche's answer is that the Greeks were drawn to tragedy because of their joy, strength, and overflowing health. Secure in their affirmation of life, the Greeks found it challenging and rewarding to seek out and face the harshest truths about human existence. Nietzsche's more developed explanation traces art in general and tragedy in particular to the "opposition, in origin and aims, between the Apollinian art of sculpture, and the nonimagistic, Dionysian art of music" that "appear coupled with each other, and through this coupling ultimately generate an equally Dionysian and Apollinian form of art—Attic tragedy."[2] In coining the terms *Dionysian* and *Apollinian,* Nietzsche alludes to Dionysus, the god of fertility and wine whose retinue included satyrs, nymphs, and maenads, and to Apollo, the god of light. Nietzsche aligns the Apollinian element in art with an element in Schopenhauer's philosophy; namely, the structuring activity of the mind by which we perceive a world of diversity and plurality, a world that conforms to Schopenhauer's *principium individuationis,* or principle of individuation. The Dionysian corresponds to a second Schopenhauerean element: namely, the primordial will that lies beneath the world of appearance. For Schopenhauer the world as it is experienced is a dreamlike world of illusion concealing the will-like world as it is in itself, and Nietzsche offers a similar view: the Apollinian is a dreamlike, illusory veil over the Dionysian, the sensuous yet cruel will that constitutes the "ground of our being,"[3] the world as it is in itself. Under the influence of the Dionysian, people experience an intoxicating, "mysterious primordial unity" normally concealed from us by the influence of the Apollinian.

In a second early work, "Schopenhauer as Educator," essay 3 of *Untimely Meditations* (1873–1876), Nietzsche reveals what drew him to the work of Schopenhauer. Schopenhauer suggested that through saintly, self-abnegating individuals the surging and pointless natural order can be seen as having finally produced the reflective capacity needed to realize its meaning: existence is not worthwhile. His view was grim indeed, but Schopenhauer had the honesty and strength of mind to accept the ugly truth as he saw it and was not prompted to overcome his despair with some sort of evasion. Thus, Nietzsche attributed to Schopenhauer the same strength of mind he found in the ancient Greeks.

However, even in his early writings Nietzsche rejected Schopenhauer's pessimism. Life has aspects that can be horrifying, but the best response is not to reject life. Rather, gifted people should respond by reaching new heights of grandeur. By doing so, they redeem a world that might otherwise be condemned. Nietzsche himself undertakes this project of advocating and pursuing excellence. According to Nietzsche, the people who matter are the great individuals—the geniuses who turn their creative efforts to fashioning wholly new and remarkable lives. From the vantage point of the lives they create, such geniuses are capable of the "profound [Dionysian] feeling of oneness and identity with all living things," insofar as they see themselves as "the mankind towards which all nature presses for its redemption."[4] Everything else—an ordinary person, people in general, the state—matters only insofar as it helps to create conditions favorable to the advent of great redemptive individuals. Again and again in his writings Nietzsche expresses this idea that we should strive to be great so that life can be seen as worth embracing. For example, in *Genealogy of Morals,* second essay, sec. 24, he says that the "man of the future" will "redeem us" from "the will to nothingness."

In writings that follow "Schopenhauer as Educator," Nietzsche registers a new, more critical understanding of Schopenhauer, and already in *The Joyful Wisdom,* sec. 370, Nietzsche no longer understands Schopenhauer's work as an honest and courageous (if misguided) attempt to set out the truth about human existence. He portrays Schopenhauer much as Schopenhauer had portrayed the wicked person in the latter's own writings, namely, as "one who suffers deeply, who struggles, is tormented, and would like to turn

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Soon Nietzsche's suspicions about Schopenhauerean philosophy grow into suspicions about the thought of many other figures, and he launches a massive project in which he attempts to show that seemingly innocuous religious and philosophical perspectives actually encourage people to deplore human existence and stifle the development of great individuals. He explains asceticism, another Schopenhauerean theme, as self-hatred, as vengefulness turned inward upon the self, and emphasizes the opposite of ascetism: egoism, or the affirmation of the self. In *The Joyful Wisdom* he attributes to Socrates the idea that life is a disease, and in various works, including *The Genealogy of Morals,* he explores ways in which religion and moral philosophy ally themselves against life.

ETERNAL RECURRENCE

After turning against his mentor, Nietzsche shaped some of his views in self-conscious opposition to Schopenhauer's. One example in particular should be emphasized. In *Beyond Good and Evil,* sec. 56, Nietzsche says a correct assessment of Schopenhauer's views may open our "eyes to the opposite idea: the ideal of the most high-spirited, alive, and world-affirming human being who has not only come to terms and learned to get along with whatever was and is, but who wants to have what was and is repeated into all eternity. . . ." In view of this passage, it is reasonable to suppose that Nietzsche is interested in the doctrine of eternal recurrence—the ancient stoic idea that history repeats itself in all particulars—because he thinks that anyone who affirms human existence just as it is

would be happy to see it repeated forever. The desire for recurrence is then the test of whether or not we affirm life as much as Schopenhauer condemned it.

Of course, one might argue that the opposite of Schopenhauer's *condemnation* of existence in all of its particulars is the *affirmation* of existence in all of its particulars, rather than the desire to "have what was and is repeated." In any case, Nietzsche certainly advocates affirming existence as it is, hiding nothing from ourselves, and at the end of the second chapter of *Ecce Homo,* he formulates his ideal without referring to eternal recurrence: "My formula for greatness in a human being is *amor fati* [love of fate]: that one wants nothing to be different, not forward, not backward, not in all eternity."

THE ÜBERMENSCH

Introduced in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1883–1885), Nietzsche's ideal of the *Übermensch** is best understood in light of his view that it is the great individual who redeems life. The Übermensch is a person who sheds traditional values and re-creates himself or herself in light of a new vision of human excellence. Moreover, the *Übermensch* is never satisfied with the new level of excellence he introduces; instead, he is constantly on the way to overcoming himself and creating ever higher forms of excellence. The *Übermensch* is always a work in progress.

WILL TO POWER AND MORALITY

According to Nietzsche, the most important human motivation is the will to power, which takes various forms. More often than not, Nietzsche understands it to be the desire for excellence or greatness, but while everyone wants to excel, different people interpret excellence in different ways. Those whom Nietzsche praises in the highest terms are people who create the very terms under which they excel. They create their own values in an attempt to define and achieve higher excellence. They constantly reinvent human excellence; although they affirm themselves, they are never satisfied with themselves and constantly strive to outdo themselves and others.

Using his theory of human motivation, Nietzsche develops positive portrayals of human characteristics that most people despise. Such despised qualities as egoism, unconventionality, cruelty, and the desire to exploit others he portrays as natural features of great individuals. A high self-regard is simply a mark of a healthy affirmation of life. Furthermore, the great are entitled to see themselves as superior to others *because* they excel. Finally, given the logic of comparative concepts such as "superior," "excellent," "above average," and so on, becoming great requires that we outdo others. Yet when we desire to outdo others, and they us, we are interested in depriving them of something they value; we want to exploit them. The great will also tend to be "free spirits" who set aside the restraints of social convention and hold themselves only to values and laws that they give themselves.

Not only does Nietzsche positively portray human characteristics that are usually despised, he also devotes a great deal of space to negative portrayals of traditional human virtues. By combining these two revaluations, Nietzsche intends to combat the idea that human existence is a thing to be deplored. He elevates the status of "bad" human characteristics by welding them to "good" characteristics. "Man needs what is most evil in him for what is best in him," he says in *Zarathustra,* part 3, sec. 13. Pity he links to people like Schopenhauer who actually loath humanity, and Nietzsche emphasizes that improving ourselves in particular or humanity in general requires harsh discipline and the willingness to neglect those who embrace mediocrity. Moreover, he suggests that "slave morality," or egalitarian, democratic values, are the creations of weak, mediocre people who envy powerful, great individuals who straightforwardly value power and being powerful. Slave moralists take their revenge on the powerful by adopting a value scheme by which the powerful are portrayed as "evil" and the importance of excelling is denied.

> The slave revolt in morality begins when *ressentiment* itself becomes creative and gives birth to values. . . . Slave morality from the outset says No to what is 'outside,' what is 'different,' what is 'not itself'; and *this* No is its creative deed. This inversion of the value-positing eye . . . is of the essence of *ressentiment* . . . its action is fundamentally reaction. The reverse is the case with the noble mode of valuation: it acts and grows spontaneously, it seeks its opposite only so as to affirm itself more gratefully and triumphantly. . . .[5]

Nietzsche suggests that "slave morality" is unnatural and unhealthy in that it is an inversion of the natural will to power that seduces us to life. Also, "slave morality" requires self-deception. Unlike the powerful, the weak refuse to acknowledge the importance of relative standing against others, yet the weak are deeply concerned about their relative standing, as is betrayed by their emphasis on equality—equality is *itself* a measure of relative standing. If we are honest with ourselves, Nietzsche thinks, we will acknowledge the force of "master morality." We will acknowledge values such as self-regard and superiority, which are affirmed by great individuals.

GOD IS DEAD

In pronouncing God dead, Nietzsche meant to suggest that the concept of God no longer plays a useful role in human progress and serves only to hinder people. Nietzsche attempted to bring out many ways in which the world's religions and otherworldly philosophies such as Platonism have turned people against life, and he singled out Christianity (which he calls "Platonism for the masses") for his most biting invective. To express their disappointment with human existence, religious people denigrate the actual world by contrasting it with an imaginary supernatural world of their own creation. The more gloriously the supernatural world is portrayed, the less valuable the actual world seems, and the less attached to human existence people find themselves. Nietzsche also suggests (in *Genealogy of Morals,* second essay, sec. 22) that the idea of God is a projection by the person who is looking for relief from self-torment: "He ejects from himself all his denial of himself . . . in the form of an affirmation, as something existent, corporeal, real, as God, . . . as the beyond. . . ." Nietzsche urges people to expend their creative efforts on making the actual world more remarkable by making their own lives more remarkable. We should not aspire to the supernatural world contemplated by Christianity. As Nietzsche's character says in part 2, sec. 2 of *Thus*

*Sometimes translated as "superman" or "overman."

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A great number of beliefs rest on assumptions about the otherworldly; hence, as it comes to lose its grip on us, we will have to reject those further beliefs as well. In particular, people have long assumed that valuation is made possible because God makes some things objectively good or right and others objectively bad or wrong. Hence, Nietzsche believed that a wave of nihilism would result from the death of God; he believed that many would echo Dostoyevski's claim that if God does not exist, then all is permitted (*Will to Power,* Book One). However, Nietzsche himself rejected nihilism. Valuing does not require an objective basis, for people may invent values. They may devise new visions of human excellence and affirm the achievement of excellence.

TRUTH AND PERSPECTIVISM

Nietzsche's understanding of, and attitude about, truth took various turns during his career. Throughout his career he emphasized the importance of accepting the truth about human existence, for we must grasp the nature of the world if we are truly to affirm existence. To affirm existence, which is one of the marks of greatness (*Beyond Good and Evil,* sec. 39), we must also affirm our natural interest in power, and our values and identities must be healthy outgrowths of our will to power. But Nietzsche's emphasis on the importance of the truth was not unequivocal. In fact, he grew more and more suspicious of the unqualified commitment to truth. For example, in *The Joyful Wisdom,* sec. 344, he linked this commitment to the ancient Greek religious belief that truth is divine, and in *Beyond Good and Evil,* sec. 34, he said that "it is no more than a moral prejudice that truth is worth more than mere appearance."

Increasingly, Nietzsche's emphasis on the importance of not deceiving ourselves was undermined by his own analyses of truth and reason. Soon after his earliest writings he began to criticize the idea of truth as the portrayal of facts about things-in-themselves, facts dealing with an otherworldly metaphysical realm. Reason Nietzsche understood as the instrument of the desires, so that a disinterested objective form of reason was not possible. Truth Nietzsche sometimes analyzed as useful lies, as calcified preju-

dice, and as worn-out metaphors, although he also says in several places that beliefs that are very harmful can be true and that "renouncing false judgements would mean renouncing life and a denial of life." He also experimented with *perspectivism,* which some commentators erroneously interpret as the view that truth is relative to perspective. In fact, Nietzsche's perspectivism is the view that people's interpretations of the world will vary depending on what they desire, that many different interpretations will be defensible from the point of view of many different value orientations, and that none of these interpretations will be more plausible than *all* of the others. Nonetheless, some interpretations will be more plausible than *some* others, and presumably among the most plausible interpretations will be those defended by people who will power and affirm life. Perspectivism led Nietzsche to suggest that people abandon the idea that the objective, scientific view is the only interpretation of the world and that they experiment with more life-affirming views of the world.

THE SELF

Nietzsche questions virtually all of the traditional, Cartesian views about ourselves. He says that we do not have direct access to ourselves as conscious subjects. The conscious subject is an inferred entity, something we posit in order to explain what we can perceive. Moreover, and as a consequence of the inferential status of the conscious subject, all aspects of the psyche are questionable. For instance, the idea that the subject is a thinking substance is simply a questionable hypothesis. A related point is that Nietzsche, like Schopenhauer, takes very seriously the idea of the unconscious. In fact, Nietzsche suggests that our mental life is largely hidden from us; our conscious life reaches only to the outer skin of the psyche.

While Nietzsche rejects the Cartesian view of the self, it is by no means clear what Nietzsche means to put in its place. In various places he experiments with several interesting alternatives. In *The Joyful Wisdom* he sketches a view that suggests that individuals should not be closely identified with their conscious life. He suggests that the capacity for consciousness goes hand in hand with the capacity for language and that the latter is a social device, so that "consciousness does not really belong to man's individual existence but rather to his social or herd nature." In other places, such as *Will to Power,* secs. 480–492, Nietzsche questions the idea of a unified self or subject and suggests that while we attempt to create a unity out of the disparate elements of the psyche, there is no reason to think that we will always succeed. He experiments with the idea that within the psyche is a "multiplicity" of subjects struggling for domination over each other. In some passages, such as *The Joyful Wisdom,* sec. 110, he challenges the claim that the will is free, saying that the doctrine of free will is a device designed to make people feel guilty for their actions, while in others, such as in the second essay of *Genealogy of Morals,* he suggests that it can be free.

NOTES

1. Arthur Schopenhauer, *The World as Will and Representation,* trans. E. F. J. Payne (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1918), p. 5.
2. Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy Out of the Spirit of Music* in *The Birth of Tragedy and The Case of Wagner* (hereafter *Tragedy*), trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), sec. 1.
3. *Tragedy,* sec. 4.
4. Nietzsche, "Schopenhauer as Educator" in *Untimely Meditations,* trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), sec. 5.
5. Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals* in *On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo,* trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage Books, 1969), sec. 10.

PRECURSOR

ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER

From The World as Will and Representation

68.

I take up again the thread of our discussion of the ethical significance of conduct, to show how, from the same source from which all goodness, affection, virtue, and nobility of character spring, there ultimately arises also what I call denial of the will-to-live.*

*Some footnotes have been omitted—ed.

Just as previously we saw hatred and wicked
conditioned by egoism, and this depending on kn
edge being entangled in the *principium individu*
nis, so we found as the source and essence of jus
and, when carried farther to the highest degree
love and magnanimity, that penetration of the *p*
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abolishing the distinction between our own ind
uality and that of others, makes possible and exp
perfect goodness of disposition, extending to
most disinterested love, and the most generous
sacrifice for others.

Now, if seeing through the *principium indivi*
tionis, if this direct knowledge of the identity o
will in all its phenomena, is present in a high de
of distinctness, it will at once show an influence o
will which goes still farther. If that veil of Maya
principium individuationis, is lifted from the eye
man to such an extent that he no longer make
egoistical distinction between himself and the pe
of others, but takes as much interest in the suffe
of other individuals as in his own, and thus is not
benevolent and charitable in the highest degree,
even ready to sacrifice his own individuality when
several others can be saved thereby, then it fol
automatically that such a man, recognizing in al
ings his own true and innermost self, must also re
the endless sufferings of all that lives as his own,
thus take upon himself the pain of the whole worl
suffering is any longer strange or foreign to him
the miseries of others, which he sees and is so sel
able to alleviate, all the miseries of which he has
rect knowledge, and even those he recognizes m
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longer the changing weal and woe of his person th
has in view, as is the case with the man still involv
egoism, but, as he sees through the *principium*
viduationis, everything lies equally near to him
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finds it involved in a constant passing away, a
striving, an inward conflict, and a continual suffe
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knowledge of the world, affirm this very life thr
constant acts of will, and precisely in this way
himself more and more firmly to it, press himsel
more and more closely? Thus, whoever is still inv

rather to his social or herd nature." In other places, such as *Will to Power,* secs. 480–492, Nietzsche questions the idea of a unified self or subject and suggests that while we attempt to create a unity out of the disparate elements of the psyche, there is no reason to think that we will always succeed. He experiments with the idea that within the psyche is a "multiplicity" of subjects struggling for domination over each other. In some passages, such as *The Joyful Wisdom,* sec. 110, he challenges the claim that the will is free, saying that the doctrine of free will is a device designed to make people feel guilty for their actions, while in others, such as in the second essay of *Genealogy of Morals,* he suggests that it can be free.

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take up again the thread of our discussion of the ethical significance of conduct, to show how, from the same source from which all goodness, affection, virtue, and nobility of character spring, there ultimately arises also what I call denial of the will-to-live.*

*Some footnotes have been omitted—ed.

Just as previously we saw hatred and wickedness conditioned by egoism, and this depending on knowledge being entangled in the *principium individuationis,* so we found as the source and essence of justice, and, when carried farther to the highest degrees, of love and magnanimity, that penetration of the *principium individuationis.* This penetration alone, by abolishing the distinction between our own individuality and that of others, makes possible and explains perfect goodness of disposition, extending to the most disinterested love, and the most generous self-sacrifice for others.

Now, if seeing through the *principium individuationis,* if this direct knowledge of the identity of the will in all its phenomena, is present in a high degree of distinctness, it will at once show an influence on the will which goes still farther. If that veil of Maya, the *principium individuationis,* is lifted from the eyes of a man to such an extent that he no longer makes the egoistical distinction between himself and the person of others, but takes as much interest in the sufferings of other individuals as in his own, and thus is not only benevolent and charitable in the highest degree, but even ready to sacrifice his own individuality whenever several others can be saved thereby, then it follows automatically that such a man, recognizing in all beings his own true and innermost self, must also regard the endless sufferings of all that lives as his own, and thus take upon himself the pain of the whole world. No suffering is any longer strange or foreign to him. All the miseries of others, which he sees and is so seldom able to alleviate, all the miseries of which he has indirect knowledge, and even those he recognizes merely as possible, affect his mind just as do his own. It is no longer the changing weal and woe of his person that he has in view, as is the case with the man still involved in egoism, but, as he sees through the *principium individuationis,* everything lies equally near to him. He knows the whole, comprehends its inner nature, and finds it involved in a constant passing away, a vain striving, an inward conflict, and a continual suffering. Wherever he looks, he sees suffering humanity and the suffering animal world, and a world that passes away. Now all this lies just as near to him as only his own person lies to the egoist. Now how could he, with such knowledge of the world, affirm this very life through constant acts of will, and precisely in this way bind himself more and more firmly to it, press himself to it more and more closely? Thus, whoever is still involved in the *principium individuationis,* in egoism, knows only particular things and their relation to his own person, and these then become ever renewed *motives* of his willing. On the other hand, that knowledge of the whole, of the inner nature of the thing-in-itself, which has been described, becomes the *quieter* of all and every willing. The will now turns away from life; it shudders at the pleasures in which it recognizes the affirmation of life. Man attains to the state of voluntary renunciation, resignation, true composure, and complete willlessness. At times, in the hard experience of our own sufferings or in the vividly recognized suffering of others, knowledge of the vanity and bitterness of life comes close to us who are still enveloped in the veil of Maya. We would like to deprive desires of their sting, close the entry to all suffering, purify and sanctify ourselves by complete and final resignation. But the illusion of the phenomenon soon ensnares us again, and its motives set the will in motion once more; we cannot tear ourselves free. The allurements of hope, the flattery of the present, the sweetness of pleasures, the well-being that falls to the lot of our person amid the lamentations of a suffering world governed by chance and error, all these draw us back to it, and rivet the bonds anew. Therefore Jesus says: "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God."*

If we compare life to a circular path of red-hot coals having a few cool places, a path that we have to run over incessantly, then the man entangled in delusion is comforted by the cool place on which he is just now standing, or which he sees near him, and sets out to run over the path. But the man who sees through the *principium individuationis,* and recognizes the true nature of things-in-themselves, and thus the whole, is no longer susceptible of such consolation; he sees himself in all places simultaneously, and withdraws. His will turns about; it no longer affirms its own inner nature, mirrored in the phenomenon, but denies it. The phenomenon by which this becomes manifest is the transition from virtue to *asceticism.* In other words, it is no longer enough for him to love others like himself, and to do as much for them as for himself, but there arises in him a strong aversion to the

*Matthew xix, 24. [Tr.]

inner nature whose expression is his own phenomenon, to the will-to-live, the kernel and essence of that world recognized as full of misery. He therefore renounces precisely this inner nature, which appears in him and is expressed already by his body, and his action gives the lie to his phenomenon, and appears in open contradiction thereto. Essentially nothing but phenomenon of the will, he ceases to will anything, guards against attaching his will to anything, tries to establish firmly in himself the greatest indifference to all things. His body, healthy and strong, expresses the sexual impulse through the genitals, but he denies the will, and gives the lie to the body; he desires no sexual satisfaction on any condition. Voluntary and complete chastity is the first step in asceticism or the denial of the will-to-live. It thereby denies the affirmation of the will which goes beyond the individual life, and thus announces that the will, whose phenomenon is the body, ceases with the life of this body. Nature, always true and naïve, asserts that, if this maxim became universal, the human race would die out; and after what was said in the second book about the connexion of all phenomena of will, I think I can assume that, with the highest phenomenon of will, the weaker reflection of it, namely the animal world, would also be abolished, just as the half-shades vanish with the full light of day. With the complete abolition of knowledge the rest of the world would of itself also vanish into nothing, for there can be no object without a subject. . . . Sacrifice signifies resignation generally, and the rest of nature has to expect its salvation from man who is at the same time priest and sacrifice.

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Asceticism shows itself further in voluntary and intentional poverty, which arises not only *per accidens*, since property is given away to alleviate the sufferings of others, but which is here an end in itself; it is to serve as a constant mortification of the will, so that satisfaction of desires, the sweet of life, may not again stir the will, of which self-knowledge has conceived a horror. He who has reached this point still always feels, as living body, as concrete phenomenon of will, the natural tendency to every kind of willing; but he deliberately suppresses it, since he compels himself to refrain from doing all that he would like to do, and on the other hand to do all that he would not like to do, even if this has no further purpose than that of serving to mortify the will. As he himself denies the will that appears in his own person, he will not resist when another does the same thing, in other words, inflicts wrong on him. Therefore, every suffering that comes to him from outside through chance or the wickedness of others is welcome to him; every injury, every ignominy, every outrage. He gladly accepts them as the opportunity for giving himself the certainty that he no longer affirms the will, but gladly sides with every enemy of the will's phenomenon that is his own person. He therefore endures such ignominy and suffering with inexhaustible patience and gentleness, returns good for all evil without ostentation, and allows the fire of anger to rise again within him as little as he does the fire of desires. Just as he mortifies the will itself, so does he mortify its visibility, its objectivity, the body. He nourishes it sparingly, lest its vigorous flourishing and thriving should animate afresh and excite more strongly the will, of which it is the mere expression and mirror. Thus he resorts to fasting, and even to self-castigation and self-torture, in order that, by constant privation and suffering, he may more and more break down and kill the will that he recognizes and abhors as the source of his own suffering existence and of the world's. Finally, if death comes, which breaks up the phenomenon of this will, the essence of such will having long since expired through free denial of itself except for the feeble residue which appears as the vitality of this body, then it is most welcome, and is cheerfully accepted as a longed-for deliverance. It is not merely the phenomenon, as in the case of others, that comes to an end with death, but the inner being itself that is abolished; this had a feeble existence merely in the phenomenon. This last slender bond is now severed; for him who ends thus, the world has at the same time ended.

And what I have described here with feeble tongue, and only in general terms, is not some philosophical fable, invented by myself and only of today. No, it was the enviable life of so many saints and great souls among the Christians, and even more among the Hindus and Buddhists, and also among the believers of other religions. Different as were the dogmas that were impressed on their faculty of reason, the inner, direct, and intuitive knowledge from which alone all virtue and holiness can come is nevertheless expressed in precisely the same way in the conduct of life. For here also is seen the great distinction between intuitive and abstract knowledge, a distinction of such importance and of general application in the whole of our discussion, and one which hitherto has received too little notice. Between the two is a wide gulf; and, in regard to knowledge of the inner nature of the world, this gulf can be crossed only by philosophy. Intuitively, or *in concreto*, every man is really conscious of all philosophical truths; but to bring them into his abstract knowledge, into reflection, is the business of the philosopher, who neither ought to nor can do more than this.

Thus it may be that the inner nature of holiness, of self-renunciation, of mortification of one's own will, of asceticism, is here for the first time expressed in abstract terms and free from everything mythical, as *denial of the will-to-live*, which appears after the complete knowledge of its own inner being has become for it the quieter of all willing. On the other hand, it has been known directly and expressed in deed by all those saints and ascetics who, in spite of the same inner knowledge, used very different language according to the dogmas which their faculty of reason had accepted, and in consequence of which an Indian, a Christian, or a Lamaist saint must each give a very different account of his own conduct; but this is of no importance at all as regards the fact. A saint may be full of the most absurd superstition, or, on the other hand, may be a philosopher; it is all the same. His conduct alone is evidence that he is a saint; for, in a moral regard, it springs not from abstract knowledge, but from intuitively apprehended, immediate knowledge of the world and of its inner nature, and is expressed by him through some dogma only for the satisfaction of his faculty of reason.

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It will be remembered from the third book that aesthetic pleasure in the beautiful consists, to a large extent, in the fact that, when we enter the state of pure contemplation, we are raised for the moment above all willing, above all desires and cares; we are, so to speak, rid of ourselves. We are no longer the individual that knows in the interest of its constant willing, the correlative of the particular thing to which objects become motives, but the eternal subject of knowing purified of the will, the correlative of the Idea. And we know that these moments, when, delivered from the fierce pressure of the will, we emerge, as it were, from the heavy atmosphere of the earth, are the most blissful that we experience. From this we can infer how blessed must be the life of a man whose will is silenced not for a few moments, as in the enjoyment of the beautiful, but for ever, indeed completely extinguished, except for the last glimmering spark that maintains the body and is extinguished with it. Such a man who, after many bitter struggles with his own nature, has at last completely conquered, is then left only as pure knowing being, as the undimmed mirror of the world. Nothing can distress or alarm him any more; nothing can any longer move him; for he has cut all the thousand threads of willing which hold us bound to the world, and which as craving, fear, envy, and anger drag us here and there in constant pain. He now looks back calmly and with a smile on the phantasmagoria of this world which was once able to move and agonize even his mind, but now stands before him as indifferently as chess-men at the end of a game, or as fancy dress cast off in the morning, the form and figure of which taunted and disquieted us on the carnival night. Life and its forms merely float before him as a fleeting phenomenon, as a light morning dream to one half-awake, through which reality already

*"Bring yourself to be reasonable!" [Tr.]

shines, and which can no longer deceive; and, like this morning dream, they too finally vanish without any violent transition. . . .

However, we must not imagine that, after the denial of the will-to-live has once appeared through knowledge that has become a quieter of the will, such denial no longer wavers or falters, and that we can rest on it as on an inherited property. On the contrary, it must always be achieved afresh by constant struggle. For as the body is the will itself only in the form of objectivity, or as phenomenon in the world as representation, that whole will-to-live exists potentially so long as the body lives, and is always striving to reach actuality and to burn afresh with all its intensity. We therefore find in the lives of saintly persons that peace and bliss we have described, only as the blossom resulting from the constant overcoming of the will; and we see the constant struggle with the will-to-live as the soil from which it shoots up; for on earth no one can have lasting peace. We therefore see the histories of the inner life of saints full of spiritual conflicts, temptations, and desertion from grace, in other words, from that kind of knowledge which, by rendering all motives ineffectual, as a universal quieter silences all willing, gives the deepest peace, and opens the gate to freedom. Therefore we see also those who have once attained to denial of the will, strive with all their might to keep to this path by self-imposed renunciations of every kind, by a penitent and hard way of life, and by looking for what is disagreeable to them; all this in order to suppress the will that is constantly springing up afresh. Finally, therefore, because they already know the value of salvation, their anxious care for the retention of the hard-won blessing, their scruples of conscience in the case of every innocent enjoyment or with every little excitement of their vanity; this is also the last thing to die, the most indestructible, the most active, and the most foolish of all man's inclinations. By the expression *asceticism*, which I have already used so often, I understand in the narrower sense this *deliberate* breaking of the will by refusing the agreeable and looking for the disagreeable, the voluntarily chosen way of life of penance and self-chastisement, for the constant mortification of the will.

Now, if we see this practised by persons who have already attained to denial of the will, in order that they may keep to it, then suffering in general, as it is inflicted by fate, is also a second way . . . of attaining to that denial. Indeed, we may assume that most men can reach it only in this way, and that it is the suffering personally felt, not the suffering merely known, which most frequently produces complete resignation, often only at the approach of death. For only in the case of a few is mere knowledge sufficient to bring about the denial of the will, the knowledge namely that sees through the *principium individuationis*, first producing perfect goodness of disposition and universal love of mankind, and finally enabling them to recognize as their own all the sufferings of the world. Even in the case of the individual who approaches this point, the tolerable condition of his own person, the flattery of the moment, the allurement of hope, and the satisfaction of the will offering itself again and again, i.e., the satisfaction of desire, are almost invariably a constant obstacle to the denial of the will, and a constant temptation to a renewed affirmation of it. For this reason, all those allurements have in this respect been personified as the devil. Therefore in most cases the will must be broken by the greatest personal suffering before its self-denial appears. We then see the man suddenly retire into himself, after he is brought to the verge of despair through all the stages of increasing affliction with the most violent resistance. We see him know himself and the world, change his whole nature, rise above himself and above all suffering, as if purified and sanctified by it, in inviolable peace, bliss, and sublimity, willingly renounce everything he formerly desired with the greatest vehemence, and gladly welcome death. . . .

In real life we see those unfortunate persons who have to drink to the dregs the greatest measure of suffering, face a shameful, violent, and often painful death on the scaffold with complete mental vigour, after they are deprived of all hope; and very often we see them converted in this way. We should not, of course, assume that there is so great a difference between their character and that of most men as their fate seems to suggest; we have to ascribe the latter for the most part to circumstances; yet they are guilty and, to a considerable degree, bad. But we see many of them converted in the way mentioned, after the appearance of complete hopelessness. They now show actual goodness and purity of disposition, true abhorrence of committing any deed in the least degree wicked or uncharitable. They forgive their enemies, even those through whom they innocently suffered; and not merely in words and from a kind of hypocritical fear of the judges of the nether world, but in reality and with inward earnestness, and with no wish for revenge. Indeed, their suffering and dying in the end become agreeable to them, for the denial of the will-to-live has made its appearance. They often decline the deliverance offered them, and die willingly, peacefully, and blissfully. The last secret of life has revealed itself to them in the excess of pain, the secret, namely, that evil and wickedness, suffering and hatred, the tormented and the tormentor, different as they may appear to knowledge that follows the principle of sufficient reason, are in themselves one, phenomenon of the one will-to-live that objectifies its conflict with itself by means of the *principium individuationis*. They have learned to know both sides in full measure, the wickedness and the evil; and since they ultimately see the identity of the two, they reject them both at the same time; they deny the will-to-live.

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Since all suffering is a mortification and a call to resignation, it has potentially a sanctifying force. By this is explained the fact that great misfortune and deep sorrow in themselves inspire one with a certain awe. But the sufferer becomes wholly an object of reverence to us only when, surveying the course of his life as a chain of sorrows, or mourning a great and incurable pain, he does not really look at the concatenation of circumstances which plunged just his life into mourning; he does not stop at that particular great misfortune that befell him. For up till then, his knowledge still follows the principle of sufficient reason, and clings to the particular phenomenon; he still continues to will life, only not on the conditions that have happened to him. He is really worthy of reverence only when his glance has been raised from the particular to the universal, and when he regards his own suffering merely as an example of the whole and for him; for in an ethical respect he becomes inspired with genius, one case holds good for a thousand, so that the whole of life, conceived as essential suffering, then brings him to resignation.

WORKS BY FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

The Birth of Tragedy

I

We will have gained much for the science of esthetics, when once we have perceived not only by logical in-

Skip to 116

himself. Only in so far as the genius in the act of artistic production coalesces with this primordial artist of the world, does he get a glimpse of the eternal essence of art, for in this state he is, in a marvelous manner, like the weird picture of the fairy tale which can at will turn its eyes and behold itself. He is now at once subject and object; at once poet, actor, and spectator.

Schopenhauer as Educator *from* Untimely Meditations

I

When the traveler, who had seen many countries and nations and continents, was asked what common attribute he had found everywhere existing among men, he answered, "They have a tendency to sloth." Many may think that the fuller truth would have been, "They are all timid. They hide themselves behind manners and opinions. Basically, every man knows well enough that he is a unique being, only once on this earth; and by no extraordinary chance will such a marvelously picturesque piece of diversity in unity as he is, ever be put together a second time. He knows this, but hides it like an evil conscience. And why? From fear of his neighbor, who demands the latest conventionalities in him and is wrapped up in them himself. But what is it that forces the man to fear his neighbor, to think and act with his herd, and not seek his own joy? Shyness perhaps, in a few rare cases, but in the majority it is idleness; the "taking things easily," in a word the "tendency to sloth," of which the traveler spoke. He was right; men are more slothful than timid, and their greatest fear is of the burdens that an uncompromising honesty and nakedness of speech and action would lay on them. It is only the artists who hate this lazy wandering in borrowed manners and ill-fitting opinions, and discover the secret of the evil conscience, the truth that each human being is a unique marvel. They show us how in every little movement of his muscles the man is an individual self, and further—as an analytical deduction from his individuality—a beautiful and interesting object, a new and incredible phenomenon (as is every work of nature) that can never become tedious. If the great thinker despises mankind, it is for their laziness; they seem mere indifferent bits of pottery, not worth any commerce or improvement. The man who will not belong to the general mass has only to stop "taking himself easily"; to follow his conscience, which cries out to him, "Be yourself! All that you do and think and desire, is not—you yourself!"

Every youthful soul hears this cry day and night, and quivers to hear it: For she divines the sum of happiness that has been from eternity destined for her if she think of her true deliverance; and toward this happiness she can in no way be helped, so long as she lies in the chains of opinion and of fear. . . .

. . . The wonderful fact of our existing at this present moment of time gives us the greatest encouragement to live after our own rule and measure; so inexplicable is it, that we should be living just today, though there has been an infinite amount of time in which we might have arisen; that we own nothing but a span's length of it, this "today," and must show in it from where and into what we have arisen. We have to answer for our existence to ourselves; and will therefore be our own true pilots and not admit that our being resembles a blind fortuity. One must take a rather impudent and reckless way with the riddle; especially as the key is apt to be lost, however things turn out. Why cling to your bit of earth, or your little business, or listen to what your neighbor says? It is so provincial to bind oneself to views which are no longer binding a couple of hundred miles away. East and West are signs that somebody chalks up in front of us to fool such cowards as we are. "I will make the attempt to gain freedom," says the youthful soul; and will be hindered just because two nations happen to hate each other and go to war, or because there is a sea between two parts of the earth, or a religion is taught in the vicinity that did not exist two thousand years ago. "And this is not you," the soul says. "No one can build you the bridge, over which you must cross the river of life, save yourself alone. . . ."

But how can we "find ourselves" again, and how can man "know himself"? He is a thing obscure and veiled: If the hare has seven skins, man can cast from him seventy times seven and yet will not be able to say "Here you are in truth; this is outer shell no more." Also this digging into one's self, this straight, violent descent into the pit of one's being, is a troublesome and dangerous business to start. A man may easily incur such an injury so that no physician can heal him. And again, what would be the use, because everything bears witness to our essence—our friendships and enmities, our looks and greetings, our memories and forgetfulnesses, our books and our writing! This is the most effective way: To let the youthful soul look back on life with the question, "What have you up to now truly loved? What has drawn your soul upward, mastered it, and blessed it, too?" Erect these things that you have honored before yourself, and, maybe, they will show you, in their being and their order a law that is the fundamental law of your own self. Compare these objects. Consider how one completes and broadens and transcends and explains another; how they form a ladder on which you have always been climbing to yourself: for your true being lies not deeply hidden in yourself, but an infinite height above you, or at least above that which you commonly take to be yourself. The true educators and molders reveal to you the real groundwork and import of your being, something that in itself cannot be educated, and that in any case is difficult of approach, bound and crippled: your educators can be nothing but your liberators. And that is the secret of all culture: It does not supply artificial limbs, wax noses, or spectacles for the eyes—what could provide such gifts is but a sham of education. But it is rather a liberation, a removal of all the weeds and rubbish and vermin that attack the delicate shoots, the streaming forth of light and warmth, the tender dropping of the night rain. It is the imitation and the adoring of nature when she is as merciful as a mother—her completion, when it deflects before her fierce and ruthless blasts and turns them to good, and draws a veil over all expression of her tragic lack of understanding—for she is a stepmother too, sometimes.

There are other means of "finding ourselves," of coming to ourselves out of the confusion in which we all wander as in a dreary cloud. But I know of no means better than to think about our educators. So I will today take as my theme the hard teacher Arthur Schopenhauer.

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IV

. . . To be honest, it is necessary to become really angry in order that things may be better. The image of Schopenhauer's man can help us here. *Schopenhauer's man*

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IV

. . . To be honest, it is necessary to become really angry in order that things may be better. The image of Schopenhauer's man can help us here. *Schopenhauer's man voluntarily takes upon himself the pain of telling the truth:* This pain serves to quench his individual will and makes him ready for the complete transformation of his being, which is the inner meaning of life to realize. This truthfulness in him appears to other men to be an effect of malice for they think the preservation of their inadequacies and pretenses is the first duty of humanity, and anyone who destroys their playthings is merely malicious. They are tempted to cry out to such a man, in Faust's words to Mephistopheles:

> "So to the active and eternal
> Creative force,
> You now oppose the cold fist of the Devil"

[A]nd he who would live according to Schopenhauer would seem to be more like a Mephistopheles than a Faust—that is, to our weak modern eyes, which always discover signs of malice in any negation. But there is a kind of denial and destruction that is the effect of that strong aspiration after holiness and deliverance, which Schopenhauer was the first philosopher to teach our profane and worldly generation. Everything that can be denied deserves to be denied; and real sincerity means the belief in a state of things which cannot be denied or in which there is no lie. The sincere man feels that his activity has a metaphysical meaning. It can only be explained by the laws of a different and a higher life. It is in the deepest sense an affirmation: even if everything that he does seems utterly opposed to the laws of our present life. It must lead therefore to constant suffering; but he knows, as Meister Eckhard did, that "the quickest beast that will carry you to perfection is suffering." Every one, I should think, who has such an ideal before him, must feel a wider sympathy; and he will have a burning desire to become a "Schopenhauer man"—pure and wonderfully patient; on his intellectual side full of a devouring fire and far removed from the cold and contemptuous "neutrality" of the so-called scientific man; so high above any warped and morose outlook on life as to offer himself as the first victim of the truth he has won with a deep consciousness of the sufferings that must spring from his sincerity. His courage will destroy his happiness on earth; he must be an enemy to the men he loves and the institutions in which he grew up; he must spare neither person nor thing; however it may hurt him, he will be misunderstood and thought an ally of forces that he abhors; in his search

for righteousness he will seem unrighteous by human standards. But he must comfort himself with the words that his teacher Schopenhauer once used: "A happy life is impossible. The highest thing that man can aspire to is a *heroic* life; such as one that a man lives who is always fighting against unequal odds for the good of others and wins in the end without any thanks. After the battle is over, he stands like the Prince in the *re corvo* of Gozzi, with dignity and nobility in his eyes but turned to stone. His memory remains and will be reverenced as a hero's; his will, that has been mortified all his life by toiling and struggling, by evil payment and ingratitude, is extinguished in Nirvana." Such a heroic life, with its full "mortification," corresponds very little to the paltry ideas of the people who talk most about it and make festivals in memory of great men in the belief that a great man is great in the same way as they are small, either through exercise of his gifts to please himself or by a blind mechanical obedience to this inner force; so that the man who does not possess the gift or feel the compulsion has the same right to be small as the other to be great. But "gift" and "compulsion" are contemptible words, mere means of escape from an inner voice, a slander on him who has listened to the voice—the great man. He least of all will allow himself to be given gifts or compelled to anything: for he knows as well as any smaller man how easily life can be taken and how soft the bed is on which he might lie if he went the pleasant and conventional way with himself and his fellow creatures. All human affairs are organized to distract people from life so that we cease to be aware of life. Now why will he so strongly choose the opposite, namely, to be aware of life and to suffer from it? Because he sees that men will betray himself and that there is a kind of agreement to draw him from his den. He will prick up his ears and gather himself together and say, "I will remain my own." He gradually comes to understand what a fearful decision it is. For he must go down into the depths of existence with a string of curious questions on his lips—"Why am I alive? What lesson do I have to learn from life? How have I become what I am, and why do I suffer from what I am?" He is troubled and sees that no one is troubled in the same way; but rather that the hands of his fellow men are passionately stretched out toward the fantastic drama of the political theater, or they themselves are treading the boards under many disguises—youths, men and graybeards, fathers, citizens, priests, merchants and officials—busy with the comedy they are all playing and never thinking of their own selves. To the question "Why do you live?" they would all immediately answer with pride, "To *become* a good citizen or professor or statesman," and yet they *are* something which can never be changed. And why are they just this? Ah, and why nothing better? The man who only regards his life as a moment in the evolution of a race or a state or a science, and thus thinks he belongs merely to the history of "becoming," has not understood the lesson of existence and must learn it over again. This eternal "becoming something" is a lying puppet show, in which man has forgot himself; it is the distraction that scatters the individual to the four winds, the eternal childish game that the great child time, is playing in front of us—and with us. The heroism of truthfulness lies in ceasing to be the plaything of time. Everything in the process of "becoming" is a hollow sham, contemptible and shallow: man can only find the solution of his riddle in "being" something definite and unchangeable. He begins to test how deep both "becoming" and "being" are rooted in him; and a fearful task is before his soul: to destroy the first and bring all the falsity of things to the light. He wishes to know everything, but not, like Goethe's man, to feed a delicate taste, to take delight, from a safe place, in the multiplicity of existence; he himself is the first sacrifice that he brings. The heroic man does not think of his happiness or misery, his virtues or his vices, or of his being the measure of things; he has no further hopes of himself and will accept the utter consequences of his hopelessness. His strength lies in his ability to forget himself: if he has a thought for himself, it is only to measure the vast distance between himself and his aim and to view what he has left behind himself as so much dross. The old philosophers sought for happiness and truth with all their strength: and there is an evil principle in nature that not one shall find that which he cannot help seeking. But the man who looks for a lie in everything, and becomes a willing friend to unhappiness, shall have a marvelous disillusioning: There hovers near him something unutterable, of which truth and happiness are but idolatrous images born of the night; the earth loses her dragging weight, the events and powers of earth become as a dream, and a gradual clearness widens around him like a summer evening. It is as though the beholder of these things began to awaken, and it had only been the clouds of a passing dream that had been weaving about him. They will at some time disappear; and then it will be day.

V

But I have promised to speak of Schopenhauer, as far as my experience goes, as an *educator,* and it is far from being sufficient to paint the ideal humanity which is the "Platonic idea" in Schopenhauer; especially as my representation is an imperfect one. The most difficult task remains—to say how a new circle of duties may spring from this ideal and how one can reconcile such a transcendent aim with ordinary action; to prove, in short, that the ideal *educates.* One might otherwise think that it is merely the blissful or intoxicating vision of a few rare moments that leaves us afterward the prey of a deeper disappointment. It is certain that the ideal begins to affect us in this way when we come suddenly to distinguish light and darkness, bliss and abhorrence; this is an experience that is as old as ideals themselves. . . .

The deeper minds of all ages have had pity for animals because they suffer from life and have not the power to turn the sting of the suffering against themselves, and understand their being metaphysically. The sight of blind suffering is the spring of the deepest emotion. And in many quarters of the earth men have supposed that the souls of the guilty have entered into beasts and that the blind suffering which at first sight calls for such pity has a clear meaning and purpose to the divine justice—of punishment and atonement. And a heavy punishment it is, to be condemned to live in hunger and need, in the shape of a beast, and to reach no consciousness of one's self in this life. I can think of no harder lot than the wild beast's. He is driven to the forest by the fierce pang of hunger that seldom leaves him at peace; and peace is itself a torment, the surfeit after horrid food, won maybe, by a deadly fight with other animals. To cling to life, blindly and madly, with no other aim, to be ignorant of the reason, or even the fact, of one's punishment, nay, to thirst after it as if it were a pleasure with all the perverted desire of a fool, this is what it means to be an animal. If universal nature leads up to man, it is to show us that he is necessary to redeem her from the curse of the beast's life, and that in him

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But there are moments when we do know; and then the clouds break, and we see how, with the rest of nature, we are straining toward the man, as if it were something that stood high above us. We look around and behind us and fear the sudden rush of light; the beasts are transfigured, and we are too. . . . There are moments when we all know that our most elaborate arrangements are only designed to give us refuge from our real task in life; we wish to hide our heads somewhere, as if our Argus-eyed conscience could not find us out. We are quick to give our hearts to the state or money-making, or social duties, or scientific work, in order to possess them no longer ourselves. We are more willing and instinctive slaves of the hard day's work than mere living requires because it seems to us more necessary not to be in a position to think. The hurry is universal because everyone is fleeing before himself; its concealment is just as universal as we wish to seem contented and hide our wretchedness from the keener eyes; and so there is a common need for a new carillon of words to hang in the temple of life and peal for its noisy festival. . . .

We understand this sometimes, as I say, and stand amazed at the whirl and the rush and the anxiety and all the dream that we call our life; we seem to fear the awakening, and our dreams also become vivid and restless as the awakening draws near. But we feel as well that we are too weak to long endure those intimate moments and that we are not the men to whom universal nature looks as her redeemers. It is something to be able to raise our heads but for a moment and see the stream in which we are sunk so deep. We cannot gain even this transitory moment of awakening by our own strength; we must be lifted up—and who are they that will uplift us?

The sincere men who have cast out the beast, the philosophers, artists and saints. Nature—which never leaps—has made her one leap in creating them; a leap

of joy, as she feels herself for the first time at her goal, where she begins to see that she must learn not to have goals above her and that she has played the game of transition too long. The knowledge transfigures her, and there rests on her face the gentle weariness of evening that men call "beauty." Her words after this transfiguration are as a great light shed over existence; and the highest wish that mortals can reach is to listen continually to her voice with ears that hear. If a man think of all that Schopenhauer, for example, must have *heard* in his life, he may well say to himself: "The deaf ears, the feeble understanding and shrunken heart, everything that I call mine, how I despise them! Not to be able to fly but only to flutter one's wings! To look above one's self and have no power to rise! To know the road that leads to the wide vision of the philosopher and to reel back after a few steps! Were there but one day when the great wish might be fulfilled, how gladly would we pay for it with the rest of life! To rise as high as any thinker into the pure icy air of the mountain, where there are no mists and veils, and the inner constitution of things is shown in a stark and piercing clarity! Even by thinking of this the soul becomes infinitely alone; but were its wish fulfilled, did its glance once fall straight as a ray of light on the things below, were shame and anxiety and desire gone forever, one could find no words for its state then, for the mystic and tranquil emotion with which, like the soul of Schopenhauer, it would look down on the monstrous hieroglyphics of existence and the petrified doctrines of "becoming"; not as the brooding night, but as the red and glowing day that streams over the earth. And what a destiny it is only to know enough of the fixity and happiness of the philosopher to feel the complete unfixity and unhappiness of the false philosopher, 'who without hope lives in desire': to know one's self to be the fruit of a tree that is too much in the shade ever to ripen and to see a world of sunshine in front, where one may not go!"

There is enough sorrow here, to make such a man envious and spiteful: But he will turn aside, so that he will not destroy his soul by vain yearning; and will discover a new circle of duties.

I can now give an answer to the question of whether it is possible to approach the great ideal of Schopenhauer's man "by any ordinary activity of our own." In the first place, the new duties are certainly not those of a hermit; they imply rather a vast community, held together not by external forms but by a fundamental idea, namely that of *culture;* though only so far as it can put a single task before each of us—to bring the philosopher, the artist and the saint, within and without us, to the light, and to strive for the completion of nature. For nature needs the artist, as she needs the philosopher, for a metaphysical end, the explanation of herself, through which she may have a clear and sharp picture of what she only saw dimly in the troubled period of transition, and so may reach self-awareness. Goethe, in an arrogant yet profound phrase, showed how all nature's attempts only have value in so far as the artist interprets her stammering words, meets her halfway, and announces what she really means. "I have often said and will often repeat," he exclaims in one place, "that the *causa finalis* of natural and human activity is dramatic poetry. Otherwise, the stuff is of no use at all."

Finally, nature needs the saint. In him the ego has melted away, and the suffering of his life is practically no longer felt as an individual one, but as the spring of the deepest sympathy and intimacy with all living creatures. He sees the wonderful transformation that the comedy of "becoming" never reaches, the attainment at length of the high state of man after which all nature is striving, that she may be delivered from herself. Without doubt, we all stand in close relation to him, as well as to the philosopher and the artist. There are moments, sparks from the clear fire of love, in whose light we understand the word "I" no longer; there is something beyond our being that comes, for those moments, to this side of it; and this is why we long in our hearts for a bridge from here to there. In our ordinary state we can do nothing toward the production of the new redeemer, and so we hate ourselves in this state with a hatred that is the root of the pessimism which Schopenhauer had to teach again to our age, though it is as old as the aspiration for culture. Its root, not its flower; the foundation, not the summit; the beginning of the road, not the end: for we have to learn at some time to hate something else, more universal than our own personality with its wretched limitation, its change and its unrest—and this will be when we shall learn to love something else than we can love now. When we are ourselves received into that high order of philosophers, artists and saints, in this life or a reincarnation of it, a new object for our love and hate will also rise before us. As it is, we have our task and our circle of duties, our hate and our loves. For we know that culture requires us to prepare for the coming of the Schopenhauer man—and this is the "use" we are to make of him—we must know what obstacles there are and strike them from our path; in fact, wage unceasing war against everything that hindered our fulfilment and prevented us from becoming Schopenhauer's men.

VI

It is sometimes harder to agree to a thing than to recognize its truth; many will feel this when they consider the proposition—"Mankind must toil unceasingly to bring forth individual great men: this and nothing else is its task." One would like to apply to society and its ends a fact that holds universally in the animal and plant world; where progress depends only on the higher individual types, which are rarer yet more persistent, complex, and productive. But traditional notions of what the end of society is absolutely bar the way. We can easily understand how in the natural world, where one species passes at some point into a higher one, the aim of their evolution cannot lie in the high level attained by the mass of exemplars or in the exemplars that are most recently developed but rather in what seem accidental beings produced here and there by favorable circumstances. It should be just as easy to understand that it is the duty of mankind to provide the circumstances favorable to the birth of great redemptive men, simply because mankind can become conscious of its goal. But there is always something to prevent them. They find their ultimate aim in the happiness of all, or the greatest number, or in the expansion of a great commonwealth. A man will very readily decide to sacrifice his life for the state; he will be much slower to respond in an individual, and not a state, ask for the sacrifice. It seems to be unreasonable that one man should exist for the sake of another: "Let it be rather for the sake of every other, or, at any rate, of as many as possible!" O righteous judge! As if it were more reasonable to let the majority decide a question of value and significance! For the problem is "in what way may your life, the individual life, retain the highest value and the deepest significance? And how may it least be squandered?" Only by your living for the good of the rarest and most valuable types, not for that of the major

together not by external forms but by a fundamental idea, namely that of *culture;* though only so far as it can put a single task before each of us—to bring the philosopher, the artist and the saint, within and without us, to the light, and to strive for the completion of nature. For nature needs the artist, as she needs the philosopher, for a metaphysical end, the explanation of herself, through which she may have a clear and sharp picture of what she only saw dimly in the troubled period of transition, and so may reach self-awareness. Goethe, in an arrogant yet profound phrase, showed how all nature's attempts only have value in so far as the artist interprets her stammering words, meets her halfway, and announces what she really means. "I have often said and will often repeat," he exclaims in one place, "that the *causa finalis* of natural and human activity is dramatic poetry. Otherwise, the stuff is of no use at all."

Finally, nature needs the saint. In him the ego has melted away, and the suffering of his life is practically no longer felt as an individual one, but as the spring of the deepest sympathy and intimacy with all living creatures. He sees the wonderful transformation that the comedy of "becoming" never reaches, the attainment at length of the high state of man after which all nature is striving, that she may be delivered from herself. Without doubt, we all stand in close relation to him, as well as to the philosopher and the artist. There are moments, sparks from the clear fire of love, in whose light we understand the word "I" no longer; there is something beyond our being that comes, for those moments, to this side of it; and this is why we long in our hearts for a bridge from here to there. In our ordinary state we can do nothing toward the production of the new redeemer, and so we hate ourselves in this state with a hatred that is the root of the pessimism which Schopenhauer had to teach again to our age, though it is as old as the aspiration for culture. Its root, not its flower; the foundation, not the summit; the beginning of the road, not the end: for we have to learn at some time to hate something else, more universal than our own personality with its wretched limitation, its change and its unrest—and this will be when we shall learn to love something else than we can love now. When we are ourselves received into that high order of philosophers, artists and saints, in this life or a reincarnation of it, a new object for our love and hate will also rise before us. As it is, we have our task and our circle of duties, our hates and our loves. For we know that culture requires us to prepare for the coming of the Schopenhauer man—and this is the "use" we are to make of him—we must know what obstacles there are and strike them from our path; in fact, wage unceasing war against everything that hindered our fulfilment and prevented us from becoming Schopenhauer's men.

VI

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With these thoughts he will enter the circle of culture, which is the child of every man's self-knowledge and dissatisfaction. He will approach and say aloud: "I see something above me, higher and more human than I. Let all help me to reach it as I will help all who know and suffer as I do, so that at last the man may arise who feels his knowledge and love, vision and power, to be complete and boundless, who in his completeness is one with nature, the educator and judge of existence." It is difficult to give anyone this courageous self-awareness because it is impossible to teach love. From love alone the soul gains, not only the clear vision that leads to self-contempt, but also the desire to go beyond itself and seek with all its power a higher self that is yet hidden and to strive upward to it with all its strength. And so he who rests his hope on a future great man receives his first "initiation into culture." The sign of this is shame or vexation at one's self, a hatred of one's own narrowness, a sympathy with the genius that ever raises its head again from our misty wastes, a feeling for all that is struggling into life, the conviction that nature its pressing towards man but repeatedly failing to achieve him, but still producing marvelous starts, forms, and projects, so that the men with whom we live are like the debris of some precious sculptures, which cry out, "Come and help us! Put us together for we long to become complete."

I called this internal condition the "first initiation into culture." I have now to describe the effects of the "second initiation," a task of greater difficulty. It is the passage from the inner life to the criticism of the outer life. The eye must be turned to find in the great world of movement the desire for culture that is known from the immediate experience of the individual; who must use his own strivings and aspirations as the alphabet to interpret those of humanity. He cannot rest here either, but must go higher. Culture demands from him not only that inner experience, not only the criticism of the outer world sur-

rounding him, but action to crown them all, the fight for culture against the influences and conventions and institutions where he cannot find his own aim—the production of genius.

Anyone who can reach the second step will see how extremely rare and imperceptible the knowledge of that end is, though all men busy themselves with culture and expend vast labor in its service. He asks himself in amazement, "Is not such knowledge, after all, absolutely necessary? Can nature be said to attain her end, if men have a false idea about the reason for their own labor?" And anyone who thinks a great deal of nature's unconscious adaptation of means to ends will probably answer at once: "Yes, men may think and speak what they like about their ultimate end, but their blind instinct will tell them the right path." It requires some life experience to be able to contradict this: but he who is convinced of the real aim of culture—the production of true human beings and nothing else—let him consider that amid all the pageantry and ostentation of culture at the present time the conditions for his production are nothing but a continual "battle of the beasts": and he will see that there is great need for a conscious will to take the place of that blind instinct. . . .

Preface *from* Human, All Too Human

2

When I found it necessary, I *invented* at one time the "free spirits," to whom this discouragingly encouraging book with the title *Human, All Too Human,* is dedicated. There are no such "free spirits" nor have there been such, but as already said, I then needed them for company to keep me cheerful in the midst of evils. . . . That such free spirits *will be possible* some day, that our Europe *will* have such bold and cheerful spirits among her children of tomorrow and the day after tomorrow, actually and bodily, and not merely, as in my case, as the shadows of a hermit's phantasmagoria—*I* should be the last to doubt that. Already I see them *coming,* slowly, slowly; and perhaps I am doing something to hasten their coming when I describe in advance under what auspices I *see* them originate and upon what paths I *see* them come.

3

One may suppose that a spirit in which the type "free spirit" is to become fully ripe and sweet, has had its decisive event in a *great emancipation,* and that it was all the more fettered previously and apparently bound forever to its corner and pillar. What is it that binds most strongly? What cords are almost unrendable? In people of a lofty and select type it will be their duties; the reverence which is suitable to youth, respect and tenderness for all that is time-honored and worthy, gratitude to the land which bore them, to the hand which led them, to the sanctuary where they learned to adore—their most exalted moments themselves will bind them most effectively, will lay upon them the most enduring obligations. For those who are so bound the great emancipation comes suddenly, like an earthquake; the young soul is all at once convulsed, unloosened, and extricated—it does not itself know what is happening. An impulsion and compulsion sway and conquer it like a command; a will and a wish awaken, to go forth on their course, anywhere, at any cost; a violent, dangerous curiosity about an undiscovered world flames and flares in every sense. "Better to die than live *here,*" says the imperious voice and seduction, and this "here," this "at home" is all that the soul has thus far loved! A sudden fear and suspicion of that which it loved, a flash of disdain for what was called its "duty," a rebellious, arbitrary, volcanically throbbing longing for travel, foreignness, estrangement, coldness, disenchantment, glaciation, a hatred of love, perhaps a sacrilegious clutch and look *backwards* to where it was once adored and loved, perhaps a glow of shame at what it was just doing, and at the same time a rejoicing *that* it was doing it, an intoxicated, internal, exulting thrill which betrays a triumph. A triumph? Over what? Over whom? An enigmatic, questionable, doubtful triumph, but the *first* triumph nevertheless—such evil and painful incidents belong to the history of the great emancipation. It is, at the same time, a disease which may destroy the man, this first outbreak of power and will to self-decision, self-valuation, this will to *free* will; and how much disease is manifested in the wild attempts and eccentricities by which the liberated and emancipated one now seeks to demonstrate his mastery over things! He roves about raging with unsatisfied longing; whatever he captures has to suffer for the dangerous tension of his pride; he tears to pieces whatever attracts him. With a malicious laugh he twirls around whatever he finds veiled or guarded by a sense of shame; he sees how these things look when turned upside down. It is a matter of arbitrariness with him, and pleasure in arbitrariness, if he now perhaps bestows his favor on what previously had a bad repute—if he inquisitively and temptingly haunts what is specially forbidden. In the background of his activities and wanderings—for he is restless and aimless in his course as in a desert—stands the note of interrogation of an increasingly dangerous curiosity. "Cannot *all* valuations be reversed? And is good perhaps evil? And God only an invention and artifice of the devil? Is everything, perhaps, radically false? And if we are the deceived, are we not also deceivers? *Must* we not also be deceivers?" Such thoughts lead and mislead him more and more, onward and away. Solitude encircles and engirdles him, always more threatening, more throttling, more heart-oppressing, that terrible goddess and *mater sæva cupidinum,** but who knows nowadays what *solitude is*? . . .

6

. . . It may at last happen, under the sudden illuminations of still disturbed and changing health that the enigma of that great emancipation begins to reveal itself to the free, and ever freer, spirit—that enigma which had until now lain obscure, questionable, and almost intangible in his memory. If for a long time he scarcely dared to ask himself, "Why so apart? So alone? Denying everything that I revered? Denying reverence itself? Why this hatred, this suspicion, this severity toward my own virtues?"—he now dares and asks the questions aloud and already hears something like an answer to them—"You should become master over yourself and master also of your own virtues. Formerly *they* were your masters; but they are only entitled to be your tools among other tools. You should obtain power over your pro and con, and learn how to put them forth and withdraw them again in accordance with your higher purpose. You should learn how to take the proper perspective of every valuation—the shifting, distortion, and apparent teleology of the horizons and everything that belongs to

*Untamed mother of the passions.