

[Throughout his career, Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) sought to penetrate beyond rational, systematic levels of thought to the irrational "human" level beneath. He is one of that small company of philosophers whose writings are immediately arresting and readable, whatever one may think of their content.

[Nietzsche became insane in 1889, after which he produced no further writings. He was cared for during the remaining decade of his life by his sister. The Will to Power is a collection of notes accumulated 1884 to 1888 systematically arranged and published in an expanded edition in 1904.]

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

THE WILL TO POWER

854.

IN this age of universal suffrage, in which everybody is allowed to sit in judgment upon everything and everybody, I feel compelled to re-establish the order of rank.

855.

^{Among} Quanta of power alone determine rank and distinguish rank: nothing else does.

857.

I distinguish between the type which represents ascending life and that which represents decay, decomposition and weakness. Ought one to suppose that the question of rank between these two types can be at all doubtful? . . .

859.

The advantages of standing detached from one's age.—Detached from the two movements, that of individualism and that of collectivist morality; for even the first does not recognise the order of rank, and would give one individual the same freedom as another. My thoughts are not concerned with the degree of freedom which should be granted to the one or to the other or to all, but with the degree of power which the one or the other should exercise over his neighbour or over all; and more especially with the question to what extent a sacrifice of freedom, or even enslavement, may afford the basis for the cultivation of a superior type. In plain words: how could one sacrifice the development of mankind in order to assist a higher species than man to come into being.

861.

It is necessary for *higher* men to declare war upon the masses! In all directions mediocre people are joining hands in order to make themselves masters. Everything that pampers, that softens, and that brings the "people" or "woman" to the front, operates in favour of universal suffrage—that is to say, the dominion of *inferior* men.

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But we must make reprisals, and draw the whole state of affairs (which commenced in Europe with Christianity) to the light of day and to judgment.

862.

A teaching is needed which is strong enough to work in a *disciplinary* manner; it should operate in such a way as to strengthen the strong and to paralyse and smash up the world-weary.

The annihilation of declining races. The decay of Europe. The annihilation of slave-tainted valuations. The dominion of the world as a means to the rearing of a higher type. The annihilation of the humbug which is called morality (Christianity as a hysterical kind of honesty in this regard: Augustine, Bunyan) The annihilation of universal suffrage—that is to say, that system by means of which the lowest natures prescribe themselves as a law for higher natures. The annihilation of mediocrity and its prevalence....

866.

It is *necessary* to show that a counter-movement is *inevitably associated* with any increasingly economical consumption of men and mankind, and with an ever more closely involved "machinery" of interests and services. I call this counter-movement the *separation of the luxurious surplus of mankind*: by means of it a stronger kind, a higher type, must come to light, which has other conditions for its origin and for its maintenance than the average man. My concept, my metaphor for this type is, as you know, the word "Superman." Along the first road, which can now be completely surveyed, arose adaptation, stultification, higher Chinese culture, modesty in the instincts, and satisfaction at the sight of the belittlement of man—a kind of *stationary level of mankind*. If ever we get that inevitable and imminent, general control of the economy of the earth, then mankind *can* be used as machinery and find its best purpose in the service of this economy—as an enormous piece of clock-work consisting of ever smaller and ever more subtly adapted wheels; then all the dominating and commanding elements will become ever more superfluous; and the whole gains enormous energy, while the individual factors which compose it represent but small modicums of strength and of *value*. To oppose this dwarfing and adaptation of man to a specialised kind of utility, a reverse movement is needed—the procreation of the *synthetic* man who em-

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bodies everything and *justifies* it; that man for whom the turning of mankind into a machine is a first condition of existence, for whom the rest of mankind is but soil on which he can devise his *higher mode* of existence.

He is in need of the *opposition* of the masses, of those who are "levelled down"; he requires that feeling of distance from them; he stands upon them, he lives on them. This higher form of *aristocracy* is the form of the future. From the moral point of view, the collective machinery above described, that solidarity of all wheels, represents the most extreme example in the *exploitation of mankind*: but it presupposes the existence of those for whom such an exploitation would have some *meaning*. Otherwise it would signify, as a matter of fact, merely the general depreciation of the type man,—a *retrograde phenomenon* on a grand scale.

Readers are beginning to see what I am combating—namely, *economic optimism*: as if the general welfare of everybody must necessarily increase with the growing self-sacrifice of everybody. The very reverse seems to me to be the case, *the self-sacrifice of everybody amounts to a collective loss*; man becomes *inferior*—so that nobody knows what end this monstrous purpose has served. A wherefore? a *new* wherefore?—this is what mankind requires.

881.

Concerning the order of rank.—What is it that constitutes the *mediocrity* of the typical man? That he does not understand that things necessarily have *their other side*; that he combats evil conditions as if they could be dispensed with; that he will not take the one with the other; that he would fain obliterate and erase the *specific character of a thing*, of a circumstance, of an age, and of a person, by calling only a portion of their qualities good, and suppressing the remainder. The "desirability" of the mediocre is that which we others combat: their *ideal* is something which shall no longer contain anything harmful, evil, dangerous, questionable, and destructive. We recognise the reverse of this: that with every growth of man his other side must grow as well; that the highest man, if such a concept be allowed, would be that man who would represent the *antagonistic character of existence* most strikingly, and would be its glory and its only justification. . . . Ordinary men may only represent a small corner and nook of this natural character; they perish the moment the multifariousness of the elements composing them, and the tension between their

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antagonistic traits, increases: but this is the prerequisite for *greatness in man*. That man should become better and at the same time more evil, is my formula for this inevitable fact.

The majority of people are only piecemeal and fragmentary examples of man: only when all these creatures are jumbled together does one whole man arise. Whole ages and whole peoples, in this sense, have a fragmentary character about them; it may perhaps be part of the economy of human development that man should develop himself only piecemeal. But, for this reason, one should not forget that the only important consideration is the rise of the synthetic man; that inferior men, and by far the great majority of people, are but rehearsals and exercises out of which here and there a *whole man* may arise; a man who is a human milestone, and who indicates how far mankind has advanced up to a certain point. Mankind does not advance in a straight line; often a type is attained which is again lost (for instance, with all the efforts of three hundred years, we have not reached the *men of the Renaissance* again, and in addition to this we must not forget that the man of the Renaissance was already behind his brother of classical antiquity).

874.

The degeneration of the ruler and of the ruling classes has been the cause of all the great disorders in history! Without the Roman Cæsars and Roman society, Christianity would never have prevailed.

When it occurs to inferior men to doubt whether higher men exist, then the danger is great! It is then that men finally discover that there are virtues even among inferior, suppressed, and poor-spirited men, and that everybody is equal before God: which is the *non plus ultra* of all confounded nonsense that has ever appeared on earth! (For in the end higher men begin to measure themselves according to the standard of virtues upheld by the slaves—and discover that they are "proud," etc., and that all their *higher* qualities should be condemned.

When Nero and Caracalla stood at the helm, it was then that the paradox arose: "The lowest man is of more value than that one on the throne!" And thus the path was prepared for an *image of God* which was as remote as possible from the image of the mightiest,—God on the Cross!

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871.

Vicious and unbridled people: their depressing

influence upon the *value of the passions*. It was the appalling barbarity of morality which was principally responsible in the Middle Ages for the compulsory recourse to a veritable "league of virtue"—and this was coupled with an equally appalling exaggeration of all that which constitutes the value of man. Militant "civilisation" (taming) is in need of all kinds of irons and tortures in order to maintain itself against terrible and beast-of-prey natures.

In this case, confusion, although it may have the most nefarious influences, is quite natural: that which *men of power and will are able to demand of themselves* gives them the standard for what they may also allow themselves. Such natures are the very opposite of the *vicious* and the *unbridled*; although under certain circumstances they may perpetrate deeds for which an inferior man would be convicted of vice and intemperance.

In this respect the concept, "*all men are equal before God*," does an extraordinary amount of harm; actions and attitudes of mind were forbidden which belonged to the prerogative of the strong alone, just as if they were in themselves unworthy of man. All the tendencies of strong men were brought into disrepute by the fact that the defensive weapons of the most weak (even of those who were weakest towards themselves) were established as a standard of valuation.

The confusion went so far that precisely the great *virtuosos* of life (whose self-control presents the sharpest contrast to the vicious and the unbridled) were branded with the most opprobrious names. Even to this day people feel themselves compelled to disparage a Cæsar Borgia: it is simply ludicrous. The Church has anathematised German Kaisers owing to their vices: as if a monk or a priest had the right to say a word as to what a Frederick II. should allow himself. Don Juan is sent to hell: this is very *naïf*. Has anybody ever noticed that all interesting men are lacking in heaven? . . . This is only a hint to the girls, as to where they may best find salvation. If one think at all logically, and also have a profound insight into that which makes a great man, there can be no doubt at all that the Church has dispatched all "great men" to Hades—its fight is *against* all "greatness in man."

877.

The Revolution made Napoleon possible: that is its justification. We ought to desire the anarchical collapse of the whole of our civilisation if such a reward were to be its result. Napoleon made nationalism possible: that is the latter's

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The value of a man (apart, of course, from morality and immorality: because with these concepts a man's *worth* is not even skimmed) does not lie in his utility; because he would continue to exist even if there were nobody to whom he could be useful. And why could not that man be the very pinnacle of manhood who was the source of the worst possible effects for his race: so high and so superior, that in his presence everything would go to rack and ruin from envy?

373.

The origin of moral values.—Selfishness has as much value as the physiological value of him who possesses it. Each individual represents the whole course of Evolution, and he is not, as morals teach, something that begins at his birth. If he represent the *ascent* of the line of mankind, his value is, in fact, very great; and the concern about his maintenance and the promoting of his growth may even be extreme. (It is the concern about the promise of the future in him which gives the well-constituted individual such an extraordinary right to egoism.) If he represent *descending* development, decay, chronic sickening, he has little worth: and the greatest fairness would have him take as little room, strength, and sunshine as possible from the well-constituted. In this case society's duty is to *suppress egoism* (for the latter may sometimes manifest itself in an absurd, morbid, and seditious manner): whether it be a question of the decline and pining away of single individuals or of whole classes of mankind. A morality and a religion of "love," the *curbing* of the self-affirming spirit, and a doctrine encouraging patience, resignation, helpfulness, and co-operation in word and deed may be of the highest value within the confines of such classes, even in the eyes of their rulers: for it restrains the feelings of rivalry, of resentment, and of envy,—feelings which are only too natural in the bungled and the botched,—and it even deifies them under the ideal of humility, of obedience, of slave-life, of being ruled, of poverty of illness, and of lowliness. This explains why the ruling classes (or races) and individuals of all ages have always upheld the cult of unselfishness, the gospel of the lowly and of "God on the Cross."

The preponderance of an altruistic way of valuing is the result of a consciousness of the fact that one is botched and bungled. Upon examination, this point of view turns out to be: "I am not worth much," simply a psychological valuation; more plainly still: it is the feeling of impotence, of the lack of the great self-assertion.

impulses of power (in muscles, nerves, and ganglia). This valuation gets translated, according to the particular culture of these classes, into a moral or religious principle (the pre-eminence of religious or moral precepts is always a sign of low culture): it tries to justify itself in spheres whence, as far as it is concerned, the notion "value" hails. The interpretation by means of which the Christian sinner tries to understand himself, is an attempt at justifying his lack of power and of self-confidence: he prefers to feel himself a sinner rather than feel bad for nothing: it is in itself a symptom of decay when interpretations of this sort are used at all. In some cases the bungled and the botched do not look for the reason of their unfortunate condition in their own guilt (as the Christian does), but in society: when, however, the Socialist, the Anarchist, and the Nihilist are conscious that their existence is something for which some one must be *guilty*, they are very closely related to the Christian, who also believes that he can more easily endure his ill case and his wretched constitution when he has found some one whom he can hold *responsible* for it. The instinct of *revenge* and *resentment* appears in both cases here as a means of enduring life, as a self-preservative measure, as is also the favour shown to *altruistic* theory and practice. The *hatred of egoism*, whether it be one's own (as in the case of the Christian), or another's (as in the case of the Socialists), thus appears as a valuation reached under the predominance of revenge; and also as an act of prudence on the part of the preservative instinct of the suffering, in the form of an increase in their feelings of co-operation and unity. . . . At bottom, as I have already suggested, the discharge of resentment which takes place in the act of judging, rejecting, and punishing egoism (one's own or that of others) is yet another self-preservative instinct on the part of the bungled and the botched. In short: the cult of altruism is merely a particular form of egoism, which regularly appears under certain definite physiological circumstances.

When the Socialist, with righteous indignation, cries for "justice," "rights," "equal rights," it only shows that he is oppressed by his inadequate culture, and is unable to understand why he suffers: he also finds pleasure in crying;—if he were more at ease he would take jolly good care not to cry in that way: in that case he would seek his pleasure elsewhere. The same holds good of the Christian: he curses, condemns, and slanders the "world"—and does not even except himself. But that is no reason for taking him seriously. In both cases we are in the presence of invalids who feel better for crying, and who find relief in slander.

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753.

I am opposed to Socialism because it dreams ingenuously of "goodness, truth, beauty, and equal rights" (anarchy pursues the same ideal, but in a more brutal fashion).

I am opposed to parliamentary government and the power of the press, because they are the means whereby cattle become masters.

755.

Socialists are particularly ridiculous in my eyes, because of their absurd optimism concerning the "good man" who is supposed to be waiting in their cupboard, and who will come into being when the present order of society has been overturned and has made way for natural instincts. But the opposing party is quite as ludicrous, because it will not see the act of violence which lies beneath every law, the severity and egoism inherent in every kind of authority. "I and my kind will rule and prevail. Whoever degenerates will be either expelled or annihilated."—This was the fundamental feeling of all ancient legislation. The idea of a higher order of man is hated much more profoundly than monarchs themselves. Hatred of aristocracy always uses hatred of monarchy as a mask.

926.

Against John Stuart Mill.—I abhor the man's vulgarity when he says: "What is right for one man is right for another"; "Do not do to others that which you would not that they should do unto you." Such principles would fain establish the whole of human traffic upon mutual services, so that every action would appear to be a cash payment for something done to us. The hypothesis here is ignoble to the last degree: it is taken for granted that there is some sort of *equivalence in value between my actions and thine*; the most personal value of an action is simply cancelled in this manner (that part of an action which has no equivalent and which cannot be remunerated). "Reciprocity" is a piece of egregious vulgarity; the mere fact that what I do cannot and may not be done by another, that there is *no such thing as equivalence* (except in those *very select circles* where one actually has one's equal, *inter pares*), that in a really profound sense a man never requites because he is something *unique* in himself and can only do *unique* things,—this fundamental conviction contains the cause of *aristocratic aloofness from the mob*, because the latter believes in equality, and consequently in the feasibility of equivalence and "reciprocity."

The very notion, "living organism," implies that there must be growth,—that there must be a striving after an extension of power, and therefore a process of absorption of other forces. Under the drowsiness brought on by moral narcotics, people speak of the right of the individual to *defend* himself; on the same principle one might speak of his right to *attack*: for *both*—and the latter more than the former—are necessities where all living organisms are concerned: aggressive and defensive egoism are not questions of choice or even of "free will," but they are fatalities of life itself.

In this respect it is immaterial whether one have an individual, a living body, or "an advancing society" in view. The right to punish (or society's means of defence) has been arrived at only through a misuse of the word "right": a right is acquired only by contract,—but self-defence and self-preservation do not stand upon the basis of a contract. A people ought at least, with quite as much justification, to be able to regard its lust of power, either in arms, commerce, trade, or colonisation, as a right—the right of growth, perhaps. . . . When the instincts of a society ultimately make it give up war and renounce conquest, it is decadent: it is ripe for democracy and the rule of shopkeepers. In the majority of cases, it is true, assurances of peace are merely stupefying draughts.

The strong of the future.—To what extent necessity on the one hand and accident on the other have attained to conditions from which a *stronger species* may be reared: this we are now able to understand and to bring about consciously; we can now create those conditions under which such an elevation is possible.

Hitherto education has always aimed at the utility of society: *not* the greatest possible utility for the future, but the utility of the society actually extant. What people required were "instruments" for this purpose. Provided the *wealth of forces were greater*, it would be possible to think of a draft being made upon them, the aim of which would not be the utility of society, but some future utility.

The more people grasped to what extent the present form of society was in such a state of transition as sooner or later to be *no longer able to exist for its own sake*, but only as a means in the hands of a stronger race, the more *this task would have to be brought forward*.

The increasing belittlement of man is precisely the impelling power which leads one to think of

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the cultivation of a *stronger race*: a race which would have a surplus precisely there where the dwarfed species was weak and growing weaker (will, responsibility, self-reliance, the ability to postulate aims for one's self).

The means would be those which history teaches: *isolation* by means of preservative interests which would be the reverse of those generally accepted; exercise in transvalued valuations; distance as pathos; a clean conscience in what to-day is most despised and most prohibited.

The *levelling* of the mankind of Europe is the great process which should not be arrested; it should even be accelerated. The necessity of *cleaving gulfs*, of *distance*, of the *order of rank*, is therefore imperative; but not the necessity of retarding the process above mentioned.

This *levelled-down* species requires justification as soon as it is attained: its justification is that it exists for the service of a higher and sovereign race which stands upon it and can only be elevated upon its shoulders to the task which it is destined to perform. Not only a ruling race whose task would be consummated in ruling alone: but a race with *vital spheres* of its own, with an overflow of energy for beauty, bravery, culture, and manners, even for the most abstract thought; a yea-saying race which would be able to allow itself every kind of great luxury—strong enough to be able to dispense with the tyranny of the imperatives of virtue, rich enough to be in no need of economy or pedantry; beyond good and evil; a forcing-house for rare and exceptional plants.

957.

The question, and at the same time the task, is approaching with hesitation, terrible as Fate, but nevertheless inevitable: how shall the earth as a whole be ruled? And to what end shall man as a whole—no longer as a people or as a race—be reared and trained?

Legislative moralities are the principal means by which one can form mankind, according to the fancy of a creative and profound will: provided, of course, that such an artistic will of the first order gets the power into its own hands, and can make its creative will prevail over long periods in the form of legislation, religions, and morals. At present, and probably for some time to come, one will seek such colossally creative men, such really great men, as I understand them, in vain: they will be lacking, until, after many disappointments, we are forced to begin to understand why it is they are lacking, and that nothing bars with greater hostility their rise and development, at present and for some time to come, than that

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which is now called *the* morality in Europe. Just as if there were no other kind of morality, and could be no other kind, than the one we have already characterised as herd-morality. It is this morality which is now striving with all its power to attain to that green-meadow happiness on earth, which consists in security, absence of danger, ease, facilities for livelihood, and, last but not least, "if all goes well," even hopes to dispense with all kinds of shepherds and bell-wethers. The two doctrines which it preaches most universally are "equality of rights" and "pity for all sufferers"—and it even regards suffering itself as something which must be got rid of absolutely. That such ideas may be modern leads one to think very poorly of modernity. He, however, who has reflected deeply concerning the question, how and where the plant man has hitherto grown most vigorously, is forced to believe that this has always taken place under the opposite conditions; that to this end the danger of the situation has to increase enormously, his inventive faculty and dissembling powers have to fight their way up under long oppression and compulsion, and his will to life has to be increased to the unconditioned will to power, to over-power: he believes that danger, severity, violence, peril in the street and in the heart, inequality of rights, secrecy, stoicism, seductive art, and devilry of every kind—in short, the opposite of all gregarious desiderata—are necessary for the elevation of man. Such a morality with opposite designs, which would rear man upwards instead of to comfort and mediocrity; such a morality, with the intention of producing a ruling caste—the future lords of the earth—must, in order to be taught at all, introduce itself as if it were in some way correlated to the prevailing moral law, and must come forward under the cover of the latter's words and forms. But seeing that, to this end, a host of transitional and deceptive measures must be discovered, and that the life of a single individual stands for almost nothing in view of the accomplishment of such lengthy tasks and aims, the first thing that must be done is to rear a *new kind* of man in whom the duration of the necessary will and the necessary instincts is guaranteed for many generations. This must be a new kind of ruling species and caste—this ought to be quite as clear as the somewhat lengthy and not easily expressed consequences of this thought. The aim should be to prepare a *transvaluation of values* for a particularly strong kind of man, most highly gifted in intellect and will, and, to this end, slowly and cautiously to liberate in him a whole host of slandered instincts hitherto held in check: whoever meditates about this problem belongs to us, the free spirits. . .

... But in what direction may I turn with any hope of finding my particular kind of philosophers themselves, or at least *my yearning for new philosophers?* In that direction, alone, where a *noble* attitude of mind prevails, an attitude of mind which believes in slavery and in manifold orders of rank, as the prerequisites of any high degree of culture. In that direction, alone, where a *creative* attitude of mind prevails, an attitude of mind which does not regard the world of happiness and repose, the "Sabbath of Sabbaths" as an end to be desired, and which, even in peace, honours the means which lead to new wars; an attitude of mind which would prescribe laws for the future, which for the sake of the future would treat everything that exists to-day with harshness and even tyranny; a daring and "immoral" attitude of mind, which would wish to see both the good and the evil qualities in man developed to their fullest extent, because it would feel itself able to put each in its right place—that is to say, in that place in which each would need the other. But what prospect has he of finding what he seeks, who goes in search of philosophers to-day? Is it not probable that, even with the best Diogenes-lantern in his hand, he will wander about by night and day in vain? This age is possessed of the *opposite* instincts. What it wants, above all, is comfort; secondly, it wants publicity and the deafening din of actors' voices, the big drum which appeals to its Bank-Holiday tastes; thirdly, that every one should lie on his belly in utter subjection before the greatest of all lies—which is "the equality of men"—and should honour only those virtues which *make men equal and place them in equal positions*. But in this way, the rise of the philosopher, as I understand him, is made completely impossible—despite the fact that many may regard the present tendencies as rather favourable to his advent. As a matter of fact, the whole world mourns, to-day, the hard times that philosophers *used* to have, hemmed in between the fear of the stake, a guilty conscience, and the presumptuous wisdom of the Fathers of the Church: but the truth is, that precisely these conditions were *ever so much more favourable* to the education of a mighty, extensive, subtle, rash, and daring intellect than the conditions prevailing to-day. At present another kind of intellect, the intellect of the demagogue, of the actor, and perhaps of the beaver- and ant-like scholar too, finds the best possible conditions for its development. But even for artists of a superior calibre the conditions are already far from favourable: for does not every

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one of them, almost, perish owing to his want of discipline? They are no longer tyrannised over by an outside power—by the tables of absolute values enforced by a Church or by a monarch: and thus they no longer learn to develop their "inner tyrant," their *will*. And what holds good of artists also holds good, to a greater and more fatal degree, of philosophers. Where, then, are free spirits to be found to-day? Let any one show me a free spirit to-day!

997.

I teach that there are higher and lower men, and that a single individual may under certain circumstances justify whole millenniums of existence—that is to say, a wealthier, more gifted, greater, and more complete man, as compared with innumerable imperfect and fragmentary men.

998.

Away from rulers and rid of all bonds, live the highest men: and in the rulers they have their instruments.

999.

The order of rank: he who *determines* values and leads the will of millenniums, and does this by leading the highest natures—he *is the highest man*.

1000.

I fancy I have divined some of the things that lie hidden in the soul of the highest man; perhaps every man who has divined so much must go to ruin: but he who has seen the highest man must do all he can to make him *possible*.

Fundamental thought: we must make the future the standard of all our valuations—and not seek the laws for our conduct behind us.

1001.

Not "mankind," but *Superman* is the goal!

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