

TRUTH AND ETHOS

THE PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF NIETZSCHE'S ETHICS

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There is already a fairly large literature on the subject of Nietzsche's moral philosophy, especially in the Anglo-American academic milieu, where the discipline called "ethics" has retained the position it lost long ago on the European continent as a regular part of the curriculum in higher education. But the volume of this literature does not in itself vouch for its philosophical accuracy, despite the growing respectability and seriousness of American scholarship on Nietzsche since the appearance of Walter Kaufmann's book.¹ The interpretation of Nietzsche's moral philosophy is based for the most part on two books: *Beyond Good and Evil* and *Genealogy of Morals*. These works, however, do not contain a complete and direct formulation of Nietzsche's philosophy. An adequate understanding of this philosophy, I believe, can be attained only if we also take into consideration the thoughts expressed by Nietzsche in his later works, *The Antichrist*, *The Twilight of the Idols*, and the posthumous fragments which were partially published under the title of *The Will to Power*. An adequate interpretation of these texts would show that Nietzsche's philosophy has to be understood as an expression and reaction to the fundamental event of nihilism, the death of the Christian God.

One consequence from this principle of interpretation is that Nietzsche's ethical utterances are to be understood from a strictly historical perspective, and not as a contribution to an ongoing discourse concerning perennial questions. In fact, Nietzsche forces us,

if we really understand him, to leave behind the general illusion that we can discuss moral matters *sub specie aeternitatae*. Alasdair MacIntyre seems to have been one of the first thinkers in the Anglo-American world to break away from this illusion by rightly criticizing treating "the moral philosophers of the past as contributors to a single debate with a relatively unvarying subject-matter."² MacIntyre's demand that we locate the moral questions of the present within the historical framework of the modern age, is a consequence, as far as I can see, of his assessment of the "state of grave disorder" in today's language and practice of morality,³ evident particularly in the fact that "there seems to be no rational way of securing moral agreement in our culture."⁴ But this is precisely one—but only one—essential aspect of that event which Nietzsche calls "nihilism" and which he defines as the devaluation of the highest values.⁵ The fact that MacIntyre does not identify the term "nihilism" as being of absolutely central signification in an interpretation of Nietzsche's philosophy, is an external sign that he remains a prisoner of the conception that Nietzsche's reflection on ethical matters is expressed completely in *Beyond Good and Evil* and *Genealogy of Morals*. But it is not simply that MacIntyre misses the terminological centrality of the concept of nihilism, for this concept means more than just the impossibility of a consensus as to what is the good life. With the word nihilism Nietzsche refers to the roots, the fact and the consequences of the decisive histori-

cal event of the modern age, namely God's death, and this aspect of the phenomenon is absent in MacIntyre's account both of Nietzsche's philosophy and of the spiritual situation of the present, despite his sharp historical sense.

Another approach to Nietzsche's ethical thought has become popular of late in the wake of Alasdair MacIntyre's thought and his working out of a "virtue ethics" as opposed to an ethics from principles or rules. Despite MacIntyre's criticism of Nietzsche, the thesis has been defended that Nietzsche's thought contains the foundation for a virtue ethics.⁶ This thesis has the questionable merit of blunting the nihilistic edge of Nietzsche's critique of traditional ethical thought. I suspect that this approach is intended to correct Nietzsche's image as an advocate of willful destruction which was (and partially still is) quite common. According to this image, Nietzsche's ethics is a disquieting, and even repugnant, rejection and destruction of the moral principles of the Western world, which are by him reduced to a revolt of the "slaves" against the natural right of the "masters." Against the centrality of concepts such as compassion and, in general, altruism, Nietzsche is perceived—with a certain right—to elevate "ethical egoism" and "individual creativity" to the standard of morals. This view is indeed a very partial and therefore distorted interpretation. But I do not think that forcing Nietzsche's philosophy in the pedagogical categories of a scholarly classification of types of ethical theory conveys the sense of urgency and crisis which is the essential mark of Nietzsche's prophetic vision. Although the interpretation of his thought as a type of virtue ethics is illuminating in many aspects, I believe that it does not touch the truly relevant aspects of Nietzsche's philosophy. I cannot give here a thorough justification for this assessment; instead I will develop my own theses without

direct reference to the problem of a virtue ethics.

If it is not to become one more commodity in the marketplace of opinions, a philosophically adequate interpretation of Nietzsche's ethical thought, should, in my opinion, start by addressing two questions: (1) to what extent the principles of Nietzschean morals are part of his fundamental philosophical propositions and (2) to what extent this philosophy is a genuine expression of the spiritual situation of the present stage of the history of the West.

The immediate purpose of the present essay is to take a preparatory step in answering these questions. The task I propose myself, therefore, is not so much an examination of the ethical tenets of Nietzsche's philosophy as an elucidation of the fundamental doctrines which, by their internal logic, lead to an ethical position which proclaims the primacy of the right of the "overman." In doing this, I intend at the same time to give some indications as to the extent to which these doctrines are the philosophical expression of the culminating stage of the modern age. The task, therefore, is to achieve an understanding of Nietzsche's fundamental philosophical position. By fundamental philosophical position I will understand here that dimension of philosophical thinking in which the thinking about reality is indistinguishable from an attitude toward that reality—a dimension, therefore, which is prior to the distinction between theory and praxis, ontology and ethics, and in which truth and ethos coincide.

Nietzsche characterizes the ethos corresponding to his fundamental philosophical position in different ways; the most important ones are "*amor fati*," "Dionysian affirmation," and "eternal recurrence of the same." All of these formulations point to Nietzsche's unconditional acceptance and affirmation of reality. A right understanding

TRUTH AND ETHOS

of the ethos of his philosophical position, therefore, has to start by making clear how reality shows itself in this philosophy. I will contend, following Heidegger's interpretation, that Nietzsche fixes the character of reality in the will to power. The unrestricted affirmation of the reality of the will to power, however, takes place within the historical situation of nihilism, that is, of the factual absence of a universally binding measure of being and worth. That is why a discussion of the meaning of Nietzsche's *amor fati* has also to come to terms with his interpretation of the modern age as a history of the devaluation of the highest values (nihilism).

The exposition is divided in three stages. (1) I will state, without arguing for them, the basic theoretical presuppositions upon which my interpretation of Nietzsche's philosophy is based. These presuppositions concern a determination of the essence of philosophical thought as what I will call the fundamental unity of truth and ethos; (2) I will give an account of what I take to be the three motifs of Nietzsche's philosophy: the death of God (nihilism), the progressive control of the natural and human world by technological means, and modern subjectivism; and will show how these three motifs converge in the determination of the essence of reality (truth) as will to power and in the corresponding postulation of the "overman"; (3) I will elucidate how to this truth there corresponds a "tragic ethos," which represents an extreme rejection of the claim to happiness of the "last man," and culminates in the thought of the eternal recurrence of the same. In conclusion, I will discuss how from the perspective of a more original interpretation of the meaning of "ethos," Nietzsche's philosophy can perhaps be seen as culminating not only in the defense of the right of the overman but also, and more profoundly, in the announcement of the radical homelessness of modern humanity.

PHILOSOPHY TODAY

This attempt to gain a philosophically sufficient understanding of Nietzsche's philosophy is sustained by a conviction which remains unfounded here: namely, that Nietzsche's philosophy, together with Hegel's, represents the most lucid exposition of the fundamental project of the modern age. That is the reason why I do not indulge in any exercises in "critical thinking," and do not try to "evaluate" Nietzsche's thought, even though it is indeed a challenging and provoking. My intention is only to make a contribution to charting the course of the modern age, which unfolds its full essence in our times, with the ultimate intention of letting our historical ethos unfold out of the knowledge of the truth instead of out of our particular arbitrary preferences.

The Theoretical Presuppositions of the Present Interpretation

The fundamental theses on which the following interpretation of Nietzsche's philosophy rests are three: 1) The essence of philosophical thought consists in the unity of truth and ethos; 2) the essence of truth is historical; and 3) the unity of truth and ethos, which is expressed in philosophical thought, is not only the end of philosophical meditation, but rather the unity which historical reality itself strives to achieve. These theses express, I believe, the result at which German philosophy from Hegel to Heidegger has arrived, although they are not expressed by these thinkers in the way I do here.⁷

Nietzsche's fundamental philosophical position is characterized, as all such fundamental positions, by the unity of truth and ethos. By "ethos" I understand initially the human dimension of free conduct. This concept does not presuppose in any way the thesis of the freedom of the will. It is rather to be assumed that the ethos is free in the sense that it is historical, i.e., in the sense that it is fundamentally determined with respect

To, but not necessarily by, the way in which reality presents itself in a given epoch of the history of spirit. Thus, I take the essence of philosophical thought to be a dimension which is prior to the customary distinction of theory and praxis, a dimension, therefore, in which thought itself, and not simply its consequence, is practical, that is, determinative of an ethos. Thus philosophical truth is not a neutral description of reality, as the predominance of scientific thought has made us believe for some centuries, but it is itself already not only an intellectual, but also an “emotional” attitude with respect to that reality. This presupposes, of course, that the essence of truth is not merely the correspondence of the intellect to particular or universal objects, but rather that essential dimension of reality from which human beings and things receive their meaning and being. The essence of philosophical thought is, expressly or otherwise, the correspondence to that essential dimension, and therefore always a determination of the being of things at the same time as a determination of the ethos. The distinction between theory and practice is in truth not a result of modern science but goes back to Aristotle, in whom it reaches a significant point in his confrontation with Socrates’ thesis that virtue is “knowledge” (*episteme*). Nonetheless Aristotle himself determines the highest form of human existence as akin to divine *theoria*,⁸ which in turn is the highest concept of the doctrine of being.⁹ It could be shown that the fundamental unity of truth and ethos characterizes all fundamental positions in the history of philosophy.

This first theoretical presupposition clearly implies the further thesis that not only the ethos but also the truth itself is in its essence historical. By this I mean not simply that humankind interprets reality, which in itself remains unchanged, in different ways in different epochs, but that the meaning

itself of what is real changes, and that thereby even the conception of an unchanging underlying reality is, as far as its meaning is concerned, subject to the essential historicity of truth. But if not only the ethos but also truth itself is historical, then the unity of truth and ethos is not simply a philosophical affair, in the sense of a concern only for scholars, but rather this unity is precisely the unity of history. The unity of truth and ethos, I would like to assert, is indeed expressed in philosophical thought, but is realized in history, although gradually, with different degrees of pervasiveness in different historical spheres, and perhaps never in a perfect manner. Thus, to give an example, the medieval preoccupation with the salvation of the soul is not simply a philosophical concern, but rather the very root of the individual existence in the Middle Ages. Likewise, the order of society is guaranteed in that world by an idea of order, which is not simply an idea, but a historical reality. The historical unity of truth and ethos is the basic idea behind Hegel’s conception of a “world spirit” (*Weltgeist*), and is also the guiding idea of Heidegger’s notion of the “history of Being.” According to this idea, each epoch is dominated and directed by what could be called an “archetype,” which demands a “dramatic unity” of time, space and human beings. It is this dramatic unity which philosophical thought strives to elevate to concept. The correspondence of time, space and human existence consists in the response of human beings to the demands of the time and in its shaping of the historical space according to those demands. If this is true, philosophy, as the expression of the unity of truth and ethos, is not only a scholarly occupation and a cultural adornment, but rather that dimension in which history attains its maximum lucidity, and the essential tasks of the epoch are formulated. It is precisely with this degree of seriousness and sense of urgency that the

TRUTH AND ETHOS

following interpretation takes Nietzsche's philosophy, and this is, I believe, the manner in which this philosophy demands to be taken.

The Three Motifs of Nietzsche's Philosophy

I will now proceed to a discussion of Nietzsche's determination of the truth of the present historical epoch as a convergence of the three motifs of the death of God, technology, and modern subjectivism.

A. The Death of God (Nihilism)

It is of the utmost importance to realize that for Nietzsche the decisive event in the change of the truth in the modern age is the death of God. For Nietzsche this event does not mean the demise of all forms of religious worship in the West, but only that the Christian god has ceased to be the foundation of reality and therefore that this god is no longer the fundamental norm and law of conduct of historical life in the West. The loss of the history-shaping power of a god is equivalent to the loss of that god's historical being. That is the meaning of the dictum: God is dead. This is the radical event of our age, according to Nietzsche, the root, for most invisible, of all actions and omissions of modern humankind. This radical event does not need to be apprehended as such in order to display its historical force; indeed, its domination is all the more pervasive the longer it remains unrecognized. That god has died means, for Nietzsche, precisely that the very source of the "metaphysical" understanding of reality is no longer existent. But as God was the truth, this means that there is no longer a truth—at least not from the perspective of the metaphysical tradition. Nietzsche's announcement of God's death is the announcement of a fundamental change of the truth, that is, of the essential aspect under which things and human beings present themselves in the present epoch of the history of the West, and therefore, at the same time,

the announcement of a fundamental change in the human ethos.

With the demise of the Christian God nothing of fundamental value remains. This grip of nothingness on historical life Nietzsche calls nihilism. What does nihilism mean? Nietzsche gives us the answer in a concise form: "That the highest values lose their value. There is no goal; there is no answer to the question 'why?'"¹⁰ In the section from *The Gay Science* in which Nietzsche announces the death of God through the mouth of the "mad man," we are confronted with the consequences of the absence of that answer in the form of a series of questions:

Whither do we move? Away from all suns?
Do we not dash unceasingly? Backwards,
sideways, forwards, in all directions? Is
there still an above and below? Do we not
stray, as through infinite nothingness?
Does not empty space breathe upon us?
Has it not become colder? Does not night
come on continually, darker and darker?¹¹

It is imperative for an adequate understanding of Nietzsche's thought to remark that he does not diagnose the death of God with glee or at least relief, as seems to be characteristic of modern atheism, but rather with all the signs of deep consternation and anguish. We see here immediately that Nietzsche understands the historical transformation of the truth at the same time as a transformation of the ethos.

This last point I would like to emphasize. The death of God means not merely that all human goals have lost their foundation, but it is also and primarily a metaphysical event, if the expression be allowed. Indeed for Nietzsche this event is equivalent to the collapse of metaphysics itself, as that primordial truth in accordance with which the things in the visible world have their true being in and from the invisible, supra-empirical realm.

The death of God is in this sense the collapse of the Platonic-Christian interpretation of reality. Accordingly, the human reality is subverted too. The human being is determined in its essence within the metaphysical tradition as a rational animal. The rationality is that dimension in which humans communicate with and participate in the true, the supra-empirical, reality, whereas the animality is that dimension by which they participate in the empirical world. In the Christian interpretation of this duality of the human being, the animality comes to be identified with the "natural" reality, whereas the rationality is equated to the supernatural being of humanity. The human being is thus conceived as a tension resulting from the demand that the "natural man" be constantly overcome in the striving to achieve one's essence as likeness and image of the supernatural God. The ethos in the Platonic-Christian tradition is thus determined as the subordination of the natural man to the supernatural man, of the animal passions and instincts to reason. With the demise of the Christian-Platonic god, however, also the metaphysical understanding of the human reality collapses and with it the possibility of the assimilation of human beings to God through reason or faith. What is left now is only the "natural man," and his essentially animalistic needs. That is why Nietzsche now reverses the order of primacy between the body and reason and declares:

The awakened, knowing one says: I am entirely body, and nothing besides; and soul is only a word for something in the body.

The body is a great Reason, a multiplicity with One meaning, a war and a peace, a herd and a shepherd.

A tool of thy body is also thy little reason, my brother, that reason which thou callst "spirit," a little tool and toy of thy great Reason.¹²

This interpretation, of course, is not peculiar to Nietzsche, but it characterizes also the position of British thinkers from Hobbes to J. S. Mill. It is characteristic that in these thinkers all genuine relation to Christianity has disappeared. I take this as a confirmation of Nietzsche's opinion that the widespread disbelief characteristic of the 19th and 20th centuries is in truth the eruption of an event that was being prepared for centuries. This is not to say that the death of god is to be "blamed" on the philosophers just named, but rather it means that they saw what was in store for the West and accepted it without further examination. The German thinkers, on the other hand, and (in the case of Kant) precisely prompted by the criticism of reason by the British philosophers, attempted to salvage the traditional understanding of humanity as characterized by the primacy of reason. Kant's philosophy as a whole is an attempt to secure an autonomous role for human reason, despite the non-demonstrability of the reality of God, and to restore the "idea" of God at least to a regulative function in the sphere of theoretical reason, and to a constitutive role in the practical.

Hegel's position is, in this context, of the utmost importance, because his philosophy represents the last great attempt in the history of the modern age to correspond to the truth of the age without abandoning the substance of the Christian tradition. His philosophical endeavors are guided by the overriding intention to overcome the conflict between faith and reason by subsuming religion under, and thereby salvaging it, in philosophy, i.e., in the absolute Idea. Thus a "reconciliation" is effected in his philosophy between nature and spirit, between sensibility and reason. Hegel is indeed aware of the disappearance from the historical world of the Christian God;¹³ he nonetheless believes that this death does not leave the world meaningless, but rather that this meaning can be re-

TRUTH AND ETHOS

stored and indeed placed for the first time on the absolute basis of philosophical thought. For Hegel, the implementation of the modern project of instituting the absolute freedom of the subject by transforming (in the Concept) the world into a home for the subject, was compatible with, and indeed the consummation of, the Christian religion. The "identity of subject and object" thereby achieved, however, presupposes the identity of human reason with divine reason, i.e., the essential kinship of man and God.

But, according to Nietzsche's experience, it is precisely this kinship which disappears when God dies. The line of continuity with the foundations of the past history of the West was interrupted by Nietzsche, but not because he was irreligious, but rather because he recognized the fundamentally non-Christian, indeed, anti-Christian, character of the modern project of enthroning man as Lord of the world. Nietzsche's philosophy is radical not out of a gusto for the extremes, but because it attempts to think the age philosophically, that is, from the roots of the truth of the age. According to Nietzsche's experience, therefore, which is to a certain extent also Dostoyevsky's experience, God's death implies a radical nihilism, for which there is no longer a meaning or a goal beyond the animal nature of the human being.

B. The Modern Project of the Domination of the World

In order to understand this radicalness of Nietzsche's thought we have to turn to the second motif in the determination of the truth of the present historical stage, namely to the overriding tendency toward a rational control of nature, including the human nature. We can call this tendency, assuming that we understand the word in its essential meaning, "technology." Nietzsche's utterances concerning the technological phenomenon are rather sparse, but nonetheless it seems clear to me that he had a lucid awareness of its

essential tendency, an awareness which seems to be absent from Hegel's philosophy. I submit that Nietzsche was aware of the overriding tendency of the modern age to make the whole of the natural and human worlds controllable for the sake of global domination. Speaking of machines, for instance, he writes:

Premises of the age of the machines.—The press, the machine, the railroad, the telegraph are premises, the conclusion of which no one yet has dared to draw.¹⁴

Nietzsche himself draws the conclusion when he formulates the "great task" of the present historical stage:

The great task and question draws near, inevitable, hesitating, terrible as fate: How is the earth as a whole to be administered?¹⁵

In another reflection he says:

There will be from now on favorable conditions for more global configurations of domination, the likes of which there have never been.¹⁶

In these passages Nietzsche expresses an awareness that the modern age, especially in the last two centuries, has created the conditions for a global domination of the earth. This stage is characterized, as Nietzsche knows, by an explosive augmentation of the possibilities of control of nature and humans. But the full meaning of this event can be surmised only when we conceive it in conjunction with the event of the death of God. The convergence of technology and nihilism makes the contemporary age a period incomparable with any other in the history of the Western world. On the one hand, the covert nihilism of Western existence since the Renaissance made possible, with its destructive force, the reorganization of historical life according to the imperatives of the mobilization of potential energy. But on the other

PHILOSOPHY TODAY

hand, this mobilization is not simply the result of the nihilistic movement of European history, but also the project which was announced at the onset of the modern age. In truth, both events, the murder of God and the technological mobilization of potential energy, are manifestations of the unfolding of the original project of modernity, namely the project of instituting the freedom of the absolute subject.

C. The Ontological Primacy of the Human "Subject"

The task posed by the age was already, although not distinctly, expressed in the project of modernity as such and from the beginning. The project of modernity, as it becomes patent in the philosophies of Hegel and Nietzsche, is the implementation of the freedom of the absolute subject, i.e., the establishment of the human being as the center and measure of all beings and the transformation of the world into a house for that subject. Hegel and Nietzsche are in this sense the thinkers of the culminating stage of the modern age, but they are each so in a different manner. Hegel looks back at the whole history of the West and interprets the modern project as the consummation of that history; Nietzsche, on the contrary, sees in that project what is new and opposed to the old.

This is the third and perhaps most fundamental motif in Nietzsche's interpretation of the truth of the age. It is Heidegger's merit to have situated Nietzsche's philosophy within the continuum of modern metaphysics, i.e., of the metaphysics of subjectivism.¹⁷ It is not my intention here to give an account of Heidegger's interpretation, but only to take his main thesis and use it for my own purposes. Heidegger's interpretation is that Nietzsche's philosophy, although not expressly and perhaps not even consciously, is the culmination of the transformation in the essence of truth in the modern age. This essence changes from the correspondence of

intellect and thing into the certainty of the Cartesian ego cogito, which forms the basis of the whole of modern philosophy, including, I would argue, British empiricism. This change goes along, and is at the basis of, the transformation of the beingness of being from substance into the rational animal as the subject. Once the human being is understood as the subject, and this means as the center and the measure of reality, the tendency manifests itself to think the subject as absolute, that is, as unconditioned, and therefore as free self-legislation.

This project culminates, but not perfectly so, in Hegel's philosophy. In this philosophy, the substance of Spinoza's ontology is interpreted from the standpoint of the self-consciousness of the subject, in such a manner that reality in its "concept," i.e., in its being, is already the subject, namely absolute spirit. In absolute spirit the self is conscious of itself as being the same as the Other, i.e., is conscious of the identity of subject and object. The self is thus no longer in an alien world but rather encounters only itself in the world. As Hegel says in the *Philosophy of Right*: "The ego is at home in the world when it knows the world, and more so when it has conceived [begriffen] it."¹⁸ In thus being identical with the object, the subject reaches the position of absolute freedom, i.e., of unrestricted self-identity. The true self, or as Hegel calls it in this context, the true will, wills only itself: "the true will consists in this: that what the will wills, i.e., its content, is identical with itself, in other words, that freedom wills freedom."¹⁹

The human being in the modern age is the "subject" insofar as it seeks to find the conditions for its absolute self-determination. In Hegel this point of self-determination is indeed reached, but only in what he calls the absolute Concept, that is, in the identity of subject and object in reason. It cannot escape our attention that this reconciliation of the

freedom of the subject with the necessity of reality does not draw the last consequences of the modern truth, which is not only the freedom of the subject in the rational penetration of reality but rather, as the preceding has made clear, also, and fundamentally, the freedom from the supersensible God to the global administration of the earth through technology. It is these two other motifs (nihilism and technology) which, I would contend, complete the culmination of modern subjectivism. The modern subject—and there is no other subject—is free insofar as it, on the one hand, elevates its absolute, i.e., independent, being to center and measure of what is (the murder of God) and thus makes, on the other, the planet as a whole into a self-made home (technology). The essential merit of Nietzsche's philosophy consists in having seen for the first time this twofold event of the liquidation of the transcendent locus of the will's determination and of the historical drive toward a global administration of the earth. Nietzsche thereby undermines the possibility of a reconciliation of the modern subject with Christian religion, a reconciliation which, as I have already shown, was constitutive of Hegel's enterprise.

The truth characterized by the confluence of the three motives of the death of God, the drive toward total administration of the earth and, at the basis of these two, of the absolute freedom of the subject, is conceived in Nietzsche's philosophy as the culmination and perfection of nihilism. It is therefore necessary to interpret nihilism not only as the devaluation of the highest values as a consequence of God's death, but also as the radical transvaluation by which the human being, now understood solely as the natural man, makes itself the sole and unconditioned subject of its endeavors. This complete essence of nihilism is, I believe, expressed also by Dostoyevsky in his great prophetic novel *The*

Brothers Karamazov, although without the welcoming acceptance that characterizes the unity of truth and ethos in Nietzsche. Dostoyevsky, through the character Dmitri Karamazov, expressed the essence of nihilism in the simple words: "If He (God) doesn't exist, man is the chief of the earth, of the universe."²⁰ In a delirium of Ivan Karamazov, the "devil" says the following: "As soon as men, all of them, have denied God—and I believe that period, analogous to geological periods, will come to pass—the old conception of the universe will fall of itself . . . and what's more the old morality; and everything will begin anew. Men will unite to take from life all it can give, but only for joy and happiness in the present world. Man will be lifted up with a spirit of divine pride and the man-god will appear . . . Every one who recognizes the truth even now may legitimately order his life as he pleases, on the new principles. In that sense 'All things are lawful' for him."²¹

The complete essence of nihilism, as Dostoyevsky gives testimony, culminates in the elevation of the human being to the position of "man-god." Precisely the same conclusion draws Nietzsche with his announcement of the "overman," when he says:

In Plato's *Theages* it is written: "Every one of us would like to be master if possible of all human beings, preferably god. This mentality must be restored."²²

If we take this announcement seriously and do not dismiss it as a fantastic idea of someone obsessed with ideas of domination, we must understand the overman from the three motifs of the death of God, the drive toward technological administration of the earth, and of the absolute freedom of the subject. If we do so, we have to dismiss all conceptions of the overman as an egoist wallowing in the satisfaction of his every passion, as incidentally seems to be Dostoyevsky's conception

PHILOSOPHY TODAY

when he speaks of “joy and happiness in the present world.” For the result of the convergence of the three motifs discussed above is not the determination of the natural man as a being that seeks pleasure and enjoyment, as was assumed by Hobbes and Hume, but rather as will to power. By a necessity rooted in the essence of modern metaphysics, as Heidegger has shown,²³ Nietzsche conceives the will to power not only as the essence of the human being but also in general as the essence of reality as such. The complete freedom of the modern subject consists not in the rational recognition of the rationality of the real, as in Hegel’s interpretation, but rather in the conquest or overpowering of the real. As will to power, the natural man of the modern age wills the unconditional subjugation of reality under the conditions of the possibility of the freedom of the god-less subject.

The Ethos Demanded by Nietzsche’s Philosophy

What ethos corresponds to this truth of the nihilistic, i.e., god-less, will to power? With this question I come to the third part of this essay. The ethos that corresponds, or rather responds, to the historical truth of the convergence of the death of god and the task of the global administration of the earth through technological means can certainly not consist in a hedonism which finds its satisfaction in low or high pleasures and avoids all pains. This conception of the human life, which, as we easily see, is at the basis of utilitarian ethics, is for Nietzsche not the ethos that corresponds to the age, but rather the greatest danger that the humanity of the culminating stage of the modern age may become impotent to correspond to the true demands of the age, the demand of the unrestricted, because absolute, will to power. I think it is right to say that from Nietzsche’s point of view this unbounded hedonism is the essential tempta-

tion in the age of complete nihilism, just as in the age of Christianity the essential temptation was the attempt to attain salvation not by the imitation of Christ but by bribing God through the Saints, the worship of relics, and the “indulgences.” In the nihilistic age, the life of enjoyment and happiness is indeed an essential possibility because in this age the human being has lost its kinship to the supersensible divinity and has been reduced to its natural, empirical, that is, to its animal being.

Nietzsche expresses his rejection of the human being who is unable to become or prepare the advent of the overman in the repudiation of the “last man.” For the last man everything is relative to the accidental whims of his contingent will. The aims he pursues are all ordered to the satisfaction of day-to-day needs and inclinations. The capacity to impose oneself tasks, to design and pursue long-term plans, especially the total administration of the earth, disappears together with the Christian God. This is for Nietzsche the most terrifying manifestation of the event of nihilism: the loss of Western humanity’s ability for self-overcoming, to be a transition to something not only higher than the animal, but also higher than the present human being. In the “Preface” to *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Nietzsche says through Zarathustra’s mouth:

Alas! The time cometh when man will no longer give birth to any star! Alas! There cometh the time of the most contemptible man, who can no longer despise himself.

Behold! I show you the last man. (. . .)

“We have invented happiness,”—the last men say, blinking.²⁴

The beginning stage of the culmination of the modern age is marked by the appearing of the last man simultaneously with the historical necessity of the overman. The human

TRUTH AND ETHOS

being with least demands on itself appears precisely at the moment when history makes the highest demands on Western humanity. The drive toward the global administration of the earth takes the form, as Nietzsche announced and we have witnessed in our century, of a struggle among the nations of the Earth for planetary power. The human type who avoids all pains and seeks only and everywhere comfort and security, is obviously the least fitted to take part in this supreme struggle. It is the reflection on this historical situation, and not a romantic glorification of brutal force or, as some critics would have it, of "personal creativity," that is at the root of the doctrine of the "overman." The overman, from Nietzsche's perspective, is not an ethical "ideal," but the human being who is able to assume the task posed by the Age.

The contrast between the last man and the overman becomes most clear when we compare their respective attitudes to pain and pleasure. The ideology of the last man elevates happiness to the final end of human life as a consequence of the general principle that all living beings seek pleasure and avoid pain. Against this doctrine Nietzsche declares:

Man does not seek pleasure and does not avoid displeasure (. . .)—what man wants, what every smallest part of a living organism wants, is an increase of power. Pleasure or displeasure follow from the striving after that; driven by this will, man seeks resistance, he needs something that opposes him. . . . Every victory, every feeling of pleasure, every event, presupposes a resistance overcome.²⁵

According to Nietzsche, therefore, pleasure and pain are only consequences of the success or the failure in the attempt to secure power. This principle follows by internal necessity from the determination of the essence

of reality as will to power, but it is also obviously directed polemically against the philosophy of the last man. Nietzsche accuses those who assert that pleasure is the final human end of confusing two kinds of pleasure: the one resulting from the overcoming of exhaustion through falling asleep, on the one hand, and the one resulting from triumph over an obstacle, on the other.²⁶ In the first case, which provides the paradigm for the happiness-doctrine, pleasure is associated with a diminution or inhibition of the will to power.

The metaphysics of the will to power establishes the fundamental postulate of the primacy of pleasure over pain.²⁷ At first sight, this seems to contradict what was just said. This postulate seems rather to be identical with the utilitarian principle, but it is in truth its radical negation. The pleasure whose primacy is here asserted is not the pleasure resulting from the absence or elimination of pain but rather from its acceptance as a necessary condition in the reaching of a higher level of power. For Nietzsche, what truly is—Being—is no longer the Rational, i.e., that in which the rational nature of man finds itself again (as it was for Hegel). From the standpoint of the will to power, the Other is recognized as fundamentally alien to the nature of the will, that is, it is perceived as an obstacle to be overcome, or else as an aid in the pursuit of the will's essential aim. The Other is now interpreted from the perspective of its value for the preservation and augmentation of power. Values do not inhere in the things as essential attributes, but are rather the perspective of the will to power in the evaluation of reality. Nietzsche recognizes evil as evil; put more rigorously, he does not declare pain as an illusion and eliminate it from the world. Pain (Evil) confronts man as the Other, as an obstacle. Freedom consists here not in the recognition of the rationality of the necessary, but in the

PHILOSOPHY TODAY

strength to bear and overcome pain. A “true” will to power sees in an obstacle an essential element of the conquest of power, as an irreducible part of life itself. Thus, the value of all things is not relative to their producing pleasure but rather to the degree to which a particular will has the force to accept pain as a necessary condition of the augmentation of power. In other words, what has true value is the degree of force of the will. That is why Nietzsche can say: “There is nothing in life which has worth, except the degree of power.”²⁸

This determination of the nature of pleasure and pain, in turn, leads to a new conception of the problem of evil. The Evil is for Nietzsche also relative to the degree of power, of will-force. The “problem of evil” is here the problem of the degree to which a will has enough force to recognize and accept as “good,” as “beautiful,” i.e., as necessary, its own obstacles. As Nietzsche puts it:

It is a question of *strength* (of an individual or of a people), *whether* and where the judgment “beautiful” is applied. . . . —the feeling of *power* applies the judgment “beautiful” even to things and conditions that the instinct of impotence could only find *hateful* and “ugly.”²⁹

The recognition of the necessity of pain and the evil culminates in what we could call an “algodicy,” that is, not in a justification of God, as in Leibniz’s theodicy, but in a justification of pain. Nietzsche calls this algodicy “Dionysian affirmation.” The Dionysian position is already to be found in *The Birth of Tragedy*, Nietzsche’s first book. The meaning of the word Dionysus, which constitutes the key concept of that book, is explained by him in a later work in the following manner:

In the mysteries of the Greeks *pain* is sanctified: The “pains of the parturient woman” sanctify pain as such, —all becoming and growing, everything that holds future,

make pain *necessary*. . . . If there is to be the eternal joy of creation, and the will to live is to affirm itself eternally, then the “torture of the parturient woman” *must* also exist eternally. . . . All this is conveyed by the word “Dionysus.”³⁰

In a different reflection on the meaning of his first book, Nietzsche adds:

In *The Birth of Tragedy* a superior state of affirmation of existence is conceived, a state out of which the most extreme pain cannot be subtracted: this is the tragic-Dionysian condition.³¹

From this standpoint, the ethos that corresponds to the truth of complete nihilism I propose to call a tragic ethos. But an adequate understanding of this expression requires an accurate interpretation of what Nietzsche calls “tragedy.” For him, tragedy is neither pessimistic, as Schopenhauer understood it, nor is it intended to have a purgative effect, in the sense explained by Aristotle. Rather, tragedy is “the affirmation (*Jasagen*) of life, even in its most foreign and questionable problems.”³² The tragic poet knows that what is called “evil” is part and parcel of life itself, and accepts it with the same “joy” with which life as such is accepted by him, i.e., as a continuous process of creation and destruction. That is why the hero is the tragic person par excellence: not because he is a pawn of destiny, but because he accepts, and, indeed loves, pain:

Pleasure in tragedy characterizes *strong* ages and natures: their *non plus ultra* is perhaps the *divina commedia*. It is the *heroic spirits* who say *Yes* to themselves in tragic cruelty: they are hard enough to experience suffering as a pleasure. . . . The *profundity* of the tragic artist lies in this, that his aesthetic instinct surveys the more remote consequences, that he does not halt shortsightedly at what is closest at hand,

TRUTH AND ETHOS

that he affirms the *large-scale economy* which justifies the *terrifying*, the *evil*, the *questionable*—and more than merely justifies them.³³

The welcoming acceptance of reality as it is, i.e., as it is from the perspective of complete nihilism, is also called by Nietzsche *amor fati*, another expression which marks the fundamental philosophical position of Nietzsche's thought. Considered abstractly, Nietzsche's *amor fati* is equivalent to Spinoza's *amor intellectualis Dei*; both formulas express the reconciliation of freedom (*amor*) with necessity (*fatum, Deus*). This proximity of Nietzsche's position to that of Spinoza is not accidental and Nietzsche is perfectly aware of it, as the passages in the posthumous fragments in which Nietzsche refers to Spinoza (and Hegel) show.³⁴ But Nietzsche's formula must be understood from the standpoint of his fundamental experience of the historico-metaphysical convergence of the death of god with the drive toward total domination.

What Nietzsche's philosophy wants, according to his self-interpretation, is:

a Dionysian affirmation of the world as it is, without subtraction, exception, or selection—it wants the eternal cycle: the same things, the same logic and illogic of entanglements. The highest state a philosopher can attain: to stand in a Dionysian relationship to existence—my formula for this is *amor fati*.³⁵

In this passage we encounter a reference to a thought which is central to the understanding of Nietzsche's tragic ethos: the conception of the "eternal cycle" in the sense of the eternal recurrence of the same. This is perhaps the most difficult of Nietzsche's thoughts. I will not attempt in this paper to give an account of the intricacies of this doctrine, but will content myself with pointing to an aspect that is essential for my pre-

sent purposes. The thought of the eternal recurrence of the same, I would like to propose, is the most forceful expression of the event of the death of God. As I have shown in my analysis of the devaluation of the highest values, if there is no God, there are also no goals and no meaning beyond the values posited by the will to power. The eternal recurrence of the same is the most extreme form of this radical meaninglessness of the world.

Let us think this thought in its most terrible form: existence as it is, without meaning or aim, yet recurring inevitably without any finale in nothingness: "the *eternal recurrence*." This is the most extreme form of nihilism: the nothing (the "meaningless"), eternally!³⁶

But the thought of the eternal recurrence of the same is not only the radicalization of the devaluation of the highest values—in a manner that makes the continuous existence of the last man impossible—it is also the radicalization of the transvaluation of all values according to the principle of the will to power. In this sense, Nietzsche speaks of this thought in *Ecce homo* as the fundamental conception of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and characterizes it as "the supreme formula of affirmation that can be attained."³⁷ How are we to understand this? The Dionysian affirmation constitutive of the tragic ethos subtracts nothing from the world; it accepts and affirms pain and "evil" as necessary conditions of the will to power. The thought of the eternal recurrence of the same gives this affirmation an eternal character, because it forces the will to will the truth *in aeternitatem*, in such a manner that the will to power itself is the only source of justification. The thought of the eternal recurrence of the same, as the thought of the absolute absence of transcendent goals, implies a conception of the "innocence of Becoming." Of this con-

PHILOSOPHY TODAY

ception Nietzsche says that it “gives us the greatest courage and the greatest freedom.”³⁸ As the correspondence to the unity of devaluation and transvaluation of values, the tragic ethos, as expressed in the most radical manner in the doctrine of the eternal recurrence of the same, is thus the correspondence to the death of God and the elevation of the human being to the position of “man-god.”

The ambiguity expressed in these opposing characterizations of the doctrine of the eternal recurrence of the same is essential to the doctrine itself. The two extremes contained in this ambiguity are, according to Nietzsche’s historical experience, the only genuine options open to the will, and the elucidation of this ambiguity is intended to force an alternative to consciousness, i.e., to bring to surface the crisis that is latent in the epoch in which the death of God begins to cast its first shadows across Europe. Nietzsche sees the belief in eternal recurrence as a means to bring about the clearest decision with respect to the modern project of absolute freedom of the subject, and thus as a means to break the historical preponderance of the mediocrity and tepidness of the last man, who does not want to decide anything. The decision is forced upon European humanity by making unmistakably clear the consequences of God’s death. If God is dead, then all sense and meaning has abandoned the world. The attitude flowing from the perception of the absolute senselessness of Being is called nihilism. This fact, however, is overlooked, i.e., denied by the last man who, in his shortsightedness, settles down complacently in a God-forsaken world and concerns himself only with reducing the possible disturbances of his comfort and security. The death of God, the withdrawal of all sense from the world, does not constitute a crisis for this man; on the contrary, it liberates him from the tension attending the thought of the necessity to procure the salvation of

his soul. This tepid nihilism, which makes a virtue out of self-contentedness, is, according to Nietzsche, as I have already pointed out, the greatest danger for European humanity at the moment in which the nations of the Earth prepare themselves for the great struggle for global domination. The eternal recurrence is a critical thought because it brings about the crisis, i.e., the situation in which the decision can no longer be postponed. This thought has the historical significance of being the “hammer” which breaks the security of the bourgeois world and confronts it with the critical task of a selection of the type best fit to the tasks of the age. That is why Nietzsche says of the thought of the eternal recurrence:

My philosophy brings the triumphant idea of which all other modes of thought will ultimately perish. It is the great *breeding* idea: the races that cannot bear it stand condemned; those who find it the greatest benefit are chosen to rule.³⁹

The thought of the eternal recurrence of the same things and situations is critically selective in that it takes away all possible forms of easy accommodation with the God-forsaken world. The last man revels in his self-contentment because he assumes that *nothing is of consequence*, i.e., that nothing is ultimately serious and important. The thought of the eternal recurrence, on the contrary, puts the weight of all decisions back onto the will, and indeed an eternal weight; it is, as Nietzsche says, “the heaviest thought,”⁴⁰ because it forces the will to recognize that in taking a decision now it is choosing for eternity, i.e., that the will is responsible for itself in an eternal sense. Since there is “no finale in nothingness,” i.e., no escape from the eternally recurring cycle of the same things and situations, we are condemned to choose *in aeternitatem*. If the idea of the eternal recurrence pervades con-

TRUTH AND ETHOS

sciousness, it becomes clear that everything, i.e., every decision, *is of eternal consequence*. As the first communication of the thought of the eternal recurrence in *The Gay Science* intimates:

If that thought acquired power over thee as thou art, it would transform thee, and perhaps crush thee; the question with regard to all and everything: "Dost thou will this once more, and also innumerable times?" would lie as the heaviest burden upon thy activity! Or, how wouldst thou have to become favorably inclined to thyself and to life, so as *to long for nothing more ardently* than for this eternal sanctioning and sealing?⁴¹

The thought of the eternal recurrence is the formula of that most extreme form of nihilism which, as the expression of the eternity of nothingness, breaks through the protective ramparts of the bourgeois world; at the same time, it is the formula of the supreme affirmation and acceptance of existence as it is. What decides with respect to (or resolves) this ambiguity is the degree of force of the will upon which this thought has fastened. The weak ones, the ones unable to enter the struggle for power, destroy themselves, thinks Nietzsche, out of the despair resulting from the thought of the eternal nothingness. Let it be said in passing that this is not merely a spirited musing on Nietzsche's part, but a historical phenomenon more widespread than many Nietzsche commentators seem to think. Be that as it may, according to Nietzsche the strong-willed ones welcome the thought of the eternal recurrence as a corroborating doctrine and as the new existential weight in the epoch in which the Christian God has lost His historical preponderance. In a passage which describes the "development of *pessimism to nihilism*," Nietzsche depicts the final stage of this development in the following manner:

Finally: one discovers of what material the "true world" had been built: and now all one has left is the repudiated world, and one adds this supreme disappointment to the reasons why it deserves to be repudiated.

At this point nihilism is reached: all one has left are the values that pass judgment—nothing else.

Here the problem of strength and weakness originates:

1. The weak perish of it;
2. those who are stronger destroy what does not perish;
3. those who are strongest overcome the values that pass judgment.

In sum this constitutes the tragic age.⁴²

The "tragic age" is the culminating stage of the history of modern man. This age is tragic not because it is pessimistic, but because in it the nations of the earth are confronted with the need to make decisions in the face of and despite the greatest pain. The tragic age is antipodal to the bourgeois world in that it accepts pain and what of old was called evil as part and parcel of "life," i.e., of Being as such. The metaphysical description of Being as will to power already contains within itself the position of Dionysian affirmation of the eternal recurrence of the same. These two thoughts: will to power and eternal recurrence of the same, condition and refer to each other as the original philosophical unity of truth (necessity) and freedom. The overman, i.e., the human being who is empowered to accept the historical necessity of the unrestricted subjugation of all things under the imperatives of the global administration of the earth, accepts and loves the task imposed on him by destiny and does not shy away from its consequences, because he is aware that "every good is a former evil which has been made serviceable."⁴³ The

overman is fastened upon by the tragic wisdom which says:

life itself, its eternal fertility and recurrence is responsible for torment, destruction, and the will to destruct. . . . [For tragic wisdom] Being is *sufficiently holy* to justify even an immensity of suffering.⁴⁴

It is with respect to this man, who in his absolute self-empowerment goes beyond all imperfect forms of the modern subject, that we must understand Nietzsche's formula for the "greatness of man":

My formula for the greatness of man is *amor fati*: to will nothing different in the future, in the past nor in all eternity. Not simply to tolerate, let alone dissemble, necessity—all idealisms are forms of dishonesty regarding necessity—but to love it ...⁴⁵

If this is indeed the case, then the overman has nothing to do with ideas of racial superiority, but is rather a consistent response to the truth of the death of God. Because it knows of this death, the ethos of the age is a tragic ethos. The tragic ethos, as we saw, counts with pain as one of the necessary elements of the whole of reality. If we now turn to the passage from *The Gay Science* in which the "mad man" announces that God is dead and asks: "does not empty space breathe upon us?," it seems that we must conclude that the most essential and profound pain which the tragic ethos has to accept and affirm is precisely the death of God. It is this pain which makes the tragic ethos incomparably superior to the ethics of the "last man" and to all forms of willful glorification of brute power, although it is also necessary to remark that Nietzsche does not shrink from the advocacy of all available means for the sake of the domination of the earth. This superiority is of a philosophical nature, in the sense that the tragic ethos is the correspondence to the fundamental modern truth of

nihilism, and does not search for subterfuges in order to negate, mitigate, or simply blind itself to this truth. Nietzsche's call for a master-morality is not the result of the oblivion of God's death but rather the most lucid perception of that loss and the heroic assumption of what he, from the perspective of the metaphysics of the will to power, conceives as the task of the age. Whether this is indeed the ultimate task of the age, is a different question.

To conclude, I would like to return to a reflection on the meaning of the word "ethos" and from this reflection try to gain a standpoint from which we can, certainly not go beyond Nietzsche, but perhaps look beyond the metaphysics of the will to power. It is known that the original signification of "ethos" is not "character" but "house" or "home." If we follow this indication, then the unity of truth and ethos would mean that the truth opens the space for building a home for the historical existence of humankind. In this sense Novalis has once said: "Philosophy is properly speaking homesickness, a drive to be everywhere at home."⁴⁶ But homesickness is the feeling of being far from home, and that is why philosophy is the drive to be at home. In this sense, the philosopher is like Odysseus, wandering far from the hearth of the fatherland, but always driven by the *nostos*, by what we call homesickness. The pain produced by this homesickness is expressed by the Greek word nostalgia (from *nostos* and *algos*, "pain"). In this essential sense, and in accordance with Novalis' definition, we could determine the essence of philosophy as nostalgia, meaning not some romantic remembrance of bygone days, but the painful, because essential, longing for home.

Nietzsche's philosophy is perhaps the most nostalgic one in the history of philosophy, because it is driven by the lucid consciousness of the loss not only of the home, but also of the very foundation of the histori-

TRUTH AND ETHOS

cal dwelling of Western humankind: the loss of God. But is the tragic ethos a new home for our historical existence? Is the unrestricted global domination of the earth the opening of a new space for historical dwelling? This is indeed the intention of Nietzsche's philosophy. And nonetheless Nietzsche himself says in a song from *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*: "the desert is growing; woe onto Him who harbors deserts!"⁴⁷ Taken with adequate seriousness, this prophecy of the growth of the desert could be taken to mean that the historical space for building a home for modern humankind is being laid to waste, that a new home is in our times no longer possible, and indeed increasingly so.

The absolute subject can have no home, because it assimilates everything to its own essence, and can thus have no sustenance in the Other than itself. If we may interpret the meaning of the dictum "the desert is growing" in this manner, then Nietzsche's philosophy would be characterized by a tension between the drive to build a new ethos for modern humankind through the appropriation and overpowering of the whole of being, which is indeed the immediate task of the age, and the consciousness that in the absence of the God modern humankind is radically homeless. Meditating upon this tension is perhaps the essential task of philosophical thought in our age.

ENDNOTES

1. Walter Kaufmann, *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974).
2. Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), p. 11.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 256.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 6.
5. *Der Wille zur Macht. Versuch einer Umwertung aller Werte* (Stuttgart: Kroner, 1964), "aphorism" 2. In the *Kritische Gesamtausgabe*, ed. Giorgio Colli and Mazzino Montinari (Berlin/New York: Gruyter, 1967ff.), henceforth cited, as usual in the Nietzsche literature, as KGW, the passage is found in VIII, 2:9[35]. In quoting Nietzsche I give the title, the chapter heading (when applicable) and/or "aphorism" (or section) number, and then volume (in Arabic and Roman numerals) and page number of the KGW. All the titles are given in English. For the collection of posthumous fragments known as *The Will to Power* I give both the "aphorism" number of the Kröner edition (cited as WtP), as reproduced in Walter Kaufmann's translation, *The Will to Power* (New York: Random House, 1967), and also the volume, notebook and fragment number of the corresponding passage in volumes VIII, 1–3 of the KGW (a small number are found in volumes VII, 1–3). The translations are for the most part mine, but I have in some cases consulted the translations by Walter Kaufmann and others.
6. See the recent book by Lester Hunt, *Nietzsche and the Origin of Virtue* (London, New York: Routledge, 1991).
7. Heidegger's interpretation of the essence of truth is developed most forcefully, although also most succinctly in "Vom Wesen der Wahrheit," in *Wegmarken* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1978), pp. 175–200; translated by John Sallis as "On the Essence of Truth", in M. Heidegger, *Basic Writings*, ed. D. F. Krell (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), p. 73–98. Heidegger's interpretation of Nietzsche's philosophy is to be found in his two-volume work, *Nietzsche* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1961); translated (partially) by D. F. Krell, J. Stambaugh, and F. A. Capuzzi, *Nietzsche*, 4 vols. (New York: Harper & Row, 1979–87). The lectures, on which most of the work, Nietzsche, is based, have been published in Heidegger's *Gesamtausgabe* (Frankfurt am Main: Klostermann, 1975–), vol. 43, 44, 47, 48, 50.
8. *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1178b 22–24.
9. *Metaphysics*, Book Lambda, 1072b 18–31.
10. WtP 2, KGW VIII, 2:9[35]
11. *Joyful Wisdom* (125), trans. Thomas Common (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing Co., 1960), p. 168. (I use this translation with some modifications), KGW V, 2:159.
12. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Part One "Of the Despisers of the Body," KGW VI, 1:35.
13. This awareness is conveyed, I believe, in the early utterance that "the feeling . . . upon which the religion of the modern age rests, (is) the feeling that God himself is dead." *Glauben und Wissen oder Reflexionsphilosophie der Subjektivität in der Vollständigkeit ihrer Formen als Kantische, Jacobische und Fichtesche Philosophie*, ed. Eva Moldenhauer and Karl Markus Michel, in G. W. F. Hegel,

PHILOSOPHY TODAY

- Werke in zwanzig Banden* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1970), 2:432; henceforth cited as *Werke*.
14. *Human All Too Human*, II (278), KGW IV, 3:312.
 15. WtP 957, KGW VII, 3:37[8].
 16. WtP 960, KGW VIII, 1:2[57].
 17. See "Der Europäische Nihilismus," in *Nietzsche* (Pfullingen: Neske, 1961), 2:31–256; and, for the following, especially "Nietzsches Metaphysik" (section "Der Uebermensch"), *Nietzsche* 2:291–314.
 18. *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, (4) (Zusatz); *Werke* 7:47.
 19. *Ibid.*, (21) (Zusatz); 7:74–75.
 20. Hutterian Brothers, eds., *The Gospel in Dostoyevsky* (Farmington, PA: Plough Publishing House, 1988), p. 144.
 21. *Ibid.*, pp. 79–80.
 22. WtP 958, KGW VII, 2:25[37].
 23. "Nietzsche's Metaphysik," *Nietzsche* 2:263–72.
 24. 2:284. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (5), trans. Alexander Tille (London: Unwin Brothers, 1908), pp. 12–13 (I use this translation with some modifications), KGW VI, 1:13.
 25. WtP 702, KGW VIII, 3:14[174].
 26. *Ibid.*, 703, KGW VIII, 3:14[174].
 27. See the whole of the "The Drunken Song" (in KGW the chapter is entitled "Das Nachtwandler-Lied") of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, Part Four, KGW VI, 1:391–400. See also WtP 853 (3), KGW VIII, 3:17[3(3)].
 28. WtP 55, KGW VIII, 1:5[71].
 29. *Ibid.*, 852, KGW VIII, 2:10[168].
 30. *The Twilight of the Idols* ("What I Owe the Ancients") (4) KGW VI, 3:153.
 31. WtP 853 (3), KGW VIII, 3:17[3(3)].
 32. *Twilight of the Idols* ("What I Owe the Ancients") (5), KGW, VI, 3:154.
 33. WtP 852, KGW VIII, 2:10[168].
 34. Cf. WtP 55, 95, 411, 416; KGW VIII, 1: 5[71], VIII, 2:9[178], VIII, 2:10[150], VIII, 1:2[16]. Cf. also the letter to Overbeck of 30 July 1881.
 35. WtP 1041, KGW VIII, 3:16[32]; cf. also *Ecce homo*, "Why I am so Clever" (10), KGW VI, 3:295.
 36. WtP 55, KGW VIII, 1:5[71].
 37. In the chapter entitled "Thus Spoke Zarathustra" (1), KGW VI, 3:333.
 38. WtP 787, KGW VII, 1:8[19].
 39. *Ibid.*, 1053, KGW VII, 2:26[376].
 40. *Ibid.*, 1059, KGW VII, 2:26[284].
 41. *The Gay Science* (341), KGW V, 2:250.
 42. WtP 37, KGW VIII, 2:9[107].
 43. *Ibid.*, 1025, KGW VIII, 2:9[138].
 44. *Ibid.*, 1052, KGW VIII, 3:14[89].
 45. *Ecce homo* ("Why I Am So Clever") (10), KGW VI, 3:295.
 46. Quoted by Heidegger, *Die Grundbegriffe der Metaphysik. Welt—Endlichkeit—Einsamkeit. Gesamtausgabe* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1983), vol. 39/30, p. 7.
 47. Heidegger has devoted practically the whole first part of *What Is Called Thinking?* to spell out the historical meaning of this sentence. *Was heisst denken?* (Tubingen: Max Niemeyer, 1954); *What Is Called Thinking?*, trans. Fred D. Wieck and J. Glenn Gray (New York: Harper & Row, 1972).

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