

Where does morality come from?

Aspects of Nietzsche's genealogical critique of morality
and
his idea of the *Übermensch*

by

Hay Lin Helen Ku

Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Magister Artium (Philosophy)

in the

**Faculty of Humanities
University of Pretoria, PRETORIA**

December 2003

Supervisor: Mr M. J. Schoeman

Abbreviations for Nietzsche's Works

- A: *The Anti-Christ*. 1971. In *PN*.
- BGE: *Beyond Good and Evil*. 1968. In *BW*.
- BT: *The Birth of Tragedy*. 1999. In *The Birth of Tragedy and Other Writings*. (ed.) Raymond Geuss & Ronald Speirs. Translated by Ronald Speirs. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.
- BW: *Basic Writings of Nietzsche*. 1968. Edited and Translated by Walter Kaufmann The Modern Library: New York.
- CW: *The Case of Wagner*. 1968. In *BW*.
- D: *Daybreak: Thoughts on the Prejudices of Morality*. 1997. Edited by Maudemarie Clark & Brian Leiter. Translated by R.J. Hollingdale. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.
- EH: *Ecce Homo*, in *BW*.
- GM: *On the Genealogy of Morals: A Polemic*. 1967. Translated by Walter Kaufmann and R.J. Hollingdale. Vintage Books: New York.
- GS: *The Gay Science: With a Prelude in Rhymes and an Appendix of Song*. 1974. Translated by Walter Kaufmann. Vintage Books: New York.
- HAH: *Human, All Too Human*. Translated by R.J. Hollingdale. 1986. Cambridge University Press: New York.
- P: *The Philosopher: Reflections on the Struggle Between Art and Knowledge*. In *PT*.
- PB: *Thoughts on the Meditation: Philosophy in Hard Times*. In *PT*.
- PN: *The Portable Nietzsche*. 1971. Translated by Walter Kaufmann. London: Chatto & Windus.
- PT: *Philosophy and Truth: Selections from Nietzsche's Notebooks of the Early 1870's*. 1979. Edited and translated by Daniel Breazeale. Humanities Press International: Atlantic Highlands, NJ.
- SE: *Schopenhauer as educator*, in *UM*.
- TI: *Twilight of the Idols*. 1971. In *PN*.
- U: *Unpublished Writings from the period of Unfashionable Observations*. 1995. Translated by Richard T. Gray. Stanford University Press: Stanford, CA

University of Pretoria etd – Ku, H L H (2003)

UDH: *On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life*, in *UM*.

UM: *Untimely Meditations*. 1983. Translated by R.J. Hollingdale. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.

WL: *On Truth and Lies in a Nonmoral Sense*. In *PT*.

WP: *The Will to Power*. 1967. Translated by Walter Kaufmann & R.J. Hollingdale. Random House: New York.

Z: *Thus Spoke Zarathustra: A book for All and None*. In *PN*.

Acknowledgements

I express my sincere thanks to:

- Venerable Master Hui Fang, the abbot of Nan Hua Temple, and all the members of the temple for their support, helping me to overcome the darkest period in my life. Master Hui Fang's practice of the spirit of bodhisattva has inspired me a lot since my husband committed suicide in 2001. I feel that the dark and imperfect world is lighted up with this spirit of bodhisattva, which I commend in the concluding chapter of this dissertation;
- My supervisor, Mr M. J. Schoeman, who encouraged me to introduce Buddhism in this dissertation, for his guidance and assistance;
- My editor, Mr Manie du Plessis for his advice and competency in editing this dissertation, and his kindness in helping me to follow a wonderful academic career.

To commemorate my husband Sing Shek Tong who inspires me
and
to celebrate my refusal to follow the fate of Ophelia in *Hamlet*.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	1
Nietzsche's 'immoralism'	2
Nietzsche's non-linear perspective of life	16
Chapter 2: Aspects of Nietzsche's genealogical critique of morality	23
The self-overcoming of morality	23
Man — the measure of all things?	28
Nietzsche's attack on metaphysics	30
Nietzsche's critique of the ascetic ideal of the will to truth	34
Has the earth been a madhouse?	41
Master morality vs. slave morality	47
Chapter 3: Nietzsche's idea of the <i>Übermensch</i>	53
Experimental morality	53
Who is Nietzsche's <i>Übermensch</i> ?	69
Chapter 4: Humanistic Buddhism as complement to Nietzsche's philosophy?	90
Humanistic Buddhism	90
Nietzsche's doctrine of eternal recurrence and <i>amor fati</i> plus the spirit of Bodhisattva	105
Conclusion	120
Epilogue	125

Abbreviations for Nietzsche's works

Bibliography

Appendix 1

Appendix 2

Summary

Summary

- Title:** Where does morality come from? Aspects of Nietzsche's genealogical critique of morality and his idea of the *Übermensch*
- Author:** Hay Lin Helen Ku
- Supervisor:** Mr M. J. Schoeman
- Degree:** Magister Artium (Philosophy)
- Department:** Philosophy
- Language:** English

With this dissertation, firstly, I address the issue of Friedrich Nietzsche's (1844-1900) so-called 'immoralism'. When he calls himself an 'immoralist' and even 'the first immoralist' (*EH Destiny 2*), he seems to be the first philosopher to consider morality as something negative, something we had better get rid of. Yet, he favours 'noble morality' and 'higher moralities' which he insists ought to be possible (*BGE 202*). I shall interpret Nietzsche's explicit claim of 'immoralism' and his 'campaign against morality' as a rejection of a particular kind of morality — Christian morality 'that has become prevalent and predominant as morality itself' (*EH Destiny 4*). His 'immoralism' does not reject the idea of an ethical life.

Nietzsche favours a 'supra-moral' version of life (*GM II 2 & BGE 257*). The move from a moral to a supra-moral orientation to life implies a kind of self-overcoming, a process which has both a 'negative' ('destructive') and a 'positive' ('productive') side. Firstly, I shall give an account of the 'negative' side, which involves Nietzsche's genealogical critique of morality. In his *Genealogy*, Nietzsche criticizes the man of *ressentiment*, the metaphysical two-worlds distinction: 'true world' and 'apparent world', and the ascetic ideal of the will to truth, which he considers as a will to nothingness (*GM III 28*). His notion of perspectivism advocates a plurality of values and perspectives as opposed to any notion of an absolute truth. Then, I shall look into his 'positive' ethic, as exemplified in the figures of Zarathustra and the *Übermensch*, and the paradox of the *Übermensch* as 'the annihilator of morality' (*EH Books 1*) and as 'the designation of a type of supreme achievement' (*EH Books 1*). By proclaiming a process of 'self-overcoming of morality' (*BGE 32*), I believe that Nietzsche proposes an experimental morality in order to improve

mankind. He considers morality as a pose, as progress (*BGE* 216), and ‘mere symptomatology’ (*TI* ‘Improvers’ of Mankind 1). Morality is the effect, or symptom of a continuous improvement within an individual. Nietzsche seeks to make us become aware of our continuous self-improvement, that we should invent our own virtue (*A* 11) in order to become what we are. Nietzsche envisions the possibility of evolving a magnanimous and courageous human type who is capable of giving style to his character (*GS* 290), the supreme human achievement — the *Übermensch*. His idea of the *Übermensch* implies a never-ending struggle for self-perfection and self-fulfilment.

There are affinities between Nietzsche’s philosophy and Buddhism, such as emphasizing practice, the recognition of the transient nature of human existence, and an emphasis on impermanence. Buddhist teachings show various feasible ways to attain enlightenment and buddhahood. The path to enlightenment and buddhahood can be shown to share some features with Nietzsche’s process of self-overcoming, which leads to self-transformation and self-perfection. The emphasis on the practice of the spirit of Bodhisattva by Humanistic Buddhism seems to lend itself as complement to Nietzsche’s philosophy, a notion I explore in the concluding chapter of the dissertation.

Key terms: Nietzsche, Zarathustra, *Übermensch*, morality, immoralism, ascetic ideal, *ressentiment*, will to truth, perspectivism, Humanistic Buddhism, Bodhisattva.

Chapter 1: Introduction

When the springs dry out, the fish are found stranded on the earth. They keep each other damp with their own moisture, and wet each other with their slime. But it would be better if they could just forget about each other in rivers and lakes.

Chuang Tzu

Nietzsche calls himself an ‘immoralist’ among immoralists, and, in fact ‘the first immoralist’ (*EH Destiny 2*). His ‘campaign against morality’ begins in his book *Daybreak* (*EH D 1*). Nietzsche does not only despise morality, but is also ‘the first philosopher to consider morality something bad, something we would be better off without’ (in Schacht 2001:101). Yet Nietzsche sometimes refers to ‘noble morality’ (*GM I*) and ‘higher moralities’ (*BGE 202*), which he insists ought to be possible. This has led to significant disagreement among interpreters as to whether Nietzsche is really claiming to reject all morality. Maudemarie Clark (in Schacht 1994:15) indicates that some interpreters, such as Walter Kaufmann, Arthur Danto and Robert Solomon have argued that Nietzsche is an immoralist only in a very qualified sense, that is, rejecting a particular kind of morality, such as Christian morality, ‘or a particular theory or conception of morality, but not morality itself.’ Others, such as Philippa Foot, Alexander Nehamas and Frithjof Bergmann, have argued that the qualified interpretation minimized the position of Nietzsche on morality. In this dissertation I shall interpret Nietzsche’s explicit claim of immoralism and his ‘campaign against morality’ as a rejection of the traditional sense, or precisely ‘the narrow sense’ of morality, because he criticizes that morality in the traditional sense, ‘the morality of intentions’, as being a prejudice (*BGE 32*). His campaign is an attempt to make us aware that there is a possibility for man to become something better and greater than he is during his changing and transient existence. Nietzsche seems to envision the possibility of this achievement in the future when he refers to ‘we immoralists.’

Nietzsche employs the word ‘immoralist’ as ‘a word that had the meaning of a provocation for everybody’ (*EH Destiny 7*). Nietzsche states that he has chosen ‘the word *immoralist* as a symbol and badge of honor’ for himself, because this distinguishes himself ‘from the whole of humanity’ (*EH Destiny 6*). What he proposes for humanity ‘is a constant self-overcoming’ (*EH Wise 8*), which is ‘out of

truthfulness' (*EH* Destiny 3). Nietzsche regards 'truthfulness as the highest virtue; this means the opposite of the cowardice of the "idealist" who flees from reality' (*EH* Destiny 3). Daniel W. Conway (1998:87) indicates that 'as an immoralist, [Nietzsche] opposes himself directly to the metaphysical idealism that informs all permutations of the "slave" or "herd" morality. His goal as an immoralist is to behold and describe the real world *as it is*, without recourse to the supernatural principles of explanation that have hitherto dominated (and corrupted) the study of morality, ontology, and cosmology.' James Conant (in Schacht 2001:217) states that Nietzsche's immoralism may be considered as a rhetorical strategy, which is used to render devalued valuables valuable once again. This is why in his later work *On the Genealogy of Morals* Nietzsche offers his interpretation of the history of morality and his critique of moral values and the ascetic ideal in order to show us how this reversal and fundamental shift in values have happened with the emergence of Christianity.

I believe that Nietzsche can help us to see morality as a particular interpretation of ethical life, and to see how there could be a non-moral or, as he also calls it, a 'supra-moral' version of ethical life. The move from a moral to a supra-moral orientation to life implies a process of self-overcoming, which consists of both a 'negative' (destructive) and a 'positive' (productive) side. In this dissertation I shall first give an account of the 'negative' side, which involves Nietzsche's genealogical critique of morality, followed by an account of Nietzsche's 'positive' ethic, as exemplified in the figures of Zarathustra and the *Übermensch*. I believe that in this regard there are clear affinities and points of convergence between Nietzsche and Humanistic Buddhism, which I should like to explore in the concluding chapter of the dissertation.

Nietzsche's 'immoralism'

According to Nietzsche, an 'immoralist' is 'the very opposite of the type of man who so far has been revered as virtuous' (*EH* P 2); he is opposite to a moralist, as 'a squanderer: that he squanders himself' (*TI* Skirmishes of an Untimely Man 44) by creating and transforming himself. By calling himself an 'immoralist' and even to be 'a bogey, or a moralistic monster' (*EH* P 2) in most people's eyes, Nietzsche shows us what it is to be a squanderer who can laugh at himself in front of all of his readers, because of having an excessive amount of strength and energetic forces. He

emphasizes ‘the overpowering pressure of outflowing forces’ (*TI Skirmishes of an Untimely Man* 44). An ‘immoralist’ creates himself out of outflowing forces, from an incommensurable abundance in life, while the herd man ‘does *not* create out of an abundance, he *languishes* for abundance’ (*CW Second Postscript*). According to Nietzsche, a decisive factor that distinguishes between an ‘immoralist’ and the herd man or moralist seems to lie in this ‘abundance in life’.

As an ‘immoralist,’ what kind of ethical life does Nietzsche favour? Nietzsche champions a pre-moral form of ethical life, what he calls ‘noble morality’ or ‘master morality’, in opposition to the dominant ‘herd animal morality’ (*BGE* 202) that he despises. Noble or master morality ‘is rooted in a triumphant Yes said to *oneself*— it is self-affirmation, self-glorification of life; it also requires sublime symbols and practices, but only because “its heart is too full.”’ (*CW Epilogue*). The *fullness* of a heart means abundance in life, that the squanderer is able to squander himself because of overflowing strength or power. What differentiates an ‘immoralist’ from a moralist? Nietzsche asserts that ‘we others, we immoralists, have, conversely, made room in our hearts for every kind of understanding, comprehending, and *approving*. We do not easily negate; we make it a point of honor to be *affirmers*’ (*TI Morality as Anti-Nature* 6). In this sense an ‘immoralist’ is an affirmer of life. Nietzsche describes ‘a spirit who has *become free* ... in the *faith* that only the particular is loathsome, and that all is redeemed and affirmed in the whole — *he does not negate any more*’ (*TI Skirmishes of an Untimely Man* 49). He honours Goethe who ‘disciplined himself to wholeness, [and who] created himself’ (*TI Skirmishes of an Untimely Man* 49). This indicates that Nietzsche’s immoralism is not a rejection of ethical life, but rather an attempt to show us the possibility of ‘higher moralities’ (*BGE* 202). He asserts that ‘at the highest stage of morality *hitherto*, [man] acts in accordance with *his own* standard with regard to men and things: he himself determines for himself and others what is honourable and useful ... he lives and acts as a collective-individual’ (*HAH I* 94). The compound word ‘collective-individual’ suggests interrelated and dynamic human relationships, rather than a ‘moralistic monster’ (*EH P* 2) that threatens people.

In *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche employs his term *immoralist* to illustrate two negations. First is the negation of ‘a type of man that has so far been considered supreme: the good, the benevolent, the beneficent’ (*EH Destiny* 4). Secondly, there is the negation of especially *Christian* morality. Nietzsche considers the latter as ‘a type of morality that has become prevalent and predominant as morality itself’ (*EH Destiny*

4). Nietzsche's first negation shows that he disagrees with moral values which have been regarded as supreme values by us. We cannot praise an individual who has performed good, benevolent and beneficent acts as a supreme type of man. Thus, Nietzsche proposes his doctrine of the *Übermensch* to illustrate what a supreme type of man would really be like. Nietzsche calls himself an 'immoralist' in order to provoke our minds to will the *Übermensch* and to regard critically those moralists whose teachings are actually immoral. Nietzsche states that 'all the means by which one has so far attempted to make mankind moral were through and through *immoral*' (*TI The Improvers of Mankind* 5). Eugene G. Newman (1982:215) notes that 'the primary valuations of Nietzsche's moral philosophy (self-expression and self-expansion over self-denial and self-protection) are the opposite to those of the conventional Christian morality which was the prevailing morality of his time [and] that it was natural for him to consider himself an immoralist.' The term 'immoralism' appears to be a claim 'to *reverse perspectives*' (*EH Wise* 1) of conventional morality which, in fact, is not supreme, but immoral, and thus calls for a 'revaluation of all values.'

Nietzsche defines 'revaluation of all values' as his 'formula for an act of supreme self-examination on the part of humanity' (*EH Destiny* 1). Richard Schacht (2001:152) indicates that 'immoralism' and 'beyond good and evil' is Nietzsche's watchword to remind us that 'the entire phenomenon of morality needs to be reconsidered, reinterpreted, and revalued' and the result would be moral renewal. Nietzsche offers us an illustration of such moral renewal: 'a well-turned-out human being, a "happy one," *must* perform certain actions and shrinks instinctively from other actions; he carries the order, which he represents physiologically, into his relations with other human beings and things. In a formula: his virtue is the *effect* of his happiness' (*TI The Four Great Errors* 2). The figures of Zarathustra and the *Übermensch* are the exemplars of such future humanity. Nietzsche's 'immoralism' marks his vision of a future humanity that stands in opposition to that of the moralists of his time.

Nietzsche's 'immoralism' makes us become aware of the unquestioned acceptance of the validity of moral values and this is why he insists that 'we need a *critique* of moral values, *the value of these values themselves must be called in question*' (*GM P* 6); 'under what conditions did man devise these value judgments good and evil? *And what value do they themselves possess?*' he asks (*GM P* 3).

Nietzsche's immoralism is an attempt to provoke us into opening our minds to the possibility that there can be criteria other than moral for determining the worth of an individual as a human being. Nietzsche demands to know whether 'morality would be to blame if the *highest power and splendor* actually possible to the type man was never in fact attained? So that precisely morality was the danger of dangers?' (*GM P 6*) One would be oblivious of the fact that there could be another supreme type of man who may come to existence in the future, that is, the *Übermensch*.

Nietzsche's second negation entails his attack on specifically Christian morality. Alexander Nehamas (1985:134) indicates that 'Nietzsche denounces Christian morality because of its negative attitude toward life.' Nietzsche states that Christian morality has '*corrupted* humanity' (*EH Destiny 7*) and that 'the practice of the church is *hostile to life*' (*TI Morality as Anti-Nature 1*). He writes that

before the court of morality (especially Christian, which is to say unconditional, morality) life *must* constantly and inevitably be proved wrong because life is essentially something amoral; life *must* eventually, crushed by the weight of contempt and the eternal "no!", be felt to be inherently unworthy, undeserving of our desire. Morality itself – might it not be a "will to negate life", a secret instinct for annihilation, a principle of decay, belittlement, calumny, the beginning of the end? And consequently the greatest danger of all? (*BT P 5*)

Nietzsche '*uncovers*' Christian morality (*EH Destiny 7*), as, in his opinion, a 'will to negate life.' It has reversed a pre-moral set of values in order to serve ascetic priests' own aims, purposes and values. Peter Shaffer's play *The Royal Hunt of the Sun*, which is based on a historical event in the sixteenth century, offers us a vivid picture of the practice of Christian morality. On the day of St John the Evangelist, the priests in the Cathedral Church of Panama consecrate the Spanish expeditionary force bound for the Inca Empire to hunt for gold. Fray Marcos de Nizza says to the Spanish military — 'the huntsmen of God,'

You are the bringers of food to starving peoples. You go to break mercy with them like bread, and outpour gentleness into their cups. You will lay before them the inexhaustible table of free spirit, and invite to it all who have dieted on terror. You will bring to all tribes the nourishment of pity. You will sow their fields with love, and teach them to harvest the crop of it, each yield in its season. Remember this always: we are their New World. (Shaffer 1964:20)

This speech is full of morality, clear from words such as ‘pity,’ ‘mercy,’ and ‘love,’ but nothing remains of this once the Spanish reach South America. Pizarro, the commander of the expedition, and his military murder many unarmed, innocent Inca people and destroy the Inca Empire. Under the banner of God, owing to his ‘good’ intention and obedience, Pizarro can be defined as ‘moralist,’ yet his cold-blooded massacre speaks of *immoral* actions. Nietzsche despises Christian morality for its apparent focus on ‘words’, like those words in de Nizza’s speech. He favours actions and actual practice in the process of the self-overcoming of morality, stating that ‘one cannot subtract dancing in every form from a noble education — to be able to dance with one’s feet, with concepts, with words’ (*TI* What the Germans Lack 7). Nietzsche’s point is that Christian morality consists of only words or conceptions, that is, a human fabrication or abstraction that does not exist in the natural world. He states that ‘there are no moral phenomena at all, but only a moral interpretation of phenomena’ (*BGE* 108). All words are interpretations, so man is caught in the net of language and concepts. Man erects on the blank surface of reality a conceptual edifice, but the concepts and ideas are his, and they have not the slightest basis in fact. ‘As a “rational” being, [man] now places his behaviour under the control of abstractions’ (*WL* 1). Thus, for Nietzsche, Christian morality merely remains a human abstraction with which to practise self-deception and as such it cannot be used as the only standard to evaluate human worth; it is a form of deception, more specifically, the ‘self-deception of moral concepts’ (*A* 20).

Nietzsche criticizes Christianity for being based on ‘an overspiritualization, an all-too-long preoccupation with concepts and logical procedures’ (*A* 20). He criticizes Christian morality because it has received ‘the highest honors as morality and was fixed over humanity as law and categorical imperative’ (*EH* Destiny 7). He criticizes those philosophers who propose ‘a *rational foundation* for morality’ (*BGE* 186) in human life, such as Kant’s categorical imperative. According to Nietzsche, they supply ‘merely a scholarly variation of the common *faith* in the prevalent morality; a new means of *expression* for this faith; and thus just another fact within a particular morality’ (*BGE* 186). Nietzsche’s immoralism is an attempt to provoke an awareness of the problem and impact deriving from such faith. Nietzsche indicates that tradition originated without ‘any immanent categorical imperative’ (*HAH* I 96), suggesting that there is something wrong with the claim that there is an objective moral law that can be grounded by an appeal to reason. However, truths are generally accepted as the

basis of all moral judgments. This is why Nietzsche attacks the ascetic ideal of will to truth in the third essay of *Genealogy of Morals* that I shall discuss in detail in chapter two.

J.P. Stern (1979:65) states that ‘morality – or the “will to truth” – is the doctrine of the distribution of power among men in accordance with their “willing” or “the action of the will.”’ However, Nietzsche believes that the ascetic ideal of the will to truth is harmful to the whole development of humanity, yet it remains ‘the only ideal so far, because it had no rival’ (EH GM). Nietzsche points to the illusion that ‘morality itself ... was accepted as “given”’ (BGE 186). Thus, Zarathustra’s ideas form a *counterideal* to the ascetic ideal (EH GM). So too is Nietzsche’s immoralism a counterideal to Christian morality and aims at revaluating all values for the benefit of ‘the future of humanity’ (EH D 2). His immoralism stands in opposition to Christian morality which glorifies the ascetic ideal of the will to truth, but which Nietzsche believes to be ‘the most malignant form of the will to lie’ (EH Destiny 7). He calls himself the first ‘immoralist’ in being ‘the first to *discover* the truth by being the first to experience lies as lies’ (EH Destiny 1). Nietzsche asserts that ‘truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions’ (WL 1) and that it is merely ‘a moral prejudice that truth is worth more than mere appearance’ (BGE 34). Thus, Nietzsche employs his provocative concept of ‘immoralism’ to mark his attack on Christian morality. His ‘immoralism’ is an attempt to confront the real problems of morality. ‘In all “science of morals” so far one thing was *lacking* ... : the problem of morality itself; what was lacking was any suspicion that there was something problematic here’, says Nietzsche (BGE 186). As an ‘immoralist,’ Nietzsche stands in opposition to traditional moralists to make his readers become aware of the problem of morality itself and to call in question the validity of moral values in order to advocate the future development of the human species from animal to *Übermensch*.

Nietzsche refers to morality in Europe of his day as herd animal morality, which needs to be denied. He states that ‘herd man in Europe today gives himself the appearance of being the only permissible kind of man, and glorifies his attributes, which make him tame, easy to get along with, and useful to the herd, as if they were the truly human virtues: namely: public spirit, benevolence, consideration, industriousness, moderation, modesty, indulgence, and pity’ (BGE 199). Nietzsche explicitly rejects this kind of ‘herd animal morality’ that conceives of itself as morality.

Morality in Europe today is herd animal morality, ... merely one type of human morality beside which, before which, and after which many other types, above all higher moralities, are, or ought to be, possible. But this morality resists such a 'possibility.' Such an 'ought' with all its power: it says stubbornly and inexorably, 'I am morality itself, and nothing besides is morality (BGE 202).

In this passage, Nietzsche clearly indicates that 'higher moralities' are possible. However, he attacks herd animal morality or Christian morality because of its claim to be morality itself and the dominant power enabling it to maintain such a claim. By proclaiming itself as the only morality, herd animal morality resists any possibility of the emergence of 'higher moralities' at any price. Christian morality claims to be morality itself. Nietzsche demonstrates that most people share this point of view, and are thus regarded by others and themselves as moralists, yet Nietzsche considers himself not to be one of them, so he appears as an immoralist in the eyes of these people and himself. This suggests that the interpretation of Nietzsche's immoralism depends on the interpreter's point of view: (i) if an interpreter agrees that Christian morality is 'morality itself', then Nietzsche's immoralism will be interpreted as a rejection of all morality, so Nietzsche becomes a notorious immoralist in the eyes of these moral interpreters; (ii) if an interpreter agrees that Christian morality is one kind of morality, then Nietzsche's immoralism is only an attack on a specific kind of morality. Such an interpreter may also agree with Nietzsche's argument that the possibility of 'higher moralities' is possible, so he or she will interpret Nietzsche's immoralism not as a rejection of ethical life as such. This is the position I hold in this dissertation. Nietzsche argues that Christian morality is a slave morality or 'herd animal morality' (BGE 202). His analysis of the differences between master morality and slave morality is a proof that Christian morality cannot be regarded as morality itself, and thus position (i) is false and the (ii) is possible.

In *Daybreak*, Nietzsche mentions 'two kinds of deniers of morality', denying both morality and immorality. He explains:

'To deny morality' — this can mean, *first*: to deny that the moral motives which men *claim* have inspired their actions really have done so — it is thus the assertion that morality consists of words and is among the coarser or more subtle deceptions (especially self-deceptions) which men practise, and is perhaps so especially in precisely the case of those most famed for virtue. *Then* it can mean: to deny that moral judgments are based on truths. Here it is admitted that they really are motives of action, but that in this way it is *errors*

which, as the basis of all moral judgment, impel men to their moral actions. ... I deny morality as I deny alchemy, that is, I deny their premises: but I do *not* deny that there have been alchemists who believed in these premises and acted in accordance with them. — I also deny immorality: *not* that countless people *feel* themselves to be immoral, but there is any *true* reason so to feel. It goes without saying that I do not deny — unless I am a fool — that many actions called immoral ought to be avoided and resisted, or that many called moral ought to be done and encouraged — but I think the one should be encouraged and the other avoided *for other reasons than hitherto*. We have to *learn to think differently* — in order at last, perhaps very late on, to attain even more: *to feel differently*. (D 103)

Nietzsche identifies ‘two kinds of deniers of morality’: one kind denies morality as Nietzsche denies alchemy, that is, deny its premises. The other kind denies alchemists, that is, deny moralists. This kind of denier ignores morality and also considers morality as a bad thing that should be rejected; he or she favours immoral actions and avoids moral actions. Nietzsche clarifies his position as being the former rather than the latter by stating that he is not a *fool*. His denial of immorality also suggests that Nietzsche does not mean to reject moral actions as such. He says that he does not deny ‘that there have been alchemists who believed in these premises and acted accordance with them’; he also says that he does not deny ‘that many actions called immoral ought to be avoided and resisted, or that many called moral ought to be done and encouraged.’ Although Nietzsche rejects the premises of morality, he does not mean to encourage people to do any immoral things, such as stealing or killing, nor avoid any moral actions, such as helping or being kind to other people. He regards these moral or immoral actions as only human facts, but he rejects the interpretation that by doing such and such actions, one is a moral or an immoral person. He thinks that ‘the one should be encouraged and the other avoided *for other reasons than hitherto*.’ His ‘campaign against morality’ is an attempt to analyse these other reasons that bring about moral/immoral actions. Nietzsche considers that conscious motives cannot inspire men to perform moral actions because of false premises of these motives. The subtitle of *Daybreak — Thoughts on the Prejudices of Morality*, deliberately makes us aware of moral prejudices and Nietzsche thinks that ‘the power of moral prejudices has penetrated deeply into the most spiritual world’ for millennia (BGE 23). Nietzsche believes himself ‘to stand in opposition to the mendaciousness of millennia’ (EH Destiny 1), so he employs the shocking concept of ‘immoralism’ to shock people into paying attention to his critique of morality.

Nietzsche seeks to destroy the moral/immoral distinction. He emphasises that people do not have ‘any *true* reason’ to measure and to feel whether an individual is moral or immoral by behaving in a certain way. He refers to the phenomenon ‘that countless people *feel* themselves to be immoral.’ The usage of the word ‘feel’ indicates that the knowledge of any *true* reason with regard to morality or life cannot be derived from the human intellect or the human thinking process. Nietzsche emphasizes this fact in the opening lines of his *Genealogy*: ‘We are unknown to ourselves, we men of knowledge’ (*GM P 1*). He criticizes the mere pursuit of objective knowledge that centers around ‘impersonality and universality’ (*GM III 6*). This paradigm appears as the dominating perspective among western intellectuals, so the ‘men of knowledge’ believe that the ‘life consisting of the pure *activity* of contemplation is more truly human; it is godlike, divine’ (Bernstein 1983:47). According to Nietzsche, if we only focus on contemplating rational, impersonal knowledge or universal truth and disregard the importance of experiences and emotional aspects in life, ‘we are necessarily strangers to ourselves, we do not comprehend ourselves, we *have* to misunderstand ourselves’ (*GM P 1*). For Nietzsche, what really matters in life is to answer the question: ‘who *are* we really?’ (*GM P 1*) Morality, based on our moral prejudices, becomes a major hindrance to attain a satisfactory answer, that is, to become a free human being, a ‘sovereign individual’ (*GM II 2*) and ultimately to become *Übermensch*, which has never existed before. The effect of morality may, by contrast, ultimately lead to the ‘overall-all degeneration of man’ into ‘the perfect herd animal’ (*BGE 203*).

Nietzsche’s denial of morality/immorality does not only aim at generating results, i.e., to teach people to think differently and ultimately to feel differently, but also to provoke our minds in order to achieve such results. Because we are used to the logical inference that the existence of two opposites cannot be accepted at the same time in any single judgment, we generally regard such a way of thinking as irrational. Nietzsche is suspicious of rationality as opposed to instinct and regards rationality ‘as a dangerous force that undermines life’ (*EH BT 1*). We should not trade our instincts for mere rational thinking. Nietzsche employs the metaphor of dancing to illustrate thinking not limited in a rational, logical and impersonal sense. He states that ‘thinking wants to be learned like dancing, *as* a kind of dancing’ (*TI What the Germans Lack 7*). According to Nietzsche, one who learns dancing has to know ‘from experience the delicate shudder which light feet in spiritual matters send into every

muscle' (*TI* What the Germans Lack 7). Thinking, like dancing, should be learnt from personal experience. Nietzsche champions experience, 'an abundance of vivid authentic experiences, desires, surprises, and delights in the realm of the beautiful' (*GM* III 6). Above all, Nietzsche favours an artistic life in which knowledge is derived from personal experiences.

As Nietzsche believes that 'the existence of the world is *justified* (*gerechtfertigt*) only as an aesthetic phenomenon' (*BT* P 5), he naturally criticizes Christianity, because 'Christian doctrine ... is, and wants to be, *only* moral, and which, with its absolute criteria (its insistence on god's truthfulness, for example) banishes art, *all* art, to the realm of *lies*, and thus negates, damns and condemns it. Behind this way of thinking and evaluating, which is bound to be hostile to art if it is at all genuine, I had always felt its *hostility to life*, a furious, vengeful enmity towards life itself' (*BT* P 5). Nietzsche, as the first 'immoralist,' asserts that until his *Zarathustra* 'there will be nobody to understand the art that has been squandered here: nobody ever was in a position to squander more new, unheard-of artistic devices that had actually been created only for this purpose' (*EH* Books 4). Art, for Nietzsche, makes room for an individual to squander himself or herself in self-creation. Nietzsche prefers the artistic paradigm 'beautiful' in self-creating and self-transforming rather than a moral framework of 'good' and 'evil' to make value judgements. He prompts us to learn to think and to see differently, 'postponing judgment, learning to go around and grasp each individual case from all sides' (*TI* What the Germans Lack 6). Nietzsche's main concern is not a moral mode for evaluating people, but rather the question of learning how to elevate human potential at its maximum in an ongoing process of the self-overcoming of morality. Nietzsche regards it as a 'supra-moral' (*GM* II 2 & *BGE* 257) mode of existence, so he demands the philosopher to 'take his stand *beyond* good and evil and leave the illusion of moral judgment *beneath* himself' (*TI* The 'Improvers' of Mankind 1). Perceiving the world and life from within such a paradigm, Nietzsche asks: 'is there anything more beautiful than *looking for* one's own virtues?' (*BGE* 214) Nietzsche does not despise any virtuous actions, but rather he argues against the value judgments derived from the morality of intention.

Nietzsche's review of the '*threefold error*' that was 'inherited from the animals and their power of judgment' (*D* 102) can shed some light on his critique of morality of intention. Nietzsche believes that our reactions to the behaviour of someone in our presence are the real matter in moral judgments. 'First of all, we see

what there is in it *for us*,' says Nietzsche. 'We take *this* effect as the *intention* behind the behaviour – and finally we ascribe the harbouring of such intentions as a *permanent* quality of the person whose behaviour we are observing and thenceforth call him, for instance, "a harmful person"' (D 102). This way of bringing forth moral judgment is false, as we misinterpret that 'the paltry, occasional, often chance *relationship* of another with ourself is his *essence* and most essential being' (D 102). Nietzsche's denial of morality is an attempt to show us that morality is 'a misinterpretation' (TI The 'Improvers' of Mankind 1), because we misinterpret the chance relationships of ourselves with others as the essence of our being.

In BGE 32, Nietzsche gives a detailed account of his denial of morality. He divides the development of morality into a pre-moral period, moral period and extra-moral period. In the pre-moral period, one decides the value of an action in terms of its consequences. And 'after long struggles and vacillations', according to Nietzsche, a 'narrowness of interpretation' has become dominant: 'the origin of an action was interpreted in the most definite sense as origin in an *intention*,' so the intention of an action allows one to decide the value of an action. In the pre-moral period, the value of an action lies in its consequences, but now in the moral period, the value of an action lies in its origin, that is, the intention. However, Nietzsche argues that the decisive value of an action is *unintentional* rather than intentional. Nietzsche claims that 'we immoralists have the suspicion that the decisive value of an action lies precisely in what is *unintentional* in it, while everything about it that is intentional, everything about it that can be seen, known, "conscious," still belongs to its surface and skin — which, like every skin, betrays something but *conceals* even more' (BGE 32). Nietzsche calls himself the first immoralist, because he is the first to announce the present as being the threshold of an extra-moral period in which a revaluation of all values would necessarily take place. Nietzsche claims that 'we have reached the necessity of once more resolving on a reversal and fundamental shift in values, owing to another self-examination of man, another growth in profundity' (BGE 32). In this sense, the term 'immoralism' is Nietzsche's wake up call for us to 'a reversal and fundamental shift in values,' that is, the morality of *non-intention*. The purpose of his 'immoralism' is a 'growth in profundity' of mankind and the method to attain such an outcome is 'self-examination.' In the future the morality of intention would be overcome. This involves a process of 'self-overcoming of morality' for 'the finest and most honest' ones (BGE 32). Above all, Nietzsche's 'immoralism' requires a higher

type of being that ‘in the past ... has appeared often — but as a fortunate accident, as an exception, never as something willed’ (A 3). ‘Willing’ this higher type would mark an extra-moral period.

Nietzsche denies that the value of an action lies in the value of the intentions or conscious motives behind it, because non-conscious factors play an important role in it. Men are used to evaluate the moral value of an action in terms of its conscious motives, and so they make moral judgments based on a false premise. Nietzsche’s strategy is to falsify this premise in order to show us the invalidity of our moral judgments. He exposes our false belief that man is free and independent and possesses self-knowledge. He believes it a delusion to say: ‘I know what I want, what I have done, I am free and responsible for it, I hold others responsible, I can call by its name every moral possibility and every inner motion which precedes action; you may act as you will – in this matter I understand myself and understand you all!’ (D 116) Nietzsche arrives at the insight that the ‘totality of drives’, which constitute our being, remains unknown to us. He depicts a picture of the inner world of human agency. An individual

can scarcely name even the cruder [drives]; their number and strength, their ebb and flood, their play and counterplay among one another, and above all the laws of their *nutriment* remain wholly unknown to him. This nutriment is therefore a work of chance: our daily experiences throw some prey in the way of now this, now that drive, and the drive seizes it eagerly; but the coming and going of these events as a whole stands in no rational relationship to the nutritional requirements of the totality of the drives: so that the outcome will always be twofold – the starvation and stunting of some and the overfeeding of others. (D 119)

According to Nietzsche, we do not know the ways our drives operate to bring about our actions. Thus, Nietzsche states that ‘the primeval delusion still lives on that one knows, and knows quite precisely in every case, *how human action is brought about*’ (D 116). If moral judgment requires that we know how human action is brought about, then our way of moral judgment is based on a false premise, because we believe that we can assess the ‘morality’ of our own and others’ actions. However, it is impossible to do so because of our ignorance as to the true causes, i.e. the law of the *nutriment* of drives. While the traditional moralists believe that we are free and consciously choose our actions, and thus the moral worth of our actions can be evaluated and the worth of a moral being can be measured, Nietzsche attempts to show us that our picture of action is false. He indicates that ‘our moral judgments and evaluations too are only

images and fantasies based on a physiological process unknown to us' (D 119). His picture of the inner world of human agency has already shown that the operation of our drives to bring about an action has *no rational* explanation. There are no objective moral law to regulate or to guide the interplay of drives. In this sense truth cannot be regarded as a motive of action, so it is an *error* to think that truth can 'impel men to their moral actions' (D 103). Moral actions, according to Nietzsche, derive from an egoistic consideration rather than from truth, a higher authority or external moral law.

Nietzsche offers us an example in *Human, All-Too-Human: Origin of Justice* to illustrate his point of view: Justice originated as negotiation between equally powerful parties to avoid physical conflict that may cause mutual damage. This derives from the prudent concern with self-preservation, that one does not want to harm oneself unnecessarily and perhaps not attain one's goal. Nietzsche states that 'in accordance with their intellectual habits, men have *forgotten* the original purpose of so-called just and fair actions, and especially because children have for millennia been trained to admire and imitate such actions, it has gradually come to appear that a just action is an unegoistic one' (HAH I 92). Nietzsche regards just actions or other so-called moral actions as deriving from egoistic considerations. He believes that the assessment of actions as egoistic or unegoistic is adherence to tradition directed 'at the preservation of a *community*, a people' (HAH I 96). 'To be moral,' Nietzsche says, 'means to practise obedience towards a law or tradition established from of old' (HAH I 96) in order to preserve the community. Thus, being good is good for something and useful to a community. Being 'immoral' calls for a paradigm shift, from performing actions for the sake of others or for the preservation of the community to recognizing the highest good in oneself. In this way one opens up the possibility 'to make of oneself a complete *person*' (HAH I 95).

For Nietzsche, morality or immorality are simply interpretations of the misunderstanding of an increase or decrease in energy. Nietzsche writes about this 'cause of much misunderstanding':

The morality that goes with an increase in nervous energy is joyful and restless; the morality that goes with a decrease in nervous energy, as in the evening or in the case of invalids and old people, is suffering, calming, patient, sorrowful, indeed often gloomy. According to whether we have the former or the latter we fail to understand the one we do not have, and we often interpret it as immorality and weakness. (D 368)

According to Nietzsche, the morality/immorality distinction is a result of our lack of understanding of ‘our entire instinctive life as the development and ramification of *one* basic form of the will — namely, of the will to power’ (*BGE* 36). Nietzsche considers ‘the will to power as the principle of life’ (*CW* Epilogue). Each individual’s life is merely a constituent part of this dynamic and complex system and a manifestation of the will to power. For Nietzsche, the manifestation of both increasing and decreasing energy is morality. The problem of the morality/immorality distinction springs from our ignorance of this fact, that we misinterpret the one — ‘the morality that goes with an increase in nervous energy’ — that we do not have as immorality.

Nietzsche favours a holistic approach to life, which emphasizes growth by learning and does not judge people according to the standard of ‘goodness’. ‘In the great economy of the whole, the terrible aspects of reality (in affects, in desires, in the will to power) are to an incalculable degree more necessary than that form of petty happiness which people call “goodness.”’ (*EH* Destiny 4). Denial of the morality/immorality distinction can lead us to see the whole, which consists of oppositions and contradictions. For Nietzsche, the presence of two opposites advances creativity. This notion may be illustrated to be true by an example of advance in mathematics. A.J. Antonites (1997:3) explains that the complex numbers, consisting of two opposite groups, imaginary (absurd and impossible numbers, such as $\sqrt{-1}$), and real numbers can generate *fractals* in a computer through a process called *iteration*.¹ Mathematicians have discovered that when very complex formulas are fed into computers, surprisingly beautiful colours and images are generated with fractals. The generation of fractals forms self-similar patterns. The existence of unreal (imaginary) and real numbers can create something new — fractals. Like the creation of fractals, Nietzsche’s deconstruction of the morality/immorality distinction seems to call for creativity other than logical inference to deal with the issues of life. He challenges the assumption that rational or logical thinking is the only way of thinking to make sense of life or the world in order to open the possibility of creating something new — ‘a kind of higher morality’ (*TI* Skirmishes of an Untimely Man 44). Nietzsche asserts

¹ Benoit B Mandelbrot, a Lithuanian-French mathematician, discovered the fractal. He has found ‘a hierarchy of shapes, atoms spouting smaller atoms ad infinitum. And where the set intersected the real line, its successively smaller disks scales with a geometric regularity’ (Gleick 1987:223). The figure, a collection of points, presents the Mandelbrot basket or Mandelbrot set, named after him.

that ‘whoever wants to be a creator in good and evil, must first be an annihilator and break values. Thus the highest evil belongs to the greatest goodness: but this is — being creative’ (*EH Destiny* 2). Opposites, such as destroying and constructing, morality and immorality, do not only advance creativity and growth, but are also constitutive of the totality of life. One keeps on growing by continually challenging opposition or problems. Nietzsche asserts that ‘every growth is indicated by the search for a mighty opponent — or problem’ (*EH Wise* 7), so it opens the possibility of the emergence of many moralities. When man is able to ‘compare *many* moralities’ (*BGE* 186), he may choose his own way of life in order to lead it to the fullest in a harmonious fashion with others, as a whole. Nietzsche’s philosophy looks for the fullness and wholeness of life. He encourages us to open our minds in terms of a holistic or non-linear perspective of life.

Nietzsche’s non-linear perspective of life

To be ashamed of one’s immorality — that is a step on the staircase at whose end one is also ashamed of one’s morality. (*BGE* 95)

The above citation illustrates Nietzsche’s perception of morality/immorality enjoying equal weight. He seems to consider morality/immorality as a two-faced Janus in terms of a holistic or non-linear approach to life. In fact, one cannot leave out either of the two if one wants to lead the fullest life. Nietzsche asserts that ‘the moral (or immoral) intentions in every philosophy constituted the real germ of life from which the whole plant had grown’ (*BGE* 6) and that ‘not only light but darkness too is essential for the life of everything organic’ (*UDH* 1). Nietzsche’s philosophy is a philosophy of life in the sense that he believes life to be ‘the higher, the dominating force’ (*UDH* 10). It seems that in his entire ‘campaign against morality’ Nietzsche’s main concern is ‘to *reverse perspectives*’ (*EH Wise* 1), a demand for a paradigm shift in our way of perceiving and of exploring life as a whole.

Nietzsche states that ‘all *protracted* things are hard to see, to see whole’ (*GM* I 8). He posits the *wholeness* and *oneness* of the world, which appears as an organic and dynamic system in terms of a non-linear approach, rather than in a linear fashion where the constituent parts of life can be analysed as pieces and be added up in order

to understand its riddle. He likes to employ the image of a tree to illustrate the organic unity of the world. In the Preface of *On the Genealogy of Morals* Nietzsche speaks of philosophers who

have no right to *isolated* acts of any kind: we may not make isolated errors or hit upon isolated truths. Rather do our ideas, our values, our yeas and nays, our ifs and buts, grow out of us with the necessity with which a tree bears fruit — related and each with an affinity to each, and evidence of *one* will, *one* health, *one* soil, *one* sun. — Whether *you* like them, these fruits of ours? — But what is that to the trees! (*GMP* 2)

Nietzsche champions a non-linear approach to life rather than a linear one. Linearity refers to processes which occur periodically and proportionally to one another, while non-linearity involves processes occurring non-periodically and disproportionately to one another. In this way, linear systems have an important modular merit in that their constituent parts can be added up, and thus be solved, while generally non-linear systems can neither be added up nor solved (Gleick 1987:23). Thus, in classical science, which deals with linear relationships in systems, the irregular side of nature, the discontinuous and the unstable, is disregarded. The classical causal-mechanical science generally ignores the chaotic or unpredictable phenomena, such as a puff of smoke which travels to the left but not to the right, regarding these phenomena as negligible and assuming that they will eventually be explained by causal linear models. But within a non-linear frame of reference, unpredictable or unstable phenomena are considered important. ‘These phenomena are part of a *sui generis* area: It is a kind of its own,’ as A.J. Antonites (1997:2) says, ‘And what is more, this area is very important and its scope is much larger than that of linear causal phenomena and processes.’ Nietzsche employs the example of a picture to illustrate how we generally approach life and the world. He depicts life as a picture which man attempts to dissect into little patches. Man ‘never gets to see these patches joined together, his perception of how they are connected is only the result of a conclusion, and thus he has no very strong conception of anything universal. Because he is incapable of viewing a piece of writing as a whole ... ; he would be tempted to assert that an oil-painting is a disorderly heap of blots’ (*SE* 6). We should focus first of all on the painter of the picture of the world and of life; otherwise we will understand ‘the canvas and the paint but not the picture’ (*SE* 3). Our natural world does not function in this linear function, but rather in a non-linear fashion, so that a linear interpretation of the world and of life is doomed to failure in the world of flux. Nietzsche states that an

individual ‘who has a clear view of the picture of life and existence as a whole can employ the individual sciences without harm to himself, for without such a regulatory total picture they are threads that nowhere come to an end and only render our life more confused and labyrinthine’ (SE 3). Nietzsche appreciates the work of Schopenhauer, stating that ‘his greatness lies in having set up before him a picture of life as a whole, in order to interpret it as a whole’ (SE 3).

Within such a non-linear frame of reference Nietzsche regards morality/immorality or truth/untruth as inseparable in the context of the whole. By focusing on the pursuit of truth, moralists attempt to establish moral principles in order to measure the worth of human beings. However, Nietzsche emphasizes the unity and wholeness of life in which the opposite aspects, truth and untruth, certainty and uncertainty, are interdependent and interrelated. In BGE 1, Nietzsche states that ‘we want truth: *why not rather untruth? and uncertainty? even ignorance?*’ He writes that

For all the value that the true, the truthful, the selfless may deserve, it would still be possible that a higher and more fundamental value for life might have to be ascribed to deception, selfishness, and lust. It might even be possible that what constitutes the value of these good and revered things is precisely that they are insidiously related ... seemingly opposite things — maybe even one with them in essence. Maybe!’ (BGE 2)

Nietzsche envisions ‘a higher and more fundamental value for life,’ yet he does not offer us any criteria or principles with regard to such value judgments, because his perspective is quite different from our habitual perspective of value judgments. His doctrine of ‘Will To Power’ can perhaps give us a clue to a different perspective with regard to morality. He depicts the world of ‘Will To Power’ as ‘a monster of energy, without beginning, without end: ... as force throughout, as a play of forces and waves of forces, at the same time one and many, increasing here and at the same time decreasing there: a sea of forces flowing and rushing together, eternally changing’ (WP 1067). For Nietzsche, ‘Will To Power’ can be considered as force or energy. Will-to-power is ‘something we *are*. Not only are *we* Will-To-Power, but so is everything, human and animal, animate and material. The entire world is Will-To-Power,’ as A.C. Danto (1965:215) says. This is the essence of life and of the world; in contrast to the traditional Western linear perspective, with a beginning and an end, the world of Will To Power always exists in a state of flux and reflux.

The world where we live is always in a constant state of becoming. We struggle among forces in order to become what we are in this world of flux. Nietzsche

states that a living body ‘will have to be an incarnate will to power, it will strive to grow, spread, seize, become predominant — not from any morality or immorality but because it is *living* and because life simply *is* will to power’ (*BGE* 259). Nietzsche employs an ocean metaphor to portray his notion of ‘Will to Power.’ In *Daybreak*, He exclaims that ‘everything is sea, sea, sea!’ (*D* 575) The dynamic movement of waves in the sea, flooding and ebbing, is the essence of life as the will to power. Man’s reality is the will to power and Nietzsche asserts that ‘what justifies man is his reality’ (*TI Skirmishes of an Untimely Man* 32). In *Twilight of the Idols*, the section titled *The immoralist speaks*, Nietzsche employs another metaphor to contrast the reality of an ideal man or a moralist to that of a real man or an immoralist. The former finds ‘only what is abject, absurd, sick, cowardly and weary, all kinds of dregs out of the emptied cup of his life’ (*TI Skirmishes of an Untimely Man* 32). For Nietzsche, if our life were as water in the cup, it would be easy to drain out and to be fed up with the flux and the unknown. However, in contrast to the search for security and certainty, his notion of Will To Power makes room for us to explore adventures and challenges in order to become who we are in the world of flux. He asserts that to ‘sail right *over* morality, we crush, we destroy perhaps the remains of our own morality by daring to make our voyage there — but what matter are *we!* Never yet did a *profounder* world of insight reveal itself to daring travellers and adventurers’ (*BGE* 23). In this sense it seems that what the moralists talk of as water in a cup, Nietzsche, as an immoralist, sees as water of the sea. Within a linear perspective — to add up all the cups of water — one never arrives at an insight of the dynamics of the sea. What Nietzsche attempts to show us is another perspective with regard to morality. He urges us to see the bigger picture of the sea without limiting our mind by only analysing a cup of water in order to understand morality and ignoring the dynamics of life and of the world. Nietzsche’s point of view is similar to that of *Chuang-Tzu*, cited earlier. If the fish are in rivers and lakes, they do not need to judge or to measure their moral behaviour, whether it is right or wrong, just or unjust, equal or unequal in moistening each other with their slime. However, whether the fish stay in rivers or on shore, whether one regards life as the sea or as a cup, depends on one’s own perspective or paradigm. Perhaps, Nietzsche’s perception can be explained in terms of Mandelbrot’s point of view in relation to the dimension of a ball of twine. From a great distance, the ball is a point, with zero dimensions. From closer up, the ball takes on three dimensions. ‘From

closer still, the twine comes into view, and the object becomes effectively one-dimensional, though the one dimension is certainly tangled up around itself in a way that makes use of three-dimensional space,' Mandelbrot (1987:97) says. From a microscopic perspective, 'twine turns to three-dimensional columns, the columns resolve themselves into one-dimensional fibers, the solid material dissolves into zero-dimensional points' (Mandelbrot 1987:97). The zero, one or three dimensions of a ball of twine are the properties of the ball that cannot be separated in a perspective of oneness or wholeness.

Nietzsche describes the characteristics of an individual who holds a non-linear perspective of life in this way: 'He flows out, he overflows, he uses himself up, he does not spare himself — and this is a calamitous, involuntary, no less than a river's flooding the land' (*TI Skirmishes of an Untimely Man* 44). Such an individual is a squanderer who overflows with an excessive amount of energy. The tremendous amount of energy, increasing here and at the same time decreasing there, flowing and rushing together, cannot be judged or measured, for it is the essence of our being. 'One is necessary, one is a piece of fatefulness, one belongs to the whole, one is in the whole; there is nothing which could judge, measure, compare, or sentence our being, for that would mean judging, measuring, comparing, or sentencing the whole. But there is nothing besides the whole!' (*TI The Four Great Errors* 8) In the whole everything intermingles with everything else in a dynamic relationship between constituent parts. For Nietzsche, 'the belief in the unity of all living things guarantees that there once was one *enormous living organism* of which we are individual parts' (*U* 23 [34]). In short, the perspective of oneness and wholeness of this living organism plays a crucial role in order to enhance the strength of life.

In contrast to the moralists who propagate the negation of life, Nietzsche urges us to enhance the strength of life by means of attaining knowledge. Nietzsche insists that 'it is a world of dangers and victories in which heroic feelings, too, find places to dance and play' (*GS* 324). With the principle of '*life as a means to knowledge*', Nietzsche says, 'in one's heart one can live not only boldly but even gaily, and laugh gaily, too' (*GS* 324). A heroic and great individual who arrives at that stage where 'everything is once again supposed to be one *single living thing*, the most blissful condition' (*U* 23 [34]) leads a supra-moral life. His existence is no longer governed by moral values that give meaning to his life, but rather his reality itself justifies him. Zarathustra claims that 'the overman is the meaning of the earth' (*Z Prologue* 3). Thus

Nietzsche calls in question the notion that morals are ‘understood as the doctrine of the relations of supremacy under which the phenomenon of “life” comes to be’ (*BGE* 19). Nietzsche focuses on life rather than on morality, that which people think to be supreme. His entire project of attacking morality is to make us aware of his belief that ‘mankind must work continually at the production of individual great men – that and nothing else is its task’ (*SE* 6). His project is an attempt to make us arrive at a conscious awareness of this goal and to open the possibility of ‘the enhancement of the type “man,” the continual “self-overcoming of man,” to use a moral formula in a supra-moral sense’ (*BGE* 257).

The ‘self-overcoming of man’ involves a process of continuous improvement of oneself, a process of ‘the *self-overcoming of morality*’, as described by Nietzsche, ‘that long secret work which has been saved up for the finest and most honest, also the most malicious, consciences of today, as living touchstones of the soul’ (*BGE* 32). The opposites, good and evil, light and darkness, as suggested by the title of his work *Beyond Good and Evil*, must be affirmed in order to attain an enhanced life. Nietzsche again employs the tree metaphor to illustrate his point of view in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. His Zarathustra claims that ‘it is with man as it is with the tree. The more he aspires to the height and light, the more strongly do his roots strive earthward, downward, into the dark, the deep — into evil’ (*Z I On the Tree on the Mountainside*). The strong grows out of problems and difficulties, and even evil in terms of a self-creating or self-overcoming process. Instead of glorifying and aiming at goodness and brightness as most people do, owing to a non-linear perspective, Nietzsche believes that ‘everything evil, terrible, tyrannical in man, everything in him that is kin to beasts of prey and serpents serves the enhancement of the species “man” as much as its opposite does’ (*BGE* 44). Nietzsche’s view of life and of the world resonates well with William Blake’s (1971:105) work *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, where the poet makes the following remark:

Without Contraries is no progression. Attraction and repulsion, reason and energy, love and hate, are necessary to human existence.

From these contraries spring what the religious call *good* and *evil*. Good is the passive that obeys reason: Evil is the active springing from energy.

We generally appreciate the good and denounce the evil. For Nietzsche, if we regard life superficially by only looking at ‘attraction’, ‘reason’, or ‘love’, we overlook the depth and profundity of life. We cannot only focus on rational explanation and

disregard the function of our drives which operate as energetic forces. Nietzsche points to our false belief that ‘one can achieve a more perfect interpretation if one minutely investigates the paint with which this picture is produced and the material upon which it is painted; perhaps with the result that one concludes that it is a quite intricately woven canvas with paint upon it which is chemically inexplicable’ (*SE* 3). According to Nietzsche, the search for a rational explanation of paint cannot interpret the essence of life and of the world. One is ‘great,’ if one can deal with the multiplicity of drives within oneself and is able to master them. Instead of denying or repressing these drives or forces as the weak does, the strong will can harmonize its own forces, capable of self-mastering the ‘play of forces and waves of forces’ (*WP* 1067) in the development of oneself. In this way, the Will To Power attains its fullest affirmation of life. Nietzsche indicates that ‘a whole host of the most various drives – curiosity, flight from boredom, envy, vanity, the desire for amusement, for example – can be involved in the striving for truth, though in reality they have nothing whatever to do with truth’ (*UDH* 6). Thus it seems impossible to construe morality as *given* ‘in a world whose essence is will to power’ (*BGE* 186) and to arrive at a rational foundation of moral principles in terms of the human faculty of reasoning, because we cannot find an objective moral law or truth while in the world of Will To Power where everything is changing and in flux. Nietzsche says that ‘life itself is *essentially* appropriation, injury, overpowering of what is alien and weaker; suppression, hardness, imposition of one’s own forms, incorporation and ... exploitation.’ He continues that exploitation ‘belongs to the *essence* of what lives, as a basic organic function; it is a consequence of the will to power, which is after all the will of life’ (*BGE* 259). This is Nietzsche’s insight into the enigmatic function and operation of our drives. The ability to operate our drives is a manifestation of the will to power. This implies that one has to transform and to create oneself in terms of an ongoing process of self-overcoming in order to lead the fullest life and to become what one is. In Chapter two, I shall attend to the ‘negative’ (destructive) side of the process of the self-overcoming of morality.

Chapter 2: Aspects of Nietzsche's genealogical critique of morality

Pity would be no more,
If we did not make somebody poor;
And mercy no more could be,
If all were as happy as we;

And mutual fear brings peace,
Till the selfish loves increase.
Then cruelty knits a snare
And spreads his baits with care.

He sits down with holy fears
And waters the ground with tears;
Then humility takes its root
Underneath his foot.

Soon spreads the dismal shade
Of mystery over his head;
And the caterpillar and fly
Feed on the mystery;

And it bears the fruit of deceit,
Ruddy and sweet to eat,
And the raven his nest has made
In its thickest shade.

The gods of the earth and sea
Sought through nature to find this tree.
But their search was all in vain—
There grows one in the human brain.

William Blake, *The Human Abstract*

The self-overcoming of morality

Nietzsche attempts to reassess all moral values and their relationship to life. In his work *On the Genealogy of Morals* he attempts to trace Western values to their roots in terms of a psychological and philosophical analysis. He investigates where and how moral concepts such as 'good' and 'evil' originated. His concern is with the religious and social conditions in which man initially formed the value judgements of good and evil. In this attempt he seeks to provide us with an innovative analysis of the social circumstances in which Western values have come forth and evolved. He investigates moral values with regard to their outcome: 'Have they hitherto hindered or furthered human prosperity? Are they a sign of distress, of impoverishment, of the degeneration of life? Or is there revealed in them, on the contrary, the plenitude, force, and will of

life, its courage, certainty, future?’ (*GM* P 3) His criterion for evaluating the value of ‘values’ is whether they have advanced or obstructed the will to live; whether dominant values promote the degeneration of life or the abundance of life.

In his Preface to the *Genealogy*, Nietzsche explicitly expresses the motive behind his concern with the origin of morality: ‘the *value* of morality’ (*GM* P 5). His genealogical analysis aims to arrive at a new knowledge. By investigating the history of morality, it seems that Nietzsche, unlike most, does not take for granted ‘the *value* of [moral] “values” as given, as factual, as beyond all question’ (*GM* P 6), but rather doubt ‘morality as consequence, as symptom, as mask, as tartufferie, as illness, as misunderstanding; but also morality as cause, as remedy, as stimulant, as restraint, as poison’ (*GM* P 6). Reflecting on the origin and nature of morality, Nietzsche concludes that morality has no absolute authority to command individuals and that, in fact, ‘a higher and more fundamental value of life might have to be ascribed to deception, selfishness, and lust’ (*BGE* 2). Nietzsche considers our moral prejudices to involve ‘the coldest and most devoid of presuppositions’ (*BGE* 23), such as ‘moral world order’ and ‘free will,’ yet their power ‘has obviously operated in an injurious, inhibiting, blinding, and distorting manner’ (*BGE* 23). Thus he aims to destroy the absolute authority of morality in order to attain a reevaluation of values through a process of ‘self-overcoming of morality’ (*BGE* 32; *EH* Destiny 3; *GM* III 27).

Nietzsche claims that ‘if a temple is to be erected *a temple must be destroyed*’ (*GM* II 24). The temple he wants to destroy is not simply ‘herd animal morality’ (*BGE* 202), that is Christian morality, but also conceptual edifices in the human mind, such as ‘punishment’ and ‘guilt.’ He introduces a process of ‘self-overcoming of morality’ (*BGE* 32) in order to accomplish this entire project. According to Nietzsche, in this ongoing process the destructive realm is human abstraction which is only an invention of human imagination and has a negative impact on life. His notion of the *Übermensch* implies that the constructive part of the process lies in becoming what one is; what one truly is, to realize one’s true nature.

Morality is generally accepted as absolutely fundamental, solid and supreme, yet Nietzsche argues:

Morality — no longer the expression of the conditions for the life and growth of a people, no longer its most basic instinct of life, but become abstract, become the antithesis of life — morality as the systematic degradation of the imagination, as the ‘evil eye’ for all things. (*A* 25)

Nietzsche's claim aims to tear down the old table of moral values, because moralists, aimed at self-preservation, champion a transcendent world or an afterworld which represents a source of supreme moral values and moral order. For Nietzsche, however, morality has been generated by a particular kind of slavish and life-denying set of values which inclines to decry danger, to insist on security and to reject passions and instincts in order to seek self-preservation. In this sense slavish morality denies life and it says No to life. As Nietzsche proclaims the will to power as will to life and emphasizes the need to free the passions and instincts from the impact of old virtues, our unquestioned, accepted moral principles represent, according to Nietzsche, 'a will to the *denial* of life, a principle of disintegration and decay' (*BGE* 259). In contrast to moralists who interpret will to life as self-preservation which strives for security and certainty, Nietzsche asserts that the total appearance of life is 'riches, profusion, even absurd squandering — and where there is struggle, it is a struggle for *power*' (*TI* Skirmishes of Untimely Man 14). The essence of life, for Nietzsche, is a struggle and a state of becoming and of growth — the will to power — but never static and fixed.

'Behold,' Life whispers to Zarathustra: 'I am *that which must overcome itself*' (*Z* II On Self-overcoming). Life is without any final purpose but itself. This implies that there may be no ultimate right or wrong, as there exist no ultimate truths, judgements or values. Nietzsche believes '*that the value of life cannot be estimated*' and he insists that 'judgments of value, concerning life, for it or against it, can, in the end, never be true: they have value only as symptoms, they are worthy of consideration only as symptoms; in themselves such judgments are stupidities' (*TI* The Problem of Socrates 2). According to Nietzsche, morality is 'mere symptomatology' (*TI* The 'Improvers' of Mankind 1). Only the individual determines the value of life for himself or herself. The manifestation of strength or weakness, virtue or vice is the determinant of growth. Nietzsche's interpretation of the will and values is an innovative one that urges us to flee from our deeply-rooted moral perspectives and to overthrow all our moral prejudices. His investigation of the origin of morality poses unquestioned moral values as a problem for the first time in Western philosophical history.

In his Preface to the *Genealogy* Nietzsche explains about his investigation of moral values 'that there is needed a knowledge of the conditions and circumstances in which they grew, under which they evolved and changed' (*GM* P 6). He insists that psychology is the way to solve human problems. (*BGE* 23) Nietzsche explores the

evolution of moral concepts and values under the impact of customs, Christianity and asceticism, by taking a psychological approach in unknitting the riddle of the human mind. He calls himself ‘a psychologist’ (*EH GM*), ‘a born and inevitable psychologist and unriddler of souls’ (*BGE* 269). His aim is to assess the quality of the will, with regard to its strength or weakness, as required by an ideal, a belief or by behaviour. Moral systems have been established in order to regulate and evaluate human behaviour. Our interpretation of life and the world influences our response to the facts and, therefore, different outcomes are possible according to different perceptions and behaviour. Nietzsche is interested in why one believes what one believes about morality in order to reveal how ‘higher moralities’ are possible. He offers us his *Genealogy* as an analysis and a radical interpretation of the origin of morality, implying that if we are able to change our paradigm of morality, a different outcome, not a degrading or decaying life, but an ascending life is possible.

The argument of Nietzsche’s *Genealogy* is that what we call morality is the development or evolution of a special set of particular pragmatic prejudices of the oppressed individuals. A morality that constantly preaches against selfishness and self-interest is, in fact, not only a product of impotence, but hypocrisy. William Blake (1971:216) expresses this viewpoint in his poem *The Human Abstract*:

Pity would be no more,
If we did not make somebody poor;
And mercy no more could be,
If all were as happy as we.

Moral systems work to subjugate the drives and the energies of the strong, those who wish to make something of themselves that morality does not recognize. Nietzsche criticizes the false assumption that regards all moral agents as being basically the same. He presumes the problems of morality to be the outcomes or manifestations of such false assumptions on the part of a moral agent about life and the world. He undermines our moral assumptions in order for us to examine and to open our way of thinking to other possible moralities.

Nietzsche designates the three essays of *Genealogy* as ‘three decisive preliminary studies by a psychologist for a revaluation of all values’ (*EH GM*). He summarizes this *Genealogy* in his work *Ecce Homo*:

The truth of the *first* inquiry is the birth of Christianity: the birth of Christianity out of the spirit of *ressentiment*, not, as people may believe, out of the “spirit” — a countermovement by its very nature, the great rebellion against the dominion of *noble* values.

The *second* inquiry offers the psychology of the *conscience* — which is not, as people may believe, “the voice of God in man”: it is the instinct of cruelty that turns back after it can no longer discharge itself externally....

The *third* inquiry offers the answer to the question whence the ascetic ideal, the priests’ ideal, derives its tremendous *power* although it is the *harmful* ideal *par excellence*, a will to the end, an ideal of decadence. Answer: not, as people may believe, because God is at work behind the priests but *faute de mieux* [Lacking something better] — because it was the only idea so far, because it had no rival. “For man would rather will even nothingness than *not* will.” — Above all, a *counterideal* was lacking — *until Zarathustra*. (EH GM)

The third essay is a response to an issue: the ascetic ideal created by *ressentiment* and bad conscience is poisonous because of being the ‘ideal of decadence’ and being a will to nothingness. The solution to the issue involves investigating the dominant belief that the power of the ascetic ideal derives from God, when in fact it derives from not having been challenged so far by a ‘counterideal.’ The ascetic ideal involves a negative goal, that is, the will to nothingness, yet it is better to will nothingness than failing to will for lack of a goal, for this would make it impossible for the will to exercise its power. It is a contradiction that the will to nothingness is a strategy of life to maintain itself as life. After all, for Nietzsche, guilt, bad conscience, and overwhelming ascetic ideals are essentially the product of the Christian morality that has ruined our psychological health.

Nietzsche envisions a process of self-overcoming of morality in order to attain ‘healthy morality’ (*TI* Morality as Anti-Nature 4). His notion of the overcoming of morality aims to eradicate the dualistic distinction in Western metaphysics and morality between good and evil and to reverse values in which what is considered ‘evil,’ according to the Christian moral interpretation and our present dominant system of values, would be considered as a source of strength under a future system. Ofelia Schutte (1984:116) suggests that the self-overcoming of morality ‘means the overcoming of deceptiveness regarding the origin and authority of traditional morality.’ The self-overcoming of morality implies that what has been called moral

hitherto is not moral at all, and that Christian morality has to perish in such an act.

Nietzsche states that

all great things bring about their own destruction through an act of self-overcoming: thus the law of life will have it, the law of the necessity of 'self-overcoming' in the nature of life — the law-giver himself eventually receives the call: '*patere legem, quam ipse tulisti*' [Submit to the law you yourself proposed]. In this way Christianity *as a dogma* was destroyed by its own morality; in the same way Christianity *as morality* must now perish, too: we stand on the threshold of *this* event. After Christian truthfulness has drawn one inference after another, it must end by drawing its *most striking inference*, its inference *against* itself; this will happen, however, when it poses the question '*what is the meaning of all will to truth?*' (GM III 27)

Christian-moral interpretation is to be destroyed in the process of self-overcoming, because Nietzsche believes that Christianity propagates 'a fundamental will *not* to see any event, any causality, any reality' (EH Destiny 7), when it is necessary to interpret and to perceive the world as it really is and not according to concepts of the imagination. He insists on 'the self-overcoming of morality, out of truthfulness' (EH Destiny 3). Instead of searching for truth in order to fulfil the will to truth, Nietzsche points out that the law-giver, that is, the *Übermensch*, will submit to the law he himself proposed. He condemns Christian moral interpretation of the world and salvation as false. Above all, he condemns the tendency

to view nature as if it were a proof of the goodness and providence of a God; to interpret history to the glory of a divine reason, as the perpetual witness to a moral world order and moral intentions; to interpret one's own experiences, as pious men long interpreted them, as if everything were preordained, everything a sign, everything sent for the salvation of the soul. (GM III 27)

Man — the measure of all things?

Verily, men gave themselves all their good and evil. Verily, they did not take it, they did not find it, nor did it come to them as a voice from heaven. Only man placed values in things to preserve himself — he alone created a meaning for things, a human meaning. Therefore he calls himself "man," which means: the esteemer. (Z I On the Thousand and One Goals).

For millennia mankind has maintained 'the feeling of the grandeur of man by pointing to his divine *origin*' (D 49), by believing that 'the way mankind is *going* shall serve as

a proof of his grandeur and kinship with God' (D 49). Man is proud of himself and his morality, as he believes that morality is a major guarantee of his divine origin. He conceives of himself as having attained a profound insight by ascribing 'to all that exists a connection with morality and [laying] an *ethical significance* on the world's back' (D 3). This belief is based on the assumption that man is the crown of creation, created in the image of God, and thus capable of controlling and manipulating the world. However, such a belief is only an abstraction of the human mind. Human abstraction, 'tree of mystery' in the words of William Blake, belongs to and only exists in the sphere and function of the human brain. Blake (1971:216) writes that

The gods of the earth and sea
Sought through nature to find this tree.
But their search was all in vain—
There grows one in the human brain.

According to Nietzsche, the concept of God causes morality to be, 'no longer the expression of the conditions for the life and growth of a people, no longer its most basic instinct of life, but become abstract, become the antithesis of life' (A 25). He considers 'human pride, the feeling of superiority in relation to other animals' as the origin of human abstractions. He continues: 'Perhaps our word "man" (*manas*) still expresses something of precisely *this* feeling of self-satisfaction: man designated himself as the creature that measures values, evaluates and measures, as the "valuating animal as such"' (GM II 8). In this sense man strives to understand the world by method, treating himself as the measure of all things. However, Nietzsche opposes this notion and criticizes those scientific investigators who strive to understand the world as something analogous to man. He indicates that 'such an investigator considers the entire universe in connection with man: the entire universe as the infinitely fractured echo of one original sound — man; the entire universe as the infinitely multiplied copy of one original picture — man. His method is to treat man as the measure of all things' (WL 1). Nietzsche rejects the assumption that man is the measure of all things. Since both human beings and the universe belong to a complex and dynamic system, their interactive relationship is intricate and incommensurable. 'Supposing ... that not just man is the "measure of things"' (BGE 3), Nietzsche says, the very foundation of morality will be shaken. Man needs a *new* paradigm and a *new* understanding in order to interpret and to deal with the morality that Nietzsche attempts to offer.

The presupposition of the divine origin of man, according to Nietzsche, derives from mere human vanity. Nietzsche criticizes the vanity that man is the great secret objective of animal evolution. ‘Man is by no means the crown of creation: every living being stands beside him on the same level of perfection’ (A 14). Man does not occupy a unique position in the universe and he is only a species and only a part in it. Nietzsche criticizes the illusion that it is only man who thinks solemnly of human intellect as akin to the central consciousness of the universe, ‘as though the world’s axis turned within it. But if we could communicate with the gnat, we would learn that he likewise flies through the air with the same solemnity, that he feels the flying center of the universe with himself’ (WL 1). Unlike most metaphysical thinkers, Nietzsche’s observation shows that he perceives the abundance in the diversity of existents. His key point is that if one is able to adjust one’s mind to accord with a direct and honest observation of the natural world and to face reality as it is and to respond and to act accordingly, then one has the possibility to transform oneself in order to become what one is rather than to flee from reality as those metaphysicians do. The ongoing improvement of mankind is the ultimate goal of Nietzsche’s philosophy.

Nietzsche’s attack on metaphysics

In *Ecce Homo* Nietzsche makes a promise ‘to “improve” mankind’ by ‘*overthrowing idols*’ (ideals) (EH P 2). In order to achieve this goal his philosophy makes an effort, such as employing his doctrine of the Will to Power and his ideal of the *Übermensch*, to throw away two crucial old ideals: ‘The conception of a “*true world*,” [and] the conception of morality as the *essence* of the world (these two most malignant errors of all time!)’ (A 10) Nietzsche attacks the metaphysical philosophical tradition mainly because of its belief in another real world or ‘true world.’ It is a false assumption that there is a real world beyond our experiences. He condemns the idea of ‘the mendaciously invented world and reality’ (EH P 2). This metaphysical ideal serves as a denial of life for its denial of the natural world and our instincts. The belief in this ‘true world’ has evolved as ‘the history of an error’ (TI How the ‘True World’ Finally Became a Fable) rather than deriving from an *honest and direct observation* of the

natural world. It exists simply as a human abstraction. Nietzsche traces the origin of metaphysics as

Misunderstanding of the dream. In the ages of crude primeval culture man believed that in dreams he got to know *another real world*; here is the origin of all metaphysics. Without the dream one would have found no occasion for a division of the world. (HAH I 5)

Under the influence of Plato, the Western metaphysical tradition favours a 'real' world of truth which is eternal and unchanging and thus devalues the natural world and life by considering our temporal and changing existence as worthless. Life is considered to be meaningless because of its temporal nature and the world of Ideas or truth is supposed to give life meaning and value. Nietzsche rejects the belief of these otherworldly metaphysicians. With his notion of Will to Power, that the world is defined as will to power, Nietzsche asserts that there is no reality over and above the reality of the natural world. Humans always exist in a state of becoming to struggle for more power rather than being in a static state. All of human existence is interpreted as forces or energy ever-flowing in order to attain power or growth. 'Life itself,' Nietzsche says, is 'the instinct for growth, for durability, for an accumulation of forces, for *power*' (A 6). Existence is an ongoing process that is dynamic and never static, as life is a process of self-overcoming. This idea differs from the metaphysical tradition as articulated by Kant.

What Nietzsche aims at with his project is to get rid of Kantian conceptions of morality and those features of morality which depend on universality and our undifferentiated equality as moral agents. Nietzsche condemns the traditional metaphysical approach of morality as universal and objective, such as Kant's categorical imperative. He criticizes Kant 'as a *moralist*,' stating that 'a virtue that is prompted solely by a feeling of respect for the concept of "virtue," as Kant would have it, is harmful. "Virtue," "duty," the "good in itself," the good which is impersonal and universally valid,' Nietzsche designates as 'chimeras and expressions of decline, of the final exhaustion of life' (A 11). Nietzsche rejects Kant's universal moral theory in as far as Kant believes that because we are moral people, we do not belong to the phenomenal world, but are part of the noumenal world where we hypothetically dwell and from where we attain moral laws. Nietzsche undermines the motive behind this metaphysics by illustrating that the Kantian distinction between the two worlds devalues the natural world.

Nietzsche rejects the notion of a noumenal world or the world of the thing-in-itself, the transcendental world of metaphysical ideas which is simply a human abstraction. According to Nietzsche, man arrives at this notion by imagining a world from which its perceiver is absent, without coming into contact with reality. Nietzsche opposes the notion of an independent and objective world structure. He refuses to acknowledge a world of higher status which depends on the mere structure of the mind as most philosophers do. He insists that in this way ‘one has deprived reality of its value, its meaning, its truthfulness, to precisely the extent to which one has mendaciously invented an ideal world’ (*EH P 2*). The natural world is our only reality and no ideal serves as a justification for an individual to flee from it. Nietzsche refers to Plato as an idealist, like most metaphysicians: ‘a coward before reality, consequently he flees into the ideal’ (*TI What I Owe To The Ancients 2*). Things in the natural world do not function according to the human mind, interpretation and measure, and thus arouse fear in man. Nietzsche indicates that most people are caught in the net of language and concepts. Man immerses himself in linguistic conventions, and thus employs language against the consciousness that the universe is hostile to him. Influenced by linguistic conventions, man is accustomed to think within the categories of reason and logic, which are only human abstraction and imaginary invention, in order to interpret and to predict his environment and circumstances. By doing so he can be stable and secure, safeguarded by a ‘true world’ or transcendent world against the flux of life and of reality.

Nietzsche criticizes the metaphysical notion of causality. He rejects the notion of God as first cause and judge of the universe, because he conceives God to be simply an imaginary *cause* and an imaginary *being* (*A 15*). For Nietzsche, the world of appearances can be sufficient justification for itself. There is no special entity, like the thing-in-itself, underlying the manifestation to guarantee its reality. Nietzsche holds that when reality is approached from an imaginary world, that is, through conceptual conjecture and logical formula, reality is perceived as a delusive appearance. We use the notion of cause and effect to predict and to seek regularity, because we are afraid of the unknown and of what is different and consequently being unable to control things. Ofelia Schutte (1984:52) refers to such a view as a psychological projection adapted by habit. Nietzsche disparages ‘*the error of confusing cause and effect,*’ stating that ‘this error belongs among the most ancient and recent habits of mankind; it is even hallowed among us and goes by the name of

“religion” or “morality” (TI The Four Great Errors 1). We select the most habitual explanation to new events, rather than understand it on its own terms. In this sense it seems to be a human error to misconceive morality as cause, and thus thinkers commit themselves to seek for objective and universal moral laws in order to govern our behaviour for self-preservation, yet morality actually appears to be an effect of our being. Nietzsche attempts to bring about a reversal of attitudes through the revaluation of values, since the metaphysical tradition consists of prejudice and blind faith. ‘The fundamental faith of the metaphysicians is *the faith in opposite values*’ (BGE 2). He urges a radical psychological change in order to enhance the possibility of living a creative life.

Nietzsche criticizes the metaphysical philosophical tradition, because philosophers immerse themselves in a deep commitment to a single belief in the unity of truth and reason which excludes any possibility of the existence of basically incommensurable criteria. He points out that almost all Western philosophers make an effort to establish a firm foundation of morality. He notes that ‘we philosophers have for a couple of millennia been accustomed to build as if upon the firmest of all foundations’ (D P 2). They aim ‘at certainty, at “truth,” but in reality at “*majestic moral structures*”’ (D P 3). Nietzsche asks about their futile effort: ‘Why is it that from Plato onwards every philosophical architect in Europe has built in vain?’ (D P 3) According to Nietzsche, the problem involves the misinterpretation of the human subject which is based on a false presupposition of man as a rational and free being, acting within a morality that is ahistorical and impersonal.

Nietzsche criticizes metaphysics and its vision of the human subject as rational and free, but simultaneously ahistorical and impersonal. He disagrees with the Kantian proposition: if man makes moral judgments, he must believe he is free; and because he is not free in the phenomenal world, he must believe he is free in some other world than this one. In this sense Nietzsche deconstructs the metaphysical tradition with its notion of the human subject, that is, a notion of a timeless epistemological subject being the ground of all knowledge and experience of humans and the world. With his notion of the Will to Power which conceives of the world and life as forces or energy, Nietzsche’s description of the human subject is quite different from that of the metaphysical interpretation of it:

A quantum of force is equivalent to a quantum of drive, will, effect — more, it is nothing other than precisely this very driving, willing, effecting, and only owing to the seduction of language (and of the fundamental errors of reason that are petrified in it) which conceives and misconceives all effects as conditioned by something that causes effects, by a “subject,” can it appear otherwise. For just as the popular mind separates the lightning from its flash and takes the latter for an *action*, for the operation of a subject called lightning, so popular morality also separates strength from expressions of strength, as if there were a neutral substratum behind the strong man, which was *free* to express strength or not to do so. But there is no such substratum; there is no “being” behind doing, effecting, becoming; “the doer” is merely a fiction added to the deed — the deed is everything. (*GMI* 13)

Nietzsche’s doctrine of Will to Power is a declaration of the impossibility of metaphysical interpretation of the self or the world, which appears as ‘force’ and is always in a state of becoming rather than a substantial entity. According to the metaphysical tradition, the ‘subject’ or the self is viewed as alienated and separated from the flux of life. Nietzsche’s critique of metaphysics aims to challenge, abandon and reverse such a manifestation of self-division and by doing so to free the individual to revalue the relationship between the self and the world. By subscribing to a non-linear vision, Nietzsche conceives of the self as a total organism and constantly in a state of becoming. This opens up the possibility of a new perspective of existence. He reminds us of the unity of the doer and the deed where the human subject discloses itself through its action. Nothing is changed in the natural or physical world, but only one’s conceptual interpretation of the world of appearances within one’s own mind. This psychological transformation regulates one’s attitude and behaviour towards life and the world. In this sense, if we can adjust our way of thinking, we can see the possibilities and methods to lead the fullest life and so to enhance the human species.

Nietzsche’s critique of the ascetic ideal of the will to truth

The search for truth appears to be at the centre of Western philosophical history. The Western metaphysical tradition has a faith in truth as the highest value since Plato. There is an objective order above the natural world which precedes any theories that man may have about the world. Theories are true or false exactly in relation to whether they represent this order accurately. Such a faith, according to Nietzsche, can be traced back through millennia to the Christian doctrine that God is truth.

Nietzsche's famous declaration of the death of God is an attempt to destroy all human conceptions and abstractions by falsifying their basic assumption: there is a single and moral God. Nietzsche states that the concept of God has been altered because of the unfulfilled hopes in the history of Israel. Nietzsche describes this alteration as follows: 'Yahweh the god of "justice" [was] no longer one with Israel, an expression of the self-confidence of the people: now a god only under certain conditions. ... A god who *demands* — in place of a god who helps, who devises means, who is at bottom the word for every happy inspiration of courage and self-confidence' (A 25). This is the death of God, according to Nietzsche, as the death of the *concept* of God.

Nietzsche emphasises the fact that 'the concept of God becomes a tool in the hands of priestly agitators, who now interpret all happiness as a reward, all unhappiness as punishment for disobeying God, as "sin": that most mendacious device of interpretation, the alleged "moral world order," with which the natural concepts of cause and effect are turned upside down once and for all' (A 25). In the interpretation of priestly agitators, we are all equal in God's eyes and are all equally His children. However, Nietzsche conceives of these teachings as lies and claims that 'there is no longer any "God," any "sinner," any "Redeemer" — that "free will" and "moral world order" are *lies*' (A 38). His claim is that they are only human inventions and their connection is conceptual, that the full meaning of those moral terms cannot be captured if the belief in God is separated. Without God truth becomes irrelevant, as does conventional morality. Nietzsche asks:

Could you *think* a god? But this is what the will to truth should mean to you: that everything be changed into what is thinkable for man, visible for man, feelable by man. You should think through your own senses to their consequences. (Z II Upon the Blessed Isles)

Nietzsche attacks Christianity, as also metaphysics, because it 'does not have contact with reality at any point' (A 47). 'To become *perfect*, [man] was advised to draw in his senses, turtle fashion, to cease all intercourse with earthly things, to shed his mortal shroud: then his essence would remain, the "pure spirit"' (A 14). In this way man cowardly flees from reality into an ideal world. As a result, metaphysical and Christian-moral views deny instincts and promote the suppression of the senses and the devaluation of the body.

Some thinkers believe that true knowledge of the world would be possible rather in terms of rationality than in terms of sense perception. Sense perceptions

imply an interpretation of the world, but not knowledge of the truth in correspondence with the world. Man never has a pure perception of the world, because he is restricted to his own interpretation of the world based on the typical features of human beings, such as his own experiences and cultural influences (*BGE* 264). Nietzsche rejects any notion that man can grasp truth in correspondence with the world. He indicates that behind all logical inference about life and the world ‘there stand valuations or, more clearly, physiological demands for the preservation of a certain type of life. For example, that the definite should be worth more than the indefinite, and mere appearance worth less than “truth” — such estimates might be, in spite of their regulative importance for *us*, nevertheless mere foreground estimates, a certain kind of *niaiserie*² which may be necessary for the preservation of just such beings as we are’ (*BGE* 3). While the ascetic priest traces the *cause* of human suffering and assumes ‘the affects, the senses, [to be] posited as causes, as “guilty”’ (*TI* The Four Great Errors 6), Nietzsche reminds us to learn from sense perceptions in order to understand their consequences for attaining an optimal *effect*. Nietzsche regards morality as effect — symptom — rather than cause. He points out that ‘morality and religion belong altogether to the *psychology of error*: in every single case, cause and effect are confused’ (*TI* The Four Great Errors 6).

For Nietzsche, since there is no thing-in-itself, transcendent world, ‘true world’ or afterworld, it is senseless to ask whether human ontology accords with the way things authentically are. The will to truth has limited our mind to further life-enhancement. Nietzsche’s negation of traditional morality intends to free individuals from an ascetic notion of truth and from the alienation of distancing truth from life. He criticizes Christianity as the crucial ideological and emotional cause of violating and repressing our instincts:

Christianity should not be beautified and embellished: it has waged deadly war against this higher type of man; it has placed all the basic instincts of this type under the ban; and out of these instincts it has distilled evil and the Evil One: the strong man as the typically reprehensible man, the ‘reprobate.’ Christianity has sided with all that is weak and base, with all failures; it has made an ideal of whatever *contradicts* the instinct of the strong life to preserve itself; it has corrupted the reason even of those strongest in spirit by teaching men to consider the supreme values of the spirit as something sinful, as something that leads to error — as temptations. (*A* 5)

² Walter Kaufmann notes that the word ‘*niaiserie*’ is one of Nietzsche’s favorite French words. It means folly, stupidity, silliness.

Under the banner of the Christian-moral paradigm ‘the supreme values of the spirit are interpreted as something sinful,’ so we have to repress all instincts. According to Nietzsche, this interpretation only aims to preserve the weak at the expense of the strong. What Nietzsche rejects is the ascetic priest’s total generalization. Nietzsche criticizes the belief that ‘*the strong man is free to be weak and the bird of prey to be a lamb* — for thus they gain the right to make the bird of prey *accountable* for being a bird of prey’ (*GM I 13*). In this way he considers morality as the invention of the inferior, the disadvantaged and the weak in order to provide some safeguard and protection for themselves. Man thinks that in this harsh and struggling world he needs moral codes in order to constrain those who are powerful and strong, and to impose justice and control. An example may illustrate the differing viewpoints of Nietzsche and conventional moralists. Suppose a cake needs to be shared by ten people. It is moral to divide the cake into ten pieces, so everyone gets his share. Moralists are committed to calculating how to justly divide the cake, otherwise the strong may take more or the weak may get nothing. They perceive this to be the absolute and single way to handle the cake and thus reject all other possibilities. However, for Nietzsche, the dominant Christian-moral paradigm constrains the strong in order to protect the weak. According to Nietzsche, by employing a creative and innovative paradigm, there may be other possibilities. We may encourage the ten persons to learn how to make cakes instead of how to justly or morally divide the cake, so that everyone may get more than simply one piece of the cake.

Instead of repressing our instincts, Nietzsche urges us to learn to master our instincts and senses in a creative way. Nietzsche says that ‘we free spirits ... and the lover of knowledge [are] expected to make a strong impression on the senses’ (*A 13*). ‘We have learned differently. We have become more modest in every way’ (*A 14*). As a result, the ‘honey-gatherers of the spirit’ (*GM P 1*) are capable of ‘bringing something home’ (*GM P 1*). Honey signifies the sweetness of knowledge in a magnanimous self-mastering heart. In such an ongoing learning process, Nietzsche requires an attitude, ‘like that of all lovers of knowledge, ... one of great tolerance, that is, magnanimous self-mastery’ (*A 38*). In this way one is able to constantly improve oneself. It does not follow that Nietzsche rejects the idea that the cake should be divided into ten pieces. Those who are accustomed to moral ardency may fail to see the subtler and deeper values that lie outside the sphere of morality. Reality is far more dynamic, diversified and complex than we hypothesize, so there would be

indefinite different approaches to govern the way in which we live apart from the existing moral codes. Since the Christian-moral paradigm has enjoyed a supreme and absolute position to be the *only* way to interpret facts and phenomena, other paradigms have been eradicated and even called ‘immoral.’ This implies that a higher human development cannot be achieved.

Nietzsche’s concern is that we do not perceive the will to truth as a problem, an obstacle to the evolution of the higher type of man. Since his major commitment is to the possibility of the future development of the human species, anything that violates this goal should be rejected. ‘Why insist on the truth?’ (*BGE* 16) Nietzsche asks, ‘*what is the meaning of all will to truth*’ and ‘*what meaning would our whole being possess if it were not this, that in us the will to truth becomes conscious of itself as a problem?*’ (*GM* III 27) Nietzsche argues that the will to truth requires a critique and that the value of truth must be experimentally examined, for when the God of the ascetic idea is rejected, a new problem, the value of truth, would certainly arise. Nietzsche explains that ‘the will to truth thus gains self-consciousness,’ and ultimately morality will *perish* (*GM* III 27). For Nietzsche, the morality that we perceive and treasure today, championed by moralists and ascetic priests, is not morality at all.

Nietzsche criticizes the ascetic priests because they are responsible for the compulsory imposition of Christian morality onto those who have no need for it. The ascetic priest seeks his own self-interest at the expense of future human development. The power of the ascetic ideal attempts to deny, and to distance man from the activities and values which are crucial to daily human life. The ascetic priest is motivated by the natural impulse to accumulate and exercise power over others. They aggrandize themselves at the expense of others. Nietzsche disagrees with the dominant view that the ascetic priest is ‘a *higher* type of man,’ (*A* 8) but rather sees ‘this *denier*’ (*GM* III 13) as a ‘*professional* negator, slanderer, and poisoner of life,’ (*A* 8) ‘the most dangerous kind of parasite,’ (*A* 38) and an ‘apparent enemy of life’ (*GM* III 13). Nietzsche argues that ‘the ascetic priest [has] possessed in this ideal not only his faith but also his will, his power, his interest. His *right* to exist stands or falls with that ideal’ (*GM* III 11). The ascetic priest simply interprets certain phenomena in an attempt to master the ‘herd men’ in terms of his ideal and in order to attain his own aims, purposes and values. The ascetic priests derive their power from their uniquely moral interpretation of human suffering which is crafted on the metaphysical

explanation of the human condition. The main issue of Nietzsche's criticism is the ascetic priest's evaluation of human existence:

the *valuation* the ascetic priest places on our life: he juxtaposes it (along with what pertains to it: 'nature,' 'world,' the whole sphere of becoming and transitoriness) with a quite different mode of existence which it opposes and excludes, *unless* it turn against itself, *deny itself*: in the case, the case of the ascetic life, life counts as a bridge to that other mode of existence. The ascetic treats life as a wrong road on which one must finally walk back to the point where it begins, or as a mistake that is put right by deeds. (*GM III 11*)

The Christian interpretation of suffering falsely equates the sickness and impotence of individuals to the worthlessness of life itself. Its effect is 'to devalue nature and natural values' (*A 38*). In short, the ascetic ideal denies life by promising an 'other mode of existence.' With his notion of Will to Power, Nietzsche claims that life itself has no moral value judgement of 'right' or 'wrong,' but is only struggle to power or to growth and is constantly in a state of becoming. He asserts that 'life itself is to [his] mind the instinct for growth, for durability, for an accumulation of forces, for *power*: where the will to power is lacking there is decline' (*A 6*). Alexander Nehamas (1985:117) suggests that, for Nietzsche, moral asceticism denies the whole of life for the otherworldly rewards and so tries to forgo its will to power. It is 'a manifestation of a will to power that aims at its own annihilation.' As the ascetic moral version has grounded devotion to 'poverty, humility, chastity,' (*GM III 8*), the ascetic ideal champions a view of life as basically unhappy, unfulfilling and suffering. It attempts 'to employ force to block up the wells of force'; with the result that 'physiological well-being itself is viewed askance, and especially the outward expression of this well-being, beauty and joy' (*GM III 11*).

Nietzsche comes to the following conclusion about the ascetic ideal in the last sentence of *Genealogy*: 'man would rather will *nothingness* than *not* will' (*GM III 28*). Tracy B. Strong (in Magnus & Higgins 1996:123) points out that to will nothing rather than not to will implies that one 'will continue to exist with an identity that is premised on no-thing, rather than not exist at all.' The psychological fact is that man conceives of 'his existence on earth [as if it] contained no goal' (*GM III 28*), when there is an absence of the will to truth. He thinks he is willing something, when in fact he is willing nothing. For Nietzsche, the will to truth is equivalent to will to nothingness, so it means: truth = nothingness, that is, truth does not exist at all. It is simply an imaginary cause to explain the meaning of the suffering of human

existence. According to Nietzsche, this seems to be exactly the core of human suffering.

Leslie Paul Thiele (1990:92-93) asserts that ‘Nietzsche’s philosophy, to the extent that it may be summarily defined, is a philosophy of and about suffering.’ Man suffers most from his incapability of investing his suffering with meaning. Philosophy, morality and religion seek to soothe human suffering through various lies. Philosophy invents ideal worlds to anaesthetize man against the pain and suffering of existing in the natural world. Morality grants man guilt, as punishment seems to be easier to endure than meaningless suffering. Religion guarantees an afterlife which concedes redemption and compensation for earthly misery. Since man has found ‘no answer to the crying question, “*why* do I suffer?”’ (GM III 28), the meaninglessness of suffering causes the greatest pain to man. Thus, the ascetic ideal has offered him meaning. Man would rather his suffering be meaningful, than accept the meaninglessness of it. Nietzsche’s insight is that

Man, the bravest of animals and the one most accustomed to suffering, does *not* repudiate suffering as such; he *desires* it, he even seeks it out, provided he is shown a *meaning* for it, a *purpose* of suffering. The meaninglessness of suffering, *not* suffering itself, was the curse that lay over mankind so far — *and the ascetic ideal offered man meaning!* (GM III 28)

Nietzsche believes that man suffers because ‘the *will* for man and earth was lacking ... *This* is precisely what the ascetic ideal means: that something was *lacking*, that man was surrounded by a fearful *void* — he did not know how to justify, to account for, to affirm himself; he *suffered* from the problem of his meaning’ (GM III 28). In this way with the will to truth the tremendous void seems to have been filled. For Nietzsche, however, suffering has no meaning in itself. Nothing is meaningful in itself, or in reality, since life is without meaning in a state of constant becoming. Nehamas (in Schacht 1994:281-282) suggests that meaning refers to a life in which, becoming a part of the whole, is capable of making a contribution to the whole. In this sense, if a life has made a difference or if it has transformed something, then everything in it, or everything that has happened to the individual becomes meaningful. In short, ‘what is incorporated into a specific whole has a meaning, and its meaning is nothing other than its contribution to that whole.’ One’s life becomes meaningful only in self-creating, self-transforming and self-improving in order to make a contribution to the whole. After all, truth is something one creates rather than

knows. Almost all known forms of ‘the search for truth’ are, in reality, only organized lies that have become respectable and institutionalised attempts to evade reality but have disguised themselves behind the mask of the desire for knowledge. Those disguised paths are in reality only a move away from what is unendurable into the tolerability of comfort, security and transcendent worlds. In confronting existential problems, Nietzsche teaches that one should look for the way out rather than for secure knowledge.

Has the earth been a madhouse?

The spirit of revenge, my friends, has so far been the subject of man’s best reflection; and where there was suffering, one always wanted punishment too.

For ‘punishment’ is what revenge calls itself; with a hypocritical lie it creates a good conscience for itself.

Because there is suffering in those who will, inasmuch as they cannot will backwards, willing itself and all life were supposed to be — a punishment. And now cloud upon cloud rolled over the spirit, until eventually madness preached, ‘Everything passes away; therefore everything deserves to pass away. And this too is justice, this law of time that it must devour its children.’ Thus preached madness.

Things are ordered morally according to justice and punishment. Alas, where is redemption from the flux of things and from the punishment called existence?’ Thus preached madness. (*Z II On Redemption*)

Nietzsche claims that ‘too long, the earth has been a madhouse’ (*GM II 22*), as man suffers most for his meaningless suffering and so has invented God in order to make sense out of his suffering. The ascetic priest devises the metaphysical will for the key purpose of calling sufferers ‘sinners,’ who deserve punishment and consequently offer their services to God as executors of penance and forgiveness. For Nietzsche, not only the device of ‘guilt’ or ‘punishment’ is an error, but also the whole cluster of morals that weakens and destroys life.

In the second essay of *Genealogy* Nietzsche deals with some moral concepts, such as ‘punishment,’ ‘sin,’ ‘guilt’ and ‘free will’ that we accept as unquestionable under the influence of metaphysic fantasy. Nietzsche claims that modern man has invented the notion of free will to ensure an absolute spontaneity of choice between good and evil, to attribute guilt and to make people assess their actions. Such inventions of the imagination serve to justify suffering in the human temporal

existence. Nietzsche identifies the error of the invention of the metaphysical fantasy of free will to be that the doer is separated from the deed:

For every sufferer instinctively seeks a cause for his suffering; more exactly, an agent; still more specifically, a *guilty* agent who is susceptible to suffering — in short, some living thing upon which he can, on some pretext or other, vent his affects, actually or in effigy...

“I suffer: someone must be to blame for it” — thus thinks every sickly sheep. But his shepherd, the ascetic priest, tells him: “Quite so, my sheep! someone must be to blame for it: but you yourself are this someone, you alone are to blame for it — *you alone are to blame for yourself!*” (*GM III 15*)

As every sufferer seeks the cause and the blame for his suffering and to express his anger, the ‘herd man,’ the sufferer of his existence tends to moralize suffering by holding someone or something responsible for it. The ‘shepherd,’ the ascetic priest, persuades the sufferer that he himself is to blame for his suffering. The ascetic priest holds that the suffering man endures, as he deserves, because he has brought it on himself. According to the ascetic priest, free will is associated with the will of God. Humans are free to choose whether to obey or disobey God’s will. The former is rewarded with heaven, while the latter is punished with hell. In this way ‘the will of God manifests itself in the destinies of a people, of an individual, as the ruling factor, that is to say, as punishing and rewarding according to the degree of obedience’ (*A 26*). As man is free not to go against God’s will, he deserves to suffer God’s punishment if he does so. From the ascetic priest man receives ‘the *first* hint as to the “cause” of his suffering: he must seek it in *himself*, in some *guilt*, in a piece of the past, he must understand his suffering as a *punishment*’ (*GM III 20*). Kathleen Higgins (in Solomon & Higgins 1988:144) points out that, for Nietzsche, Christianity perceives time as a linear model. Unlike in a non-linear paradigm, ‘our lives in time involve a linear progression toward a finish line, after which we will be rewarded or punished on the basis of whether our souls are in a state of grace or a state of sin.’ Such a paradigm of the world and of life propagates the notion of a supernatural type of causality in which the natural order that is deemed sinful and contaminating to the soul. As sin has to be redeemed, man imagines a supernatural agency in order to offset the impact of sin. The Christian-moral interpretation of the world is life-negating, because it encourages man to divorce himself from a sense of real interaction with the larger world. Above all, the priest interprets punishment as the outcome of God’s judgment.

According to the ascetic priest, man is a ‘sinner,’ so he deserves God’s punishment. In this way morality makes suffering possible. Since man ‘had become a “sinner,” he was stuck in a cage, imprisoned among all sorts of terrible concepts. And there he lay, sick, miserable, malevolent against himself: full of hatred against the springs of life, full of suspicion against all that was strong and happy’ (*TI* The ‘Improvers’ Of Mankind 2). In this context Nietzsche thinks of man as ‘*the sick animal*’ (*GM* III 13). He disparages the dominant power of the ascetic priest and ‘the physiological struggle of man against death (more precisely: against disgust with life, against exhaustion, against the desire for the “end”)’ (*GM* III 13). Nietzsche’s insight reveals man as prisoner of ‘the moral conceptual world of “guilt,” “conscience,” “duty”’ (*GM* II 6). Man subjugates himself to concepts and ideals which do not have any connection with reality, but is simply human abstraction and self-preservation. Consequently, ‘everywhere the *will* to misunderstand suffering [makes] the content of life, the reinterpretation of suffering as feelings of guilt, fear, and punishment’ (*GM* III 20). The moral implication of punishment appears to be the awaking of guilt and fear to serve the priest’s purposes. Nietzsche protests that the ascetic priest interprets suffering by placing ‘all suffering under the perspective of *guilt*’ (*GM* III 28). He traces the origin of guilt to the *creditor-debtor relationship* between God and man.

According to Nietzsche, the consciousness of being in debt to the deity has been a persistent phenomenon in history: ‘The guilty feeling of indebtedness to the divinity continued to grow for several millennia’ and ‘the advent of the Christian God, as the maximum god attained so far, was therefore accompanied by the maximum feeling of guilty indebtedness on earth’ (*GM* II 20). The moral concept of guilt and ‘bad conscience’ evolves, like in trade business, from ‘the contractual relationship between *creditor* and *debtor*’ (*GM* II 4). Nietzsche employs the contract metaphor to explain an innovative, psychological form of compensation for the debtors’ failure to repay his loan:

We stand before the paradoxical and horrifying expedient that afforded temporary relief for tormented humanity, that stroke of genius on the part of Christianity: God himself sacrifices himself for the guilt of mankind, God himself makes payment to himself, God as the only being who can redeem man from what has become unredeemable for man himself — the creditor sacrifices himself for his debtor, out of *love* (can one credit that?), out of love for his debtor! (*GM* II 21)

Nietzsche embarks on a complex psychological analysis to explain the impact of this eternal and unredeemable debt. Punishment is one of the creditor's alternatives, imposing pain on the debtor as substitution for the payment. The creditor receives not money, land or possessions of any kind, but 'a kind of *pleasure*— the pleasure of being allowed to vent his power freely upon one who is powerless' (*GM II 5*). The pleasure of imposing pain is one means of appeasing both parties in terms of making suffering meaningful and enduring. God sacrifices himself for man. By sacrificing himself to the debtor, the creditor makes the debt eternal and unredeemable. If the sacrifice of Christ is a debt that can never be repaid, then man is eternally guilty as a 'sinner' because of this unredeemable debt. In order to release man from suffering and guilt, the ascetic priest urges man to deny and destroy his individual will and instincts. In this way the priest bestows meaning on human suffering and promotes the preservation of a declining life.

Nietzsche rejects this ascetic interpretation and demands to know: 'to what extent can suffering balance debts or guilt? To the extent that to *make* suffer was in the highest degree pleasurable, to the extent that the injured party exchanged for the loss he had sustained, including the displeasure caused by the loss, an extraordinary counterbalancing pleasure: that of *making* suffer' (*GM II 6*). In a world where everything exists in a state of flux, Nietzsche considers one's pleasure or suffering to depend on one's ability to struggle for power, to make oneself expand or grow in the play of forces. Nietzsche's insight into the ascetic interpretation of unredeemable debt is that 'punishment was *not* imposed *because* one held the wrong-doer responsible for his deed, thus *not* on the presupposition that only the guilty one should be punished: rather, ... from anger at some harm or injury, vented on the one who caused it — but this anger is held in check and modified by the idea that every injury has its *equivalent* and can actually be paid back, even if only through the *pain* of the culprit' (*GM II 4*). Nietzsche's point is that no redemption can be made when everything is constantly and rapidly changing. This implies that nothing is owed and no debt is to be paid. Thus human existence cannot be evaluated as worthless punishment. Nietzsche's insight encourages us to open our minds to seek alternatives in order to enhance life rather than to fix our mind on an absolute ascetic framework.

Nietzsche states that 'the irredeemable debt gives rise to the conception of irredeemable penance, the idea that it cannot be discharged ("*eternal punishment*")' (*GM II 21*). This impacts on us by promoting the view of our existence as '*worthless*

as such.' (GM II 21). Nietzsche criticizes the 'moralization of the concepts guilt' (GM II 21) and sin because of their presupposition of faith in God, our creditor. For Nietzsche, the ascetic ideal is life-denying, by its preaching of moral concepts and the denial of instincts. Nietzsche considers the whole cluster of concepts that supports morality to be delusional and deceitful, preserving the weak and impotent who suffer most. He interprets the concept of 'sin' as one of the ascetic priest's means to exercise his power over his sheep, the 'herd man.' "'Sin" ... is the priestly name for the animal's "bad conscience" (cruelty directed back)' (GM III 20).

Nietzsche seeks to trace the origin of bad conscience. He asserts that 'all instincts that do not discharge themselves outwardly *turn inward*' (GM II 16). Owing to the denial of instincts, man is incapable of discharging his instincts outwardly into deeds for growth, or more precisely, for power, but turns inwardly against himself. This is what he calls 'the *internalisation* of man' (GM II 16). As a result, 'hostility, cruelty, joy in persecuting, in attacking, in change, in destruction — all this turned against the possessors of such instincts: that is the origin of the "bad conscience"' (GM II 16). Nietzsche insists that the outcome of this transformation of mind and the internalisation of drives or instincts engender 'bad conscience.' He considers the 'bad conscience' as a sickly consciousness of guilt before God and complete self-hatred and self-torture that produce terrible sickness in man (GM III 14). Man is turned against himself by abasing the will in terms of 'guilt':

This man of the bad conscience has seized upon the presupposition of religion so as to drive his self-torture to its most gruesome pitch of severity and rigor. Guilt before *God*: this thought becomes an instrument of torture to him. He apprehends in 'God' the ultimate antithesis of his own ineluctable animal instincts; he reinterprets these animal instincts themselves as a form of guilt before God (as hostility, rebellion, insurrection against the 'Lord,' the 'father,' the primal ancestor and origin of the world); he stretches himself upon the contradiction 'God' and 'Devil'; he ejects from himself all his denial of himself, of his nature, naturalness, and actuality, in the form of an affirmation, as something existent, corporeal, real, as God, as the holiness of God, as God the Judge, as God the Hangman, as the beyond, as eternity, as torment without end, as hell, as the immeasurability of punishment and guilt. (GM II 22)

Nietzsche criticizes ascetic self-torture 'as a form of guilt before God,' a debt owed not simply to ancestors, but also to God. As the debt can never be totally repaid, the guilt can never be totally redeemed. So man's guilt before God reaches its highest level of self-denial. Nietzsche concludes that bad conscience is 'man's suffering of

man, of himself (GM II 16). Arthur C. Danto (in Solomon & Higgins 1988:22) suggests that ‘any suffering due to false moral beliefs about ourselves is due to bad consciousness,’ or ‘bad conscience’ in Nietzsche’s language, when there is nothing verily bad about us in the natural world *except* our consciousness of being bad, or guilt. It is man’s imaginary revenge to make himself suffer. Nietzsche refers to ‘the *ressentiment* of natures that are denied the true reaction, that of deeds, and compensate themselves with an imaginary revenge’ (GM I 10). The ascetic ideal has produced not simply the life-denying phenomena of ‘bad conscience’ and ‘guilt,’ but also the sickest animal — ‘animal man’. The sick is the unfortunate man of *ressentiment* who seeks revenge against the fortunate and strong and poison the conscience of the fortunate with their own misery. Nietzsche states that ‘the progress of this poison through the entire body of mankind seems irresistible’ (GM I 9). In this way the sick represents the greatest danger to the healthy and even the entire human race.

Nietzsche notes that the sense of *ressentiment* lies in the senselessness of suffering. Instead of alleviating the wound of suffering, ‘the priest *alters the direction of resentment*’ (GM III 15), by persuading man that he is a ‘sinner’ who has to blame himself for his suffering. The notion of ‘sin’ in itself is a manifestation of sickness. ‘Sinfulness,’ for Nietzsche, is a mere psychological interpretation of a fact, that is, physiological depression of the herd man who cannot digest his experiences (GM III 16). Nietzsche employs the term ‘*ressentiment*’ not simply to interpret the sickness of the herd, but also to describe the cruelty of the ascetic priest. Robert C. Solomon (in Schacht 1994:103) suggests that *ressentiment* means ‘vulnerability, and implies a reaction to an offence (real or imagined, local or global), which includes (mostly imaginary) schemes of revenge.’ Frustration is the core of *ressentiment*. *Ressentiment* is a feeling, a sensitivity and a reaction to a detrimental and hostile environment which links up with frustrated fantasies of revenge. *Ressentiment* is an emotion, involving not only an awareness of one’s powerlessness and misfortune, but also a type of blame and personal injury, an external projection and devastating sense of injustice. *Ressentiment* is consuming and engenders envy and desire for revenge. It involves a generalized sense of impotence and is an expression of weakness. Frithjof Bergmann (in Schacht 1994:79) points out that a large portion of the suffering of the ‘slaves’ or men of *ressentiment* is *internal*, the knowledge of their hopeless inferiority and perpetual deficiency which leads to pain and jealousy. *Ressentiment* refers to this

sceptical, reinforcing, downward agitation which appears as poison and aggravates self-hatred, jealousy and anger, and eventually deteriorates the self and turns against life.

In short, the man of *ressentiment* is not only self-tortured and self-contemptuous, but also self-deceptive, attempting to attain power over the strong by denying individual power and desires. He reacts against the sense of injustice and oppression of his existence, compensating for it by taking imaginary revenge. For Nietzsche, the ‘herd man’ who suffers but is unable to change the conditions of his miserable existence is liable to develop metaphysical and moral beliefs in a just order. Such beliefs are false, yet they dominate human life — people go mad from suffering. The man of *ressentiment*, or ‘slave’ in Nietzsche’s language, suffers without hope, so he seeks to poison those who are well-constituted by reversing all values. Thus he makes the strong become sick. Ultimately the strong is overpowered by the weak.

Master morality vs. slave morality

In *Beyond Good and Evil* section 260, Nietzsche discusses one of his most popular notions; that of the *master morality* versus *slave morality*, a conceptual device to distinguish between two basic types of morality. Two different ways of reacting to human suffering mark two basic human types, the strong and the weak, or the master and the slave. Master morality and slave morality refer to the division between what weakens and mutilates life and what strengthens and enhances it. Nietzsche contends that what we call morality is ‘slave morality,’ which is based on, and an expression of, weak character. It is motivated by the slavish and resentful emotions of those poor spirits who feel themselves to be inferior. In contrast, ‘master morality’ is an expression of good and strong qualities. Nietzsche not simply makes us recognize that there are also moralities other than our present dominant morality — slave morality, but also explains how the ideas of ‘good’ and ‘evil’ have initially emerged in order to shed light on the origin of morality.

In the first essay of *Genealogy*, Nietzsche employs the analogy of master and slave in order to account for two types of morality and to describe the origin of our most basic moral values, such as ‘good,’ ‘bad,’ and ‘evil.’ ‘What is good?’ Nietzsche asks: ‘Everything that heightens the feeling of power in man, the will to power, power

itself. What is bad? Everything that is born of weakness' (A 2). For Nietzsche, the master who is capable of heightening the feeling of power is 'good', while the slave who is born of weakness is 'bad'. In this context the terms 'master' and 'slave' refer to fundamentally different types of individuals and their responses to the phenomenon of suffering. The former is able to attain full sovereignty in controlling and organizing his chaotic instincts or drives towards self-creation and life-enhancement, while the latter is compelled by resentment, or *ressentiment* in Nietzsche's language, and the impulse of revenge. Nietzsche asserts that life itself is characterized by the will to power. While the strong delights in effort and struggle because only in this way he can experience his own strength and power, the weak or the slave tends to evade effort and struggle because of having little energy and vigour. Nietzsche answers the question: 'What is happiness?' by saying that 'the feeling that power is *growing*, that resistance is overcome' (A 2). The strong can attain maximal happiness by overcoming resistance — the greater the resistance, the greater the happiness. In contrast, the weak avoids resistance and struggle, not simply because of laziness and lack of vitality, but also because in an unsuccessful struggle they experience their impotence. The weak is powerless, dependent and lacks self-mastery. Nietzsche compares the strong to a bird of prey and the weak to a lamb, stating that 'if the lambs say among themselves: "these birds of prey are evil; and whoever is least like a bird of prey, but rather its opposite, a lamb — would he not be good?"' (GM I 13) The strong, the master, exalts health, self-mastery, independence, power and spontaneity. The self-directed master derives his values from the abundance of his own life and strength. He is capable of celebrating life, for it shines forth in his instinctual power as something 'good,' while the weak or the slave is incapable of discharging strength and energy, therefore, he eventually revenges himself in terms of revaluating all active and strong instincts as 'evil,' and his passivity as 'goodness.'

Nietzsche investigates what the moral concepts of 'good' and 'evil' first meant. He is against the notion that actions are originally called 'good' because they are unegoistic and useful. He asserts that the concept of 'good' originated with 'the noble, powerful, high-stationed and high-minded, who felt and established themselves and their actions as good' (GM I 2) in contrast to 'all the low, low-minded, common and plebeian' (GM I 2). The noble 'first seized the right to create values and to coin names for values' (GM I 2). Nietzsche speaks of 'the noble mode of valuation: it acts and grows spontaneously; it seeks its opposite only so as to affirm itself more

gratefully and triumphantly — its negative concept “low,” “common,” “bad,” is only a subsequently-invented pale, contrasting image in relation to its positive basic concept — filled with life and passion through and through — “we noble ones, we good, beautiful, happy ones!” (GM I 10) Nietzsche’s point is that the origin of the moral concepts ‘good’ and ‘bad’ does not belong to the moral sphere of values as they do today. They simply evolved as moral values due to ‘the slave revolt in morality’:

The slave revolt in morality begins when *ressentiment* itself becomes creative and gives birth to values: the *ressentiment* of natures that are denied the true reaction, that of deeds, and compensate themselves with an imaginary revenge. While every noble morality develops from a triumphant affirmation of itself, slave morality from the outset says No to what is ‘outside,’ what is ‘different.’ What is ‘not itself’; and *this* No is its creative deed. This inversion of the value-positing eye — this *need* to direct one’s view outward instead of back to oneself — is of the essence of *ressentiment*: in order to exist, slave morality always first needs a hostile external world; it needs, physiologically speaking, external stimuli in order to act at all — its action is fundamentally reaction. (GMI 10)

Nietzsche explains how ‘the slave revolt in morality’ gives rise to the inversion of values in terms of the notion of *ressentiment*. He shows that the revolt of the slaves in moral issues is both creative and resentful. The ground of slave morality is *ressentiment*, which is a distressful emotion based on a sense of inferiority and frustrated revenge, generating what we call ‘morality.’ What distinguishes slave morality is a feeble state of mind, a particularly ‘reactive’ set of emotions which Nietzsche calls *ressentiment*. Nietzsche argues that *ressentiment* is based on a primordial perception of oneself. The slave is self-tortured due to an awareness of his impotence and inferiority and a refusal to accept himself. The noble may also experience *ressentiment*, yet it does not ‘poison’ him if he is capable of discharging it in his action (GM I 10). While the noble acts, the slave immerses in deep feelings.

Slave morality is a defensive reaction to the values of the more powerful ones. In revolt, it becomes creative. ‘The noble type of man experiences *itself* as determining values; it does not need approval; ... it knows itself to be that which first accords honor to things; it is *value-creating*. Everything it knows as part of itself it honors: such a morality is self-glorification’ (BGE 260). Master morality is a form of bold self-glorification. The noble or master calls the inferior and weak man ‘bad’ only by contrast to himself, as an absence of ‘good’. As the slave needs ‘external stimuli in order to act at all’ (GM I 10), he pictures and creates the noble as an enemy. Nietzsche

explains that the slave ‘has conceived “the evil enemy,” “*the Evil one*,” and this in fact is his basic concept, from which he then evolves, as an afterthought and pendant, a “good one” — himself’ (*GM I 10*). The slave takes the master’s idea of ‘good’ and ‘bad,’ but twists it to become ‘good’ and ‘evil’ attributing qualities to an individual because of ‘the submerged hatred, the vengefulness of the impotent’ (*GM I 10*). *Ressentiment* negates the master’s values and eventually becomes a creative act of inverting these values and substituting new values for them. These new values arise out of opposition to a hostile, oppressive external world.

The slave disparages and depreciates the noble in order to elevate himself. This conversion of values derives from *ressentiment* which is a psychological process by which the weak or the slave compensates for himself his own weakness with an imaginary revenge. The slave takes his imaginary revenge, insisting that ‘the noble mode of valuation blunders and sins against reality’ (*GM I 10*). The slave condemns the master’s self-glorifying virtues because he considers his oppressor as dangerous, cruel and threatening. The slave is powerless to bring about a radical change in his conditions, and he can only act according to his master’s will rather than his own drives. When his drives for aggression, cruelty, lust for power and so on cannot be conveyed outwardly and naturally, these drives turn inwardly, and eventually takes revenge against life — the *internalisation* of man in Nietzsche’s language. (*GM II 16*) The slave carries out his revenge by converting the master’s attributes into vices. In morality people assert themselves to be good for being moral, no matter how miserable their life may be. By telling ‘lies,’ they attempt to evade the facts in order to make themselves appear to be better off than they really are. Rüdiger Bittner (in Schacht 1994:130) indicates that this reaction is just like that of La Fontaine’s Fox. It consoles itself by saying the grapes are green and sour, although they are fully ripe, because it is unable to reach them. In this way ‘pity, the complaisant and obliging hand, the warm heart, patience, industry, humility, and friendliness are honoured — for here these are the most useful qualities and almost the only means for enduring the pressure of existence’ (*BGE 260*). The slave denies those desires that he is unable to satisfy and conspires against those who are able to satisfy them, and eventually declares such desires and those who are able to satisfy them ‘evil.’ Thus ‘*who is “evil” in the sense of the morality of *ressentiment*?* Nietzsche’s answer ‘is: *precisely the “good man” of the other morality*’ (*GM I 11*).

In short, the slave judges the qualities of the master as ‘evil,’ seeing the strong as dangerous and calling them ‘evil,’ and thus concludes himself to be ‘good’ because of lacking the master’s ‘evil’ traits. *Ressentiment* finally converts the enemies, the oppressors or the noble ones to ‘evil.’ Unlike ‘bad,’ ‘evil’ contrives a sense of threat; it implies a demonic and dark force that contaminates and befouls purity. It does not simply mean the absence of ‘good’ as the ‘bad’ does, but involves a dangerous and vicious quality that hankers for resistance, combat and eradication. By inverting and condemning the characteristics of the noble as evil, the slave succeeds to disguise his fear, impotence and weakness as goodness.

Nietzsche states that Christian morality is intrinsically shaped as a form of slave morality. The ascetic priest, the leader of slaves, provides the men of *ressentiment* with an interpretation which, on the one hand, blames them for their suffering, and, on the other hand, promises redemption through belief in God. In order to relieve his inner tension, the slave projects suffering onto someone who could be responsible for his misery and, taking a further step, he projects the supreme God who is able and willing to fight against the ‘evil’ masters. The slave finds consolation from God and believes in future happiness in an afterlife. This interpretation promotes an inspiration for the slave, giving him a strong sense of power and eventually enabling him to overcome even the master. According to Nietzsche, this goes along with the claim that ‘the wretched alone are the good; the poor, impotent, lowly alone are the good; the suffering, deprived, sick, ugly alone are pious, alone are blessed by God, blessedness is for them alone — and you, the powerful and noble, are on the contrary the evil, the cruel, the lustful, the insatiable, the godless to all eternity; and you shall be in all eternity the unblessed, accursed, and damned’ (*GM I 7*). By interpreting the noble mode of valuation as evil, slave morality implies that the noble is indeed free not to act, that he is free to choose not to be evil. In this way, the slave interprets the weakness and inability to act, which is so typical of himself, as something positive — as ‘freedom.’

Nietzsche criticizes the psychological paradigm of the slave, the weak or the sick as a morality which ‘represent[s] justice, love wisdom, superiority — [as] the ambition of the “lowest,” the sick’ (*GM III 14*). Ultimately, the dominance of slave morality weakens both the slave and the master. Nietzsche criticizes ‘the will of the weak to represent *some* form of superiority, their instinct for devious paths to tyranny

over the healthy' (*GM III 14*). While master or noble morality allows coexistence with *different* types and morals, slave morality or Christian morality, assuming that we are all in equal before God, claims universal status for itself. However, Nietzsche considers the 'universal' rules of this morality as a strategy by the slaves for inhibiting the best. By masking as the only possible morality, slave or Christian morality is succeeded in regulating the lives not only of the majority, the weak who need its codes to live their lives, but also the few healthy ones who do not need it.

Nietzsche despises Christian morality not simply for its values, but also for its attitude that 'I am morality itself, and nothing besides is morality' (*BGE 202*) and its claim to represent the supreme values of human existence. Frithjof Bergmann (in Schacht 1994:85) notes that '*we believe in egoism,*' so 'we naturally slip into the idea that without morality the world would be a chaotic, grim, and ghastly place.' Morality has a purpose to constrain ruthlessness and to protect those who are weak, poor and disadvantaged against those who are strong, fortunate and aggressive. However, according to Nietzsche, morality should not be considered as a safeguard against all the uncertainties and dangers of the natural world. Rather, if one recognizes that life is in a state of flux, full of danger and basically a struggle for power, then morality would be interpreted in a creative and dynamic fashion. He insists that 'this whole world of fiction is rooted in *hatred* of the natural (of reality!); it is the expression of a profound vexation at the sight of reality. *But this explains everything.* Who alone has good reason to lie his way out of reality? He who suffers from it. ... The preponderance of feelings of displeasure over feelings of pleasure is the cause of this fictitious morality and religion' (*A 15*). Since Christian morality has sought to regulate human conduct so that differences between the strong and the weak are eliminated as far as possible, it denies all possible moralities or paradigms which may enhance life or may possess a value 'of producing a stronger type' (*GM I 17*) of man, which is presented in Nietzsche's ideal of the *Übermensch*. In order to attain such a goal, slave or Christian morality and all its components or presuppositions should be destroyed in the process of what Nietzsche calls the self-overcoming of morality.

Chapter 3: Nietzsche's idea of the *Übermensch*

To mercy, pity, peace, and love
All pray in their distress;
And to these virtues of delight
Return their thankfulness.

For mercy, pity, peace, and love
Is God, our father dear;
And mercy, pity, peace, and love
Is man, his child and care.

For mercy has a human heart;
Pity, a human face;
And love, the human form divine;
And peace, the human dress.

Then every man of every clime
That prays in his distress,
Prays to the human form divine—
Love, mercy, pity, peace.

And all must love the human form
In heathen, Turk or Jew.
Where mercy, love, & pity dwell
There God is dwelling too.

William Blake, 'The Divine Image'
From *Songs of Innocence*

Cruelty has a human heart,
And jealousy a human face—
Terror, the human form divine,
And secrecy, the human dress.

The human dress is forged iron,
The human form, a fiery forge.
The human face, a furnace sealed,
The human heart, its hungry gorge.

William Blake, 'A Divine Image'
From *Songs of Experience*

Experimental Morality

Nietzsche employs the term 'self-overcoming of morality' to refer to an ongoing process of destruction, a revaluation of values in order to make room for creating something new, something beyond oneself, beyond one's existential limitations. He employs the metaphor of the earthquake to symbolize his stance in *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. Zarathustra states that 'earthquakes bury many wells and leave many languishing, but they also bring to light inner powers and secrets. Earthquakes reveal

new wells. In earthquakes that strike ancient peoples, new wells break open' (Z III On Old and New Tablets 25). Destroying conventional morality, Nietzsche introduces his idea of the *Übermensch*. He emphasizes that the *Übermensch* (superman or overman) represents 'the annihilator of morality' (EH Books 1). Nietzsche tells us very little about what the *Übermensch* is like, and asserts that 'never yet has there been an overman' (Z II On Priests).³ Nietzsche left the *Übermensch* so open to interpretation that his sister 'assured Hitler that *he* was what her brother had in mind by the *Übermensch*' (Danto 1965:198). Alan D. Schrift (1995:71) notes the paradox that Nietzsche's *Übermensch* can be portrayed 'alternatively as a model of the Maslowian self-actualized individual or a fascist moral monster.' My argument in this thesis sides with the former: Nietzsche employs a growth model, aiming at self-actualization in human finite existence as a whole, although the *Übermensch* is the destroyer of morality according to Zarathustra.

In his doctrine of the *Übermensch* Nietzsche proposes an experimental morality in order to improve mankind, because the traditional moral system does not fit or, more precisely, appears as an obstacle, in the process of self-overcoming and self-creating to reach supreme human achievement. Nietzsche states that 'to "improve" men: this above all was called morality' (TI The "Improvers" of Mankind 2). He attacks Christian morality because instead of improving man, in fact Christian or 'slave morality' weakens him, taming man to become a sickly beast. 'Under the same word', Nietzsche writes, 'both the *taming* of the beast, man, and the *breeding* of a particular kind of man have been called "improvement"' (TI The "Improvers" of Mankind 2). His major concern in his analysis of morality is 'what type of man shall be *bred*, shall be *willed*, for being higher in value, worthier of life, more certain of a future' (A 3). Such notions have never been willed by any moral systems, which simply seek universal moral laws or codes to confirm and to govern individuals in order to preserve communities.

Nietzsche's investigation of the genealogy of morality illustrates a new and different way to define morality. What is new and innovative in his investigation is

³ Alan D. Schrift (in Schacht 2001:54) points out that the metaphors of the child in 'On the Three Metamorphoses' and the shepherd in 'On the Vision and the Riddle' show two models of the *Übermensch*. One may accept Bernd Magnus's observation to distinguish 'between two basic styles of interpreting the *Übermensch* – as an ideal type or model of human perfection or as a representation of a particular attitude toward life.'

that morality is not a cause, an absolute law or truth, something supreme ‘given’ by a supernatural being to regulate or evaluate human conduct and human worth as most thinkers have believed for millennia. In Nietzsche’s reality the fixity of morality is a pose, when morality should actually be seen as a process, as progress (*BGE* 216), so that it is the effect of continuous improvement within an individual. By proclaiming the self-overcoming of morality, Nietzsche seeks to make us become aware of continuous self-improvement, rather than to look for the meaning of our existence on earth. While a moralist attempts to find certainty, a morally ordered world, something that can give an answer to the riddle of time and death, Nietzsche thinks that only one can provide such an answer oneself. ‘The riddle of existence is expressed in you: no one can solve it for you, only you alone. The human being flees from this task by surrendering himself to things. – If he ever reverses his manner of viewing things,’ Nietzsche says, ‘the only thing he hopes for is that all human beings will understand the lesson of life correctly’ (*U* 34 [32]). In this sense Nietzsche uses the dramatic slogan ‘God is dead’ to shake the very foundation of the current moral system, and introduces his ideal of the *Übermensch* as the counterpart of Christian or slave morality.

Morality seems to involve an ongoing individual learning process in order to attain self-actualization or to become what one is. ‘I too have learned to wait — thoroughly — but only to wait for *myself*,’ as Nietzsche’s mouthpiece Zarathustra says. ‘This, however, is my doctrine: he who would learn to fly one day must first learn to stand and walk and run and climb and dance: one cannot fly into flying’ (*Z* III On the Spirit of Gravity 2). The image of standing, walking, running, climbing, dancing and flying offers us a vivid sense that the fullest life is derived from a series of self-developing and self-creating actions. This involves a playful attitude and an interacting relationship between the self and the world through the senses, the continuous labour of the human soul to express its will to power in each and every action. Zarathustra teaches us as his ‘doctrine of life’ (*Z* II On the Tarantulas) the improvement or ‘growth’ of mankind as a whole. Nietzsche’s philosophy is best described by his term ‘immoralism,’ in contrast with conventional morality. Unlike many moralists, Nietzsche considers morality to involve a long and constant process, appearing as an experiment for each and every individual who would aim to live the fullest life.

Nietzsche points to the ‘moral narrowness’ of most previous and contemporary philosophers, stating that ‘the small single questions and experiments were counted contemptible: one wanted the shortest route,’ and that philosophers want ‘to settle all questions with a *single* answer. “There is a *riddle* to be solved”: thus did the goal of life appear to the eye of the philosopher; the first thing to do was to find the riddle and to compress the problem of the world into the simplest riddle-form’ (D 547). Unlike these philosophers, Nietzsche’s Zarathustra states that ‘an experiment was man’ (Z I On the Gift-giving Virtue 2). This suggests an experiment in which man, the experimenter, commits himself to an infinite process of self-overcoming. Nietzsche states that ‘all great things bring about their own destruction through an act of self-overcoming: thus the law of life will have it, the law of the necessity of “self-overcoming” in the nature of life — the lawgiver himself eventually receives the call: “*patere legem, quam ipse tulisti*”⁴ (GM III 27). The lawgiver must find his or her own way out of the riddle of life in terms of will to power to command and to obey the law he or she proposed, ‘for *the* way — that does not exist,’ (Z III On the Spirit of Gravity 2) Zarathustra claims.

Nietzsche prompts us to find our own way in this ongoing process of self-improvement and self-overcoming with a trial and error approach: ‘that is: many triers. Who can command, who must obey — *that is tried out there*. Alas, with what long trials and surmises and unpleasant surprises and learning and retrials!’ (Z III On Old and New Tablets 25) Zarathustra claims that ‘in a hundred ways, thus far, spirit as well as virtue has tried and erred’ (Z I On the Gift-giving Virtue 2). To try many ways is Nietzsche’s own personal experience, which has been recorded in *Zarathustra*. ‘By many ways, in many ways, I reached my truth: it was not on one ladder that I climbed to the height where my eye roams over my distance,’ says Zarathustra, ‘I preferred to question and try out the ways themselves’ (Z III On the Spirit of Gravity 2). Zarathustra says of his way that ‘a trying and questioning was my every move; and verily, one must also learn to answer such questioning’ (Z III On the Spirit of Gravity 2). By questioning and trying to answer and to solve one’s problems of life, one takes one’s own way according to one’s own will. Nietzsche depicts two oppositions of a ‘basic will of the spirit,’ stating that

⁴ Submit to the law you yourself proposed.

University of Pretoria etd – Ku, H L H (2003)

‘the spirit’ wants to be master in and around its own house and wants to feel that it is master; it has the will from multiplicity to simplicity, a will that ties up, tames, and is domineering and truly masterful. Its needs and capacities are so far the same as those which physiologists posit for everything that lives, grows, and multiplies. The spirit’s power to appropriate the foreign stands revealed in its inclination to assimilate the new to the old, to simplify the manifold, and to overlook or repulse whatever is totally contradictory — just as it involuntarily emphasizes certain features and lines in what is foreign, in every piece of the “external world,” retouching and falsifying the whole to suit itself. Its intent in all this is to incorporate new “experiences,” to file new things in old files — growth, in a word — or, more precisely, the *feeling* of growth, the feeling of increased power.

An apparently opposite drive serves this same will: a suddenly erupting decision in favor of ignorance, of deliberate exclusion, a shutting of one’s windows, an internal No to this or that thing, a refusal to let things approach, a kind of state of defense against much that is knowable, a satisfaction with the dark, with the limiting horizon, a Yea and Amen to ignorance (*BGE* 230).

Overcoming resistance or avoiding it appears to be the two ways in which human beings confront their chaotic internal and external world in terms of the will to power, so that different expressions of the soul emerge. William Blake reveals two opposite expressions of the human soul in his two poems — *The Divine Image* from *Songs of Innocence* and *A Divine Image* from *Songs of Experience*. The third stanza in *The Divine Image* reveals the divine qualities in man:

For Mercy has a human heart,
Pity, a human face:
And Love, the human form divine,
And Peace, the human dress. (Blake 1971:69)

However, the divine qualities of ‘mercy’ are replaced by ‘cruelty,’ ‘pity’ by ‘jealousy,’ ‘love’ by ‘terror’ and ‘peace’ by ‘secrecy’ in the first stanza in *A Divine Image* in *Songs of Experience*:

Cruelty has a human heart
And jealousy a human face —
Terror, the human form divine,
And secrecy, the human dress. (Blake 1971:143)

In these contrary images, the two opposing states of the human soul are apparent. These images signify the two possible personal developments, depending on whether the will is strong or weak in its reaction. The strong and the weak spirit, ‘both types

belong together and owe their origin to the same causes' (*BGE* 200). Nietzsche claims:

For fundamentally it is the same active force that is at work on a grander scale in those artists of violence and organizers who build states and that here, internally, on a smaller and pettier scale, directed backward, in the 'labyrinth of the breast,' ... creates for itself a bad conscience and builds negative ideals — namely, the *instinct for freedom* (in my language: the will to power); only here the material upon which the form-giving and ravishing nature of this force vents itself is man himself, his whole ancient animal self — and *not*, as in that greater and more obvious phenomenon, some *other* man, *other* men. This secret self-ravishment, this artists' cruelty, this delight in imposing a form upon oneself as a hard, recalcitrant, suffering material and in burning a will, a critique, a contradiction, a contempt, a No into it, this uncanny, dreadfully joyous labor of a soul voluntarily at odds with itself that makes itself suffer out of joy in making suffer — eventually this entire *active* 'bad conscience' — as the womb of all ideal and imaginative phenomena, also brought to light an abundance of strange new beauty and affirmation, and perhaps beauty itself. — After all, what would be 'beautiful' if the contradiction had not first become conscious of itself, if the ugly had not first said to itself: 'I am ugly'?

This hint will at least make less enigmatic the enigma of how contradictory concepts such as *selflessness*, *self-denial*, *self-sacrifice* can suggest an ideal, a kind of beauty; ... the nature of the *delight* that the selfless man, the self-denier, the self-sacrificer feels from the first: this delight is tied to cruelty.

So much for the present about the origin of the moral value of the 'unegoistic,' about the soil from which this value grew: only the bad conscience, only the will to self-maltreatment provided the conditions for the *value* of the unegoistic.— (*GM* II 18)

Although 'bad conscience' generates *ressentiment*, the active 'bad conscience' can serve the noble soul to be happy in overcoming suffering and obstacles. The bad conscience reminds one of ugliness and so encourages the search for beauty. It may be 'the womb of all ideal,' the origin of all beauty, growth and virtue, leading to overcoming of *ressentiment*. Nietzsche states that '*ressentiment* itself, if it should appear in the noble man, consummates and exhausts itself in an immediate reaction, and therefore does not *poison*' (*GM* I 10). Unlike men of *ressentiment*, the bad conscience can be exploited as an active and creative force for a noble or an artist who has self-knowledge, being conscious of his or her ugliness or weakness, and who is willing to be self-maltreated and to be engaged constantly in 'this uncanny, dreadfully joyous labor of a soul' in order to be beautiful and happy. This is what Nietzsche calls 'artist's cruelty,' which involves the process of self-overcoming. An individual with a

well-organized soul may develop power vital to affirm life and to embrace his destiny in a constant self-overcoming by means of waging inner war. The well-organized soul of the experimenter should be flexible and capable, on the one hand, going beyond it to work ‘on a grander scale,’ and mastering the chaotic ‘animal self’ to work ‘on a smaller and pettier scale’ on the other by means of ‘the instinct for freedom’ or the will to power. In Zarathustra’s language, one is able to climb the mountain or to descend to the depth. The experimenter seeks to actualise his ideal in terms of each and every action and deed to experience delight. Instead of preaching the selflessness of individuals in order to preserve society, as the moralists do, for Nietzsche, the selfishness of the parts is to be encouraged and exploited for the benefit of the whole. He asserts that ‘we watch over and care for to the *benefit of all*’ (D 552). Morality should not be considered a safeguard of life against all the dangers and odds in the physical world, or as a means to achieve a secure and certain outcome to life. Rather, if one recognizes that a world in which life is danger and struggle and one decides to do the best to overcome one’s animal self as well as resistance, to enjoy a continuous hard labour of the soul, then eventually one would attain a morality which is the effect of one’s actions in order to become what one is. This decision is totally egoistic, intended to suit one’s own will. Nietzsche insists that the perceived value of unegoistic behavior has grown only from a bad conscience. He criticizes the notion that morality derives from an unegoistic soul.

According to Nietzsche, the moral worth of an individual involves ‘*the natural value of egoism.*’ Nietzsche claims that ‘every individual may be scrutinized to see whether he represents the ascending or the descending line of life. Having made that decision, one has a canon for the worth of his self-interest’ (TI Skirmishes of an Untimely Man 33). To lead an ascending or a descending life determines the worth of an individual as a human being. If an individual ‘represents the ascending line, then his worth is indeed extraordinary — and for the sake of life as a whole, which takes a step farther through him, the care for his preservation and for the creation of the best conditions for him may even be extreme.’ Nietzsche continues that if an individual ‘represents the descending development, decay, chronic degeneration, and sickness (sicknesses are, in general, the consequences of decay, not its causes), then he has small worth’ (TI Skirmishes of an Untimely Man 33). An ascending or a descending life depends on the instinct for freedom, to will what kind of life one really desires to live. Nietzsche measures human worth by means of the wholeness of the human soul,

the depth and plasticity of the soul demonstrated by its ability to propagate and to discharge its chaotic forces or energy for leading an ascending life. If one decides to lead an ascending life, then one engages in the process of self-transforming and self-creating by performing actions that are really what one desires. This determines one's worth and strengthens a strong or noble soul, which does not limit itself to conform to moral codes for self-preservation. Above all, Nietzsche rejects any imaginary objective knowledge constituted by an unegoistic soul.

The experimenter seeks knowledge. He is a collector of knowledge from each and every deed, not a contemplator of objective knowledge that derives from 'contemplation without interest' (*GM III 12*). In this context, Nietzsche proposes that objectivity should be understood 'as the ability *to control* one's Pro and Con and to dispose of them, so that one knows how to employ a *variety* of perspectives and affective interpretations in the service of knowledge.' Nietzsche asserts that 'the *more* affects we allow to speak about one thing, the *more* eyes, different eyes, we can use to observe one thing, the more complete will our "concept" of this thing, our "objectivity," be' (*GM III 12*). The experimenter wills and learns to see differently in this way. William Shakespeare's *King Henry IV Part I* may offer an example of Nietzsche's point of view. 'Honour' is a human concept. It does not have intrinsic value, but is given value by people. Honour can have different interpretations depending on each person's own value judgement. Prince Hal is the true soul of honour. He is the master of his own soul, without being distorted by excessive attention to the interest of public admiration. He can overcome the vanity of human existence and preserve his sense of self. On the contrary, Hotspur's character is driven by honour, and even the king praises him as 'theme of honour's tongue.' (Shakespeare 1978:7). Honour for Hotspur is relative to public admiration. He is narrow-minded, and his interpretation of honour relates to the spheres of military honour and political power. He is eager to engage in a 'hot and bleeding' (Shakespeare 1978:125) fight to prove his honour, and disregards the value of human life. In this sense, he is bound by what could be seen as a man-made prison — honour. Prince Hal knows himself and his abilities. He is always in control of himself. As a result of Falstaff's influence, Hal does not live only in the sheltered court, but he also gets to know the common people. Under these flexible and various circumstances, Hal strengthens himself and shapes his character, so his ability is enlarged, enabling him to cope with a dynamic, complex and changing world. Eventually he demonstrates his brilliant kingship in history.

According to Nietzsche's insight, 'with the strength of his spiritual eye and insight grow distance and, as it were, the space around [the experimenter]: his world becomes more profound; ever new stars, ever new riddles and images become visible for him' (*BGE* 57). The invisible becomes visible through new, different and many *eyes*. In fact, no absolute truth could be found and nothing changes in reality: stars and riddles remain the same, but only one's view of life and the world becomes multiple and flexible, being deeper and profounder than before. This is the hallmark of Nietzsche's notion of perspectivism.

Favouring a plurality of perspectives, Nietzsche attacks Christian morality, because it allows only one perspective, 'teaching the *narrowing of our perspective*' (*BGE* 188). 'There is *only* a perspective seeing, *only* a perspective "knowing"' (*GM* III 12). In contrast to many philosophers who are only concerned with objective knowledge in the search for absolute truth, for Nietzsche, truth is something one creates rather than knows in a world of flux. Knowing is only a process of accommodating the human species to the world in which it lives and that world to him. Truths are simply man-made devices designed to serve human purposes. According to Arthur C. Danto (1965:72), Nietzsche advocates 'a pragmatic criterion of truth: *p* is true and *q* is false if *p* works and *q* does not.' For Nietzsche, a variety of truths exist in different contexts for different persons. 'A person's happiness is dependent upon the fact that somewhere there exists for him a truth which is *not debatable*: a crude example is the well-being of one's family considered as the highest motive for action,' as Nietzsche claims. 'If anything is said against [this perspective of truth] he will not listen at all' (*PB* 46). Nietzsche's notion of perspectivism advocates a plurality of values and perspectives in contrast to the notion of absolute truth.

The search for truth — a foundation, or a firm and permanent structure on which we could ground our knowledge — is considered as philosophy's task in the Western tradition. However, the claims of this persistent theme are taken 'as a sign of the "scandal" of philosophy', as R.J. Bernstein (1983:3) calls it. In contrast to those thinkers who manifest a will to truth, to certainty and to absolute knowledge, Nietzsche requires different characteristics of the new and genuine philosophers. They should have 'sufficient pride, daring, courage, self-confidence ... , sufficient will of the spirit, will to responsibility, *freedom of will*' (*GM* III 10). These are the distinct qualities of the philosophers of the future and the preconditions of the *Übermensch*. Nietzsche describes the dynamic traits of a genuine philosopher in this way:

Perhaps he himself must have been critic and skeptic and dogmatist and historian and also poet and collector and traveller and solver of riddles and moralist and seer and ‘free spirit’ and almost everything in order to pass through the whole range of human values and value feelings and to be *able* to see with many different eyes and consciences, from a height and into every distance, from the depths into every height, from a nook into every expanse. But all these are merely preconditions of his task: this task ... demands that he *create values*. ... *Genuine philosophers, however, are commanders and legislators: they say: “thus it shall be!”* ... With a creative hand they reach for the future, and all that is and has been becomes a means for them, an instrument, a hammer. Their ‘knowing’ is *creating*, their creating is a legislation, their will to truth is — *will to power*. (BGE 211)

Through active, dynamic and creative force the genuine philosophers can play a wide range of roles, as dogmatist, historian, poet, collector, solver, moralist, seer and free spirit and so command and obey their own laws. In this way they are ‘commanders and legislators’ creating values and their own truths in this infinite process. They may play different roles in the riddle of acquiring knowledge of life and the world. In ‘the riddle of self-conquest’ (BGE 51), Nietzsche emphasizes that ‘every attainment, every step forward in knowledge, *follows* from courage, from hardness against oneself, from cleanliness in relation to oneself’ (EHP 3). To become what one is one has to will and to create the steps to climb to the top of the mountain, in Zarathustra’s language. One has to see from inside and to gain knowledge of one’s inner reality rather than be distracted by the external environment.

In *Beyond Good and Evil*, Nietzsche uses the two words ‘exoteric’ and ‘esoteric’ to sum up two different approaches to life and to acquiring knowledge. He states that ‘the exoteric approach comes from outside and sees, estimates, measures, and judges from the outside, not the inside’ and ‘the exoteric approach sees things from below, the esoteric looks *down from above*’ (BGE 30). In every deed or action, by self-mastering his or her drives and instincts in daily practices, the experimenter acquires new experiences and incorporates them to increase knowledge, and to attain growth and increased power. ‘With knowledge, the body purifies itself; making experiments with knowledge, it elevates itself; in the lover of knowledge all instincts become holy; in the elevated, the soul becomes gay’ (ZI On the Gift-giving Virtue 2). Nietzsche considers our body as ‘a social structure composed of many souls’ (BGE 19). ‘The body,’ Nietzsche asserts, ‘will have to be an incarnate will to power, it will strive to grow, spread, seize, become predominant — not from any morality or

immorality but because it is *living* and because life simply *is* will to power' (*BGE* 259). The human soul is a multiple structure in which dynamic forces strive to grow or to increase in power, while a weak spirit tends to ignore this inner reality in order to have peace within the soul. Leslie Paul Thiele (1990:54) asserts that 'the multiple soul is a conglomerate of passions, desires, affects, forces, feelings, emotions, drives and instincts.' This summarizes the multiple dimensions of a spirit which has to seek a true self-mastery in terms of the will to power. The achievement of self-mastery and self-creating depends on how one directs one's will to reconcile contradictions and to integrate new experiences from the external world into the internal world on a daily basis within one's soul. This process involves a 'return to nature,' Nietzsche says, 'up into the high, free, even terrible nature and naturalness where great tasks are something one plays with, one *may* play with' (*TI* Skirmishes of an Untimely Man 48). This process is what Nietzsche calls 'the self-overcoming of morality.'

Nietzsche advocates a natural and healthy morality. He claims that 'every naturalism in morality — that is, every healthy morality — is dominated by an instinct of life; some commandment of life is fulfilled by a determinate canon of "shalt" and "shalt not"; some inhibition and hostile element on the path of life is thus removed' (*TI* Morality as Anti-Nature 4). Natural morality implies that under intensive tension within oneself one is able to master one's instincts in order to gain in power and to become strong according to one's free will. One needs to have the will to take responsibility for oneself in order to improve, or to be moral. This is what Nietzsche defines as 'freedom of the will':

that is the expression for the complex state of delight of the person exercising volition, who commands and at the same identifies himself with the executor of the order — who, as such, enjoys also the triumph over obstacles, but thinks within himself that it was really his will itself that overcame them. In this way the person exercising volition adds the feelings of delight of his successful executive instruments, the useful 'under-wills' or under-souls ... to his feelings of delight as commander. (*BGE* 19)

In self-creating and self-overcoming, the strong soul is able to attain the feeling of delight by overcoming obstacles and reconciling itself to a changing, imperfect world. For Nietzsche, the will is a 'manifold thing' (*BGE* 19), commanding and obeying within our chaotic and dynamic inner reality. Nietzsche describes an act of willing as, firstly, 'a plurality of sensations' (*BGE* 19), such as 'the sensations of constraint,

impulsion, pressure, resistance and motion' (*BGE* 19); secondly, 'in every act of the will there is a ruling thought' (*BGE* 19); thirdly, the will 'is above all an *affect*, and specifically the affect of the command' (*BGE* 19). 'A man who *wills* commands something within himself that renders obedience, or that he believes renders obedience' (*BGE* 19). For Nietzsche, a moral act is a result, an effect, of such commanding and obeying between chaotic instincts and drives: 'The price of fruitfulness is to be rich in internal opposition' (*TI* *Morality as Anti-Nature* 3). This implies that the inner struggle provides an opportunity for the experimenter to increase his or her strength through an infinite process. The lawgiver or experimenter is capable of mastering his chaotic instincts and drives in order to lead the fullest life. As a result, his ability of mastering himself simultaneously 'gives him mastery over circumstances, over nature,' and elevates him above 'all more short-willed and unreliable creatures' (*GM* II 2). The noble or strong spirit lives out of his nature, sees his worthiest goal and hopes and strives to actualise them. It is in this sense that Nietzsche defines morality:

Morality — the idiosyncrasy of decadents, with the ulterior motive of revenging oneself against life — successfully. (*EH* *Destiny* 7)

According to Nietzsche, one's volition plays an important role in the direction of the will. A strong volition opens possibilities to augment or to satisfy the demand for growth, for more power, while a weak volition directs decay. So Nietzsche attacks morality, Christian morality, to be more precise, because it is an expression of the latter. He interprets decadence as 'any distinction between a "true" and an "apparent" world,' because this Platonic two-world view is 'a symptom of the *decline of life*' (*TI* "Reason" in Philosophy 6) due to escaping from physical reality and diminishing the importance of the senses. A sign of the decadent instincts of a soul is the need to invent imaginary worlds, an afterlife or a transcendental world fabricated by Christian-moral interpretation, to 'redeem' this natural world by denying our instincts and passions. Thus Nietzsche brings forth his 'campaign against morality,' because he considers morality so far as an '*anti-natural* morality — that is, almost every morality which has so far been taught, revered, and preached — turns, conversely, *against* the instincts of life: it is *condemnation* of these instincts' (*TI* *Morality as Anti-Nature* 4). Christian morality denies instincts and passion, and Nietzsche asserts that 'an attack on the roots of passion means an attack on the roots of life: the practice of the church

is *hostile to life*' (*TI Morality as Anti-Nature 1*). Nietzsche criticizes the belief, perpetuated by Christianity, in what he terms '*soul atomism*,' the notion of 'the soul as something indestructible, eternal, indivisible, as a monad, as an *atomon*' (*BGE 12*). Zarathustra claims that the human soul is never eternal, but, 'having being, dives into becoming; the soul which *has*, but *wants* to want and will' (*Z III On Old and New Tablets 19*). He argues that the weakness of the will — 'the inability *not* to respond to a stimulus — is itself merely another form of degeneration' (*TI Morality as Anti-Nature 2*). Decadence is a symptom or effect of the weakness of the will and of the decay of instincts.

The effect should not be misinterpreted as the cause, however. A disorganized soul manifests weakness, vice and decadence, while a well-organized soul displays strength, virtue and growth. The manifestation, such as strength or weakness, growth or decadence, is the effect of a well-organized or a disorganized soul. The greater the strength displayed, the greater victory of mastering one's elements of decadence. Decadence and growth are indivisible, as the latter represents the evolution and overcoming of the former. For Nietzsche, the need for fixed values is a symptom of weakness and decay, because in a world of will to power that presents a constant state of becoming there exists no fixed point, no stability, but flooding and ebbing, growing and decaying, ascending and declining. The manifestation of strength or weakness, virtue or vice is the determinant of growth, and whether one is leading an ascending life or a declining life. To lead an ascending life one has to overcome decadence through strength. In this context Nietzsche concedes that master morality and slave morality at times 'occur directly alongside each other — even in the same human being, within a *single* soul' (*BGE 260*), because the evolution or transformation of life, growth or decadence, beauty or ugliness, is simply the manifestation or expression of the will to power, depending on one's own volition to direct one's own dynamic and chaotic forces toward certain goals. In his writings, Nietzsche seeks to make his idea of the *Übermensch* become a conscious goal for mankind. He attempts to remind us that man has the possibility to free himself and to resolve the riddle of life, by taking responsibility for his actions and his life, and by breaking his self-imposed mind-manacles — to become what he is, in creating and overcoming himself.

Nietzsche asserts that in a natural state ‘we, ... *want to become those we are* — human beings who are new, unique, incomparable, who give themselves laws, who create themselves’ (*GS* 335). These great human beings, ‘in pursuit of the great and the impossible’ (*UDH* 9), would want to be responsible for themselves, to make maximal use of life in terms of the will to power in a transient human existence. They would not limit their horizon by imaginary causes and live hypothetically in order to flee from reality. Nietzsche indicates that ‘it is *courage* in the face of reality that distinguishes a man like Thucydides from Plato: Plato is a coward before reality, consequently he flees into the ideal; Thucydides has control of *himself*, consequently he also maintains control of things’ (*TI* What I Owe to the Ancients 2). Nietzsche champions ‘the courage for the *forbidden*; the predestination to the labyrinth’ (*A* P), stating ‘the will to knowledge on the foundation of a far more powerful will: the will to ignorance, to the uncertain, to the untrue ... as its refinement!’ (*BGE* 24) An individual who is capable of wandering from a great height to a great depth is indifferent to the claims of true or untrue, certain or uncertain, even moral or immoral, because these concepts are simply the abstract constituents of a complex system — the whole. ‘In short, as the proverb of Zarathustra says: “What does it matter?”’ (*Z* IV The Drunken Song 1) Nietzsche calls himself the first immoralist who sets a proper example of such courage. Courage is one of the virtues that may help great human beings to find their own unique way out of the human existential labyrinth and to envisage a profounder world. Nietzsche defines a person of courage in this way: ‘What? A great man? I always see only the actor of his own ideal’ (*BGE* 97). The philosopher of the future is the one who is courageous enough to overcome his inner chaos in order to make things happen, or to actualise his own ideals.

Zarathustra states that ‘one must still have chaos in oneself to be able to give birth to a dancing star’ (*Z* Prologue 5). Chaos and obstacles seem to be preconditions for the birth of the *Übermensch*. Human beings have multiple chaotic drives and value standards that constantly fight each other in their bodies. Many desire that the war within themselves should come to an end: ‘Happiness appears to them’ Nietzsche explains, ‘as the happiness of resting, of not being disturbed, of satiety, of finally attained unity, as a “Sabbath of Sabbaths”’ (*BGE* 200). However, only a few are capable of the self-control and self-outwitting to be able to master ‘powerful and irreconcilable drives, a real mastery and subtlety in waging war against oneself’ (*BGE* 200). By overcoming resistance, they achieve happiness, for Nietzsche defines

happiness as ‘the feeling that power is *growing*, that resistance is overcome’ (A 2). This superhuman type ‘conceives reality *as it is*, being strong enough to do so; this type is not estranged or removed from reality but is reality itself and exemplifies all that is terrible and questionable in it — *only in that way can man attain greatness*’ (EH Destiny 5).

The distinct quality of greatness in an individual is the volition and ability to overcome decadence, to transform sickness into health and to grow stronger after sickness. Nietzsche attains such knowledge ‘*out of life’s school of war*: What does not destroy me, makes me stronger’ (TI Maxims and Arrows 8). This warlike practice uplifts the noble from the weak to become what he is. Nietzsche’s Zarathustra employs the metaphor of the pine tree to describe this characteristic of the *Übermensch*. Zarathustra compares himself to the pine: ‘long, silent, hard, alone, of the best and most resilient wood, magnificent — and in the end reaching out with strong green branches for his *own* dominion, questioning wind and weather and whatever else is at home on the heights with forceful questions, and answering yet more forcefully, a commander, triumphant: oh, who would not climb high mountains to see such plants?’ (Z IV The Welcome). Perhaps the bizarre pines of Huangshan, a famous mountain in Anhui Province in China, can illustrate Nietzsche’s point of view. Owing to the special geographical conditions of rocks and peaks, rainy weather and moist air, strong wind and relatively low temperature, the pines have grown into countless queer shapes. The flourishing pines of Huangshan represent a hard and courageous spirit, growing remarkably and uniquely in an unfavourable environment and thus triumph over obstacles, like the *Übermensch* who climbs to the top of the mountain, arriving at such a height to understand and to will such a growth within himself.

Nietzsche claims that ‘there are heights of the soul from which even tragedy ceases to look tragic’ (BGE 30). When one is able to reach such a height, one is able to see the unity and harmony of the whole. At this level the manifestation of a healthy morality is a total affirmation of life as a whole, its potential become substantial and totally fulfilled, as when one sees our planet from space only as a great ball hanging in the darkness, and takes no notice of its details or its parts, the people, the building or the roads. For Nietzsche, this should be a task for the philosophers of the future.

Nietzsche sees himself as an educator (EH U 3). He educates us by telling his own experiences. ‘I am,’ he says, ‘at the same time a *decadent* and a *beginning*’ (EH

Wise 1). He admits himself to be a decadent, but also ‘the *opposite* of a decadent’ (EH Wise 2), because he stands in opposition to truth. For Nietzsche, truth is a lie, ‘the mendaciousness of millennia’ (EH Destiny 1). He himself is a beginning, because he is ‘the first to *discover* the truth by being the first to experience lies as lies’ (EH Destiny 1). Because of recognizing truth as lies, Nietzsche considers himself as the first genuine philosopher who is capable of self-transforming and self-creating, from a decadent to the opposite of a decadent, because he commits himself to become what he is. The subtitle of his book *Ecce Homo, How One Becomes What One Is*, sealed this destiny. Nietzsche identifies a decadent as the one who ‘chooses means that are disadvantageous for him’ (EH Wise 2) and ‘who has a sense of necessity in his corrupted taste, who claims it as a higher taste, who knows how to get his corruption accepted as law, as progress, as fulfillment’ (CW 5). Nietzsche’s point is that the *Übermensch* is capable of self-transforming from a corrupted and unfavourable state, through wide observation, in order to choose his own way, to become what he is. In *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche writes that he has always instinctively chosen the *right* means against corrupted states; he has excessive energy and is strong enough to bear absolute solitude and to take himself in hand; he eventually makes himself healthy again; he grows out of his sickness. He insists that the condition to arrive at such a remarkable recovery is that one has to be healthy at heart. The *Übermensch* ‘exploits bad accidents to his advantage; what does not kill him makes him stronger. Instinctively, he collects from everything he sees, hears, lives through, *his* sum: he is a principle of selection, he discards much’ (EH Wise 2). He is blessed with the advantages of having a plurality of perspectives and of tremendous experiences and knowledge to enrich and to enjoy life in a world of flux.

Having realized the nature of reality, Nietzsche is capable of ‘looking from the perspective of the sick toward *healthier* concepts and values and, conversely, looking again from the fullness and self-assurance of *rich* life down into the secret work of the instinct of decadence’ (EH Wise 1). As a result of this experiment, he knows how, and has the know-how, to *reverse perspectives* and is capable of making a ‘revaluation of values’ alone. (EH Wise 1) ‘How much truth does a spirit *endure*, how much truth does it *dare*?’ Nietzsche asks. ‘More and more that became for me the real measure of value’ (EH P 3). Alexander Nehamas (1985:232) makes the following remark about Nietzsche’s own attitude towards his life: ‘despite the misery, the poverty, the sickness, the ridicule, and the lack of recognition that have accompanied him

throughout, he can ask, “How could I fail to be grateful to my whole life?” (*EH* Epigraph) In fact, Nietzsche’s measure of values, as is clear from his life that many may believe to have been miserable, is quite different from that of many of us. He is proud to recount his life to himself in *Ecce Homo*, because he is grateful to his whole life. Throughout his life Nietzsche fights against conventional morality by criticizing it in his writings, and he says shocking things, like God is dead, to shock people to independent thinking.

Nietzsche inscribes the findings of his journey of experiment: ‘O *sancta simplicitas!*⁵ In what strange simplification and falsification man lives! One can never cease wondering once one has acquired eyes for this marvel! How we have made everything around us clear and free and easy and simple!’ (*BGE* 24) This appears to be Nietzsche’s end product in the process of self-overcoming of morality. ‘If one has once drifted there with one’s bark,’ Nietzsche says, ‘we sail right *over* morality, we crush, we destroy perhaps the remains of our own morality by daring to make our voyage there — but what matter are *we!* Never yet did a *profounder* world of insight reveal itself to daring travellers and adventurers’ (*BGE* 23). This profounder world comes into being through the adventures of the *Übermensch*, as Nietzsche claims that the free spirit is granted ‘the dangerous privilege of living *experimentally* and of being allowed to offer itself to adventure’ (*HAH* P 4).

Who is Nietzsche’s *Übermensch*?

Nietzsche’s ideal of the *Übermensch* appears mainly in the Prologue of his masterpiece *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, while it hardly appears in his other writings. He claims that with his book he has given mankind ‘the greatest present that has ever been made to it so far’ (*EH* P 4). ‘This book,’ he explains, ‘is not only the highest book there is, the book that is truly characterized by the air of the heights — the whole fact of man lies *beneath* it at a tremendous distance — it is also the *deepest*, born out of the innermost wealth of truth, an inexhaustible well to which no pail descends without coming up again filled with gold and goodness,’ and ‘from an infinite abundance of light and depth of happiness falls drop upon drop, word upon word’ (*EH*

⁵ Holy simplicity.

P 4). Nietzsche pays the highest tribute to this book, yet it seems that very few readers can really understand the *Übermensch*. When Zarathustra speaks to the people in the market place, he admits that he is ‘not the mouth for these ears’ (Z Prologue 5). This insight is implied in the subtitle of his *Zarathustra: A book for all and none*.

Paul J. M. van Tongeren (2000:11) interprets this subtitle as signifying that Zarathustra addresses his speeches to all; however, ‘all may try, none will succeed.’ Apart from this interpretation, the subtitle of *Zarathustra* suggests that Nietzsche’s greatest present to all is only a therapy of life, that none should follow Zarathustra’s way, because everyone should invent his own therapy. As Zarathustra asks: ‘This is *my* way; where is yours?’ (Z III On the Spirit of Gravity 2) Many readers may ask, but never receive a definite answer: who is the *Übermensch*? What is the *Übermensch*? Is it possible to become the *Übermensch*? An inaccessible goal or human destiny? If the latter, then how could one become the *Übermensch*? Nietzsche gives advice to his readers on how to read the ‘greatest present’: ‘Above all, one must *hear* aright the tone that comes from [Zarathustra’s] mouth, the halcyon tone, lest one should do wretched injustice to the meaning of its wisdom’ and ‘I bid you lose me and find yourselves; and only *when you have all denied me* will I return to you.’ (EH P 4). Nietzsche seems to speak in enigmas in order to play a joke on his reader and at the same time to elaborate a dangerous or wonderful game to invite his reader to exercise his mind and to embark on adventure.⁶

Nietzsche defines the word *Übermensch* ‘as the designation of a type of supreme achievement’ (EH Books 1). The *Übermensch* stands for ‘an “idealistic” type of a higher kind of man, half ‘saint,’ half ‘genius’ (EH Books 1). The *Übermensch* is a vision or a hope for mankind to become. Nietzsche attempts to sow this seed, his vision of the future of the human species, to become a conscious *will* or *goal* in the human mind. In the future, ultimately, man will be able to attain the sweetest and ‘ripest fruit,’ (GM II 2) — the supreme achievement of mankind that has hardly existed hitherto. At the end of the process of self-overcoming his morality is his own self-creation. Zarathustra who teaches the *Übermensch* says:

⁶ A book on Nietzsche by Daniel W. Conway is entitled *Nietzsche’s dangerous game*. The metaphor of a child at play in the section titled ‘On the Three Metamorphoses’ in *Zarathustra*, seems to be suggestive of process as a wonderful game.

University of Pretoria etd – Ku, H L H (2003)

Man is a rope, tied between beast and overman — a rope over an abyss. A dangerous across, a dangerous on-the-way, a dangerous looking-back, a dangerous shuddering and stopping.

What is great in man is that he is a bridge and not an end: what can be loved in man is that he is an *overture* and a *going under* (Z Prologue 4)

‘Man is a rope,’ which involves movement or a process. The image of the rope signifies an ongoing process in the finite, dangerous and unpredictable journey of life. In this process of self-transforming and self-creating, from the splendid animal to the *Übermensch*, man is an overture and a going-under. Nietzsche considers that it is a harsh punishment for man ‘to live as animal, beset by hunger and desire yet incapable of any kind of reflection on the nature of this life’ (SE 5). He describes the animal state in this way: ‘to hang on to life madly and blindly, with no higher aim than to hang on to it; not to know that or why one is being so heavily punished but, with the stupidity of a fearful desire, to thirst after precisely this punishment as though after happiness’ (SE 5). In this way, men, even some who are conscious of desiring life, exist within an animal horizon for Nietzsche. ‘As long as anyone desires life as he desires happiness he has not yet raised his eyes above the horizon of the animal, for he only desires more consciously what the animal seeks through blind impulse. But that is what we all do for the greater part of our lives.’ Nietzsche claims, ‘usually we fail to emerge out of animality, we ourselves are the animals whose suffering seems to be senseless’ (SE 5). Nietzsche prompts us to go beyond ourselves, to rise above the animal horizon to the highest state of existence, that is, the *Übermensch*.

Man should exist within the process of self-overcoming in order to become what he is, Nietzsche’s ideal of the *Übermensch*. Man is never a static being, but rather on the way of becoming-*Übermensch*. Schrift (1995:74) refers to ‘becoming-*Übermensch*’ as an infinite process of becoming, stating that ‘one is always on the way, and the emphasis is always on the process of going rather than the destination reached.’ Nietzsche believes that because man is ‘not a goal but only a way, an episode, a bridge, a great promise’ (GM II 16), he always exists in a state of becoming. The bridge metaphor demonstrates a sense of creating, becoming and self-overcoming. Zarathustra proclaims that ‘man is something that shall be overcome’ (Z Prologue 3). Man, as a transcending being, is a bridge to overcome himself; man, as an evolving organic being, is never an end product or a goal of nature or of God, because his life ‘is indeed still fully in course of *becoming*, and should thus not be regarded as a fixed object on the basis of which a conclusion as to the nature of its

originator (the sufficient reason) may either be drawn or pronounced undrawable' (HAH I 16). In short, man always exists in a state of becoming in between beast and *Übermensch*, and is never an end, as he is evolving all the time. Nietzsche states that 'that is no goal, that seems to us an *end*' (BGE 225). From the beast to the *Übermensch*, this process involves a personal commitment and effort, an indefinite labour of the soul to overcome, to organize and to give form to one's inner chaotic drives and instincts in order to reach the state of wholeness and greatness of the soul in human finitude. Zarathustra's personal experience illustrates this ongoing process: 'I pursued the living; I walked the widest and the narrowest paths that I might know its nature. With a hundredfold mirror I still caught its glance when its mouth was closed, so that its eyes might speak to me' (Z II On Self-overcoming), and 'in the end, one experiences only oneself' (Z III The Wanderer). The strong and free spirit seeks to broaden the perspective or horizon to look at things, and thus attains a holistic picture of the self and of life, and at the same time the spirit is evolving towards becoming what it is.

In *Three Metamorphoses of the Spirit*, Zarathustra describes an evolving spirit. The spirit changes from camel, the load-bearing spirit who says, 'Thou shalt,' to the lion, the destroyer of old values who says, 'I will' and finally to the child who is 'innocence and forgetting, a new beginning, a game, a self-propelled wheel, a first movement, a sacred "Yes"' (Z I Three Metamorphoses of the Spirit). These metamorphoses suggest the different stages in the evolution of humanity. The end product of this process is the child at play, representing the spirit who conquers and becomes like a child who only carries out his own will, who says 'Yes' to life, and thus creates his world. The metaphor of a child at play emphasizes that the process as 'a game', and not any result in particular, is important. The process of self-transformation into a child at play is the ultimate goal of Zarathustra's teachings. Zarathustra claims that 'these children, this living plantation, these life-trees of my will and my highest hope' (Z IV The Welcome), are all organic beings, not machines and therefore in a state of becoming. Zarathustra's vision is organic, one of becoming and growing; for Nietzsche, this is the essence of life and the world, illustrated in his doctrine of the will to power.

Nietzsche writes that 'the existence on earth of an animal soul turned against itself, taking sides against itself, was something so new, profound, unheard of, enigmatic, contradictory, and *pregnant with a future* that the aspect of the earth was

essentially altered' (*GM II 16*). He offers his readers a picture of this strange pregnancy in 'Ideal selfishness' in *Daybreak*.

'What is growing here is something greater than we are' is our most secret hope: we prepare everything for it so that it may come happily into the world: not only everything that may prove useful to it but also the joyfulness and laurel-wreaths of our soul. – It is in this *state of consecration* that one should live! It is a state one can live in! And if what is expected is an idea, a deed – towards every bringing forth we have essentially no other relationship than that of pregnancy and ought to blow to the winds all presumptuous talk of 'willing' and 'creating'. This is *ideal selfishness*: continually to watch over and care for and to keep our soul still, so that our fruitfulness shall *come to a happy fulfilment!* Thus, as intermediaries, we watch over and care for to the *benefit of all*; and the mood in which we live, this mood of pride and gentleness, is a balm which spreads far around us and on to restless souls too. – But the pregnant are *strange!* (*D 552*)

Nietzsche considers men to be 'intermediaries', so in this sense man is subject to change by 'willing' and 'creating.' The product or fruitfulness of the infinite process of self-overcoming and self-creating is a happy fulfilment of the human soul, which always remains in a 'state of consecration.' Man should strive for this destiny and for serving this goal by all means. This requires an ideal selfishness, but not to produce a moral monster. While the latter would derive from a narrow perspective of self-preservation, the former looks down from a height, a viewpoint of the highest evolution of an individual. Ultimately, for Nietzsche, this individual achievement would benefit mankind as a whole. The caring and gentle mood of such beings inspires greatness in others, so the human species would evolve to become a great promise.

Abraham Maslow's theory — a hierarchy of needs — postulates that a higher need is experienced only when a preceding lower need has been satisfied.⁷ Physiological needs, such as food and shelter, are at the bottom of the hierarchy. When the physiological needs, the need for security, the need for love and the need for esteem are sufficiently satisfied, an individual will pursue the growth needs, i.e. the need for self-actualization. 'Maslow states that this need amounts to *a desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything one is capable of becoming.* This need, and the behaviour it gives rise to, enable the person to "grow" — hence the term *growth needs*' (Jordaan & Jordaan 1989:655). Nietzsche prompts us

⁷ See Appendix 1.

to make it our priority to respond to and to satisfy the highest need for growth rather than the lower need for survival. If one who is concerned with growth needs engages in an infinite process of self-overcoming and self-creating, then one would eventually make a difference in a transient existence. Nietzsche always employs a sun image to emphasize human potential, as Nature, which is rich and prodigal beyond human understanding, symbolizes his viewpoint.

Nietzsche regards man as part of the natural world, which is an organic and complex system. He states that 'nature *proceeds the same way* in all realms: a law that holds for human beings holds for all of nature. The human being [is] truly a microcosm.' The human brain, according to Nietzsche, is 'nature's supreme accomplishment' (*U* 21 [18]). The sun image is a symbol of light, goodness and nobility of soul as well as a source of energy symbolizing the richness and prodigality of life and the world. Nietzsche insists that 'the world is deep, *deeper than day had been aware*' (*Z* IV The Drunken Song 6). The richness of the world is beyond human imagination. After unveiling the real nature of the world, man is astonished by the prodigality of Nature. Nietzsche states that 'man is acquainted with the world to the extent that he is acquainted with himself; i.e. its depth is revealed to him to the extent that he is astonished by himself and his own complexity' (*P* 80). Nature, in an indifferent and incommensurable manner, deals with richness, profusion and prodigality, while man, within a limited horizon, is concerned only with need, starvation and survival. 'Behold what fullness there is about us! And out of such overflow it is beautiful to look out upon distant seas' (*Z* II Upon the Blessed Isles). By employing the sun and sea image to symbolize the richness and dynamic energy of nature, Nietzsche asks for a paradigm shift to broaden a limited horizon and to strive for fullness of growth as Nature does. In this way man opens up the possibility to enhance life and to reach a noble mode of existence which is above the animal and the rabble.

Zarathustra points out that 'a *new nobility* is needed to be the adversary of all rabble and of all that is despotic and to write anew upon new tablets the word "noble"' (*Z* III On Old and New Tablets 11). The noble is different from the rabble or the slave, because the former perceives life in a dynamic fashion and carries out his own law, while the latter sees it only from a lacking perspective and thus subjugates himself to morals and customs, to society. For Nietzsche, life is not a struggle for existence, the Will to life as Schopenhauer propagates (*TI* Skirmishes of an Untimely

Man 21), but rather a struggle for power, that is, for growth. Zarathustra employs the metaphors of kitchen coal and diamonds to distinguish between these two types of existence (*TI The Hammer Speaks*). While the former is soft, the hardness of the latter endures all cutting in being ‘created’. The most difficult thing for the rabble is to look beyond self-preservation to the supreme human achievement. ‘One must learn to *look away* from oneself in order to see *much*: this hardness is necessary to every climber of mountains’ (*Z III The Wanderer*). The noble is able to bear this hardship in self-creating. Zarathustra claims that ‘only the noblest is altogether hard’ (*Z III On Old and New Tablets 29*). Above all, man has to learn to stretch his horizon, from height to depth, in order to attain the fullness and richness of life in his transient existence, rather than simply focusing on self-preservation.

The image of the sun does not only signify human potential that is beyond the knowledge of those whose perspective is a limited horizon, but also a symbol of the generosity of Nature. Zarathustra calls himself ‘a giver of gifts’ (*Z II On the Pitying*); he gives his wisdom to man by teaching the *Übermensch*, and he hopes that his message can reach all, ‘like a bee that has gathered too much honey; I need hands outstretched to receive it’ (*Z Prologue 1*). Nietzsche speaks of ‘the manner of noble souls: they do not want to have anything for nothing; least of all, life. Whoever is of the mob wants to live for nothing; we others, however, to whom life gave itself, we always think about what we might best give in return’ (*Z III On Old and New Tablets 5*). The noble has a *giving* framework in mind, while the mob only perceives from a *taking* frame of reference. ‘One shall not wish to enjoy where one does not give joy’ (*Z III On Old and New Tablets 5*), says Zarathustra. In giving, the noble attains life-enjoyment. ‘Goldlike gleam the eyes of the giver,’ Zarathustra says, ‘a gift-giving virtue is the highest virtue’ (*Z I On the Gift-giving Virtue 1*). Zarathustra claims that his disciples ‘strive, as I do, for the gift-giving virtue’ (*Z I On the Gift-giving Virtue 1*). Nature provides the world and all beings with the unconditional love that man usually takes for granted. ‘All solar love is innocence and creative longing,’ Nietzsche says of Nature. The sun

approaches impatiently over the sea. Do you not feel the thirst and the hot breath of her love? She would suck at the sea and drink its depth into her heights; and the sea’s desire rises toward her with a thousand breasts. It wants to be kissed and sucked by the thirst of the sun; it wants to become air and height and a footpath of light, and itself light.

Verily, like the sun I love life and all deep seas. And this is what perceptive knowledge means to me: all that is deep shall rise up to my heights. (*Z II On Immaculate Perception*)

In this passage, the sea image reveals the dynamic and vital quality of life and the world. The sun image manifests the incommensurable love of the *Übermensch* that would make a valuable contribution to mankind and to the world as a whole. Nietzsche employs various images of the world and Nature, such as sun, sea, mountain, fruit and tree, to illustrate that we cannot deny our instincts and passions in a sensuous relationship with the natural world. On the contrary, he encourages us to learn and to act as Nature does in order to become what we are. He notes ‘how accommodating, how friendly all the world is toward us as soon as we act as all the world does and “let ourselves go” like all the world!’ (*GM II 24*) For this reason Zarathustra claims that the *Übermensch* is the destroyer of morality, because conventional morality appears to be the major constraints toward preventing such an achievement. Man calls certain passions evil and represses them, but Zarathustra states that virtues can grow out of man’s passions, asserting that ‘you commended your highest goal to the heart of these passions; then they become your virtues and passions you enjoyed’ (*Z I On Enjoying and Suffering the Passions*). According to Nietzsche, to strive for the highest goal, one has to cultivate the gift-giving nature in the human soul, seen as a quality of the sun, and enrich oneself in giving. Zarathustra claims that ‘insatiably your soul strives for treasures and gems, because your virtue is insatiable in wanting to give. You force all things to and into yourself that they may flow back out of your well as the gifts of your love. Verily, such a gift-giving love must approach all values as a robber; but whole and holy I call this selfishness’ (*Z I On the Gift-giving Virtue 1*). This notion of selfishness is much different from our conventional perception of selfishness. Zarathustra does well to point out that ‘there is also another selfishness, an all-too-poor and hungry one that always wants to steal — the selfishness of the sick: sick selfishness’ (*Z I On the Gift-giving Virtue 1*). Unlike the rabble, life for the noble is the feeling of the abundance of power, the joy in adventure and high tension. The noble helps those who are unfortunate and inferior, but this is prompted by his super-abundant power. In this sense the *Übermensch* should be understood as the one who has incommensurable love toward others and life, as the sun image symbolizes, and who thus goes beyond man as the measure and the measurer of things.

The indifferent nature of the sun toward human concerns is suggested in the title of Nietzsche’s book *Beyond good and evil*. ‘What is good and evil *no one knows yet*,’ says Zarathustra, ‘unless it be he who creates. He, however, creates man’s goal

and gives the earth its meaning and its future. That anything at all is good and evil — that is his creation’ (Z III On Old and New Tablets 2). This state of fullness and richness is beyond the understanding of most people. In their eyes, the *Übermensch* may even appear a fool, but Zarathustra claims that ‘a sage too is a fool’ (Z IV The Drunken Song 10), because ‘whoever has too much spirit might well grow foolishly fond of stupidity and folly itself’ (Z IV The Ass Festival 1). Nietzsche envisions a child-like innocence and playfulness as prerequisites of the *Übermensch*.

The task of the *Übermensch* is a very difficult and dangerous one, symbolized by ‘crooked paths’ (Z II On Self-overcoming) in *Zarathustra*. He has to take risks and responsibility in becoming ‘the judge, the avenger, and the victim of [his] own law’ (Z II On Self-overcoming). One of the preconditions for the *Übermensch* that Nietzsche requires is that the creative spirit needs great health:

The attainment of this goal would require a *different* kind of spirit from that likely to appear in this present age: spirits strengthened by war and victory, for whom conquest, adventure, danger, and even pain have become needs; it would require habituation to the keen air of the heights, to winter journeys, to ice and mountains in every sense; it would require even a kind of sublime wickedness, an ultimate, supremely self-confident mischievousness in knowledge that goes with great health; it would require, in brief and alas, precisely this *great health!* (GM II 24)

Great health is needed for the confrontation of self-conflicts and constraints, a fact which has been totally ignored by conventional moral systems. By overcoming constraints, one can learn from experiences, including bad ones, acquiring knowledge of internal and external reality in order to grow constantly. Such a total affirmation of life is derived from the process of self-transforming, self-creating and self-overcoming. This is Nietzsche’s vision and hope for the future of mankind. In fact, Nietzsche is not concerned about standards and values, which seem irrelevant to him. He only regards the whole: ‘what kind of knowledge of the world and life is it through which man can live happiest?’ (HAH I 7)

This analysis of morality and the idea of the *Übermensch* irritate many thinkers. Irving M. Zeitlin (1994:53) argues that ‘the noble soul is above all egoistic, possessing the conviction that he and his peers are superior, and that those other beings, who are inferior by nature, must subordinate and sacrifice themselves.’ Zeitlin argues that it may be only Nietzsche’s taste to favour ‘noble morality,’ for if Nietzsche rejects transcendental and rational standards, then what other standard

remains by which to choose between moral values? Is it an illusion to propose that any such real standards exist at all? Zeitlin's argument reveals the reason why many people disparage Nietzsche's attack on morality; it is because Nietzsche does not provide us with a standard or a set of standards to evaluate human worth. Nietzsche, however, despises the moralist who equates honor and worth to morality 'and talk from morning to night of the happiness of virtue, the composure of the soul, of justice and immanent retribution' (GS 292). He champions an artistic life in which each and every deed forms part of the process of self-overcoming and self-transforming. He asserts that 'we want to be the poets of our life — first of all in the smallest, most everyday matters' (GS 299). For Nietzsche, the idea of the *Übermensch* is the supreme standard for human worth, because it opens possibilities for man to lead a noble life.

With his doctrine of the *Übermensch*, Nietzsche emphasizes that man can will to go beyond himself, by stretching his existential limitations and by overcoming constraints within himself and the external world, climbing up to the top of the mountain in solitude. 'To see the ground and background of all things; hence you must climb over yourself — upward, up until even your stars are *under* you!' Zarathustra desires 'to look down upon myself and even upon my stars, that alone I should call my *peak*; that has remained for me as my *ultimate* peak' (Z III The Wanderer). Interestingly, Zarathustra also seeks to go down to the masses, the human sea. The world is 'as an abysmal, rich sea,' Zarathustra says, 'so rich ... in queer things, great and small. Especially the human world, the human sea' (Z IV The Honey Sacrifice). The abyss symbolizes the process of self-overcoming, climbing to the top of the rope ladders (Z III On the Spirit of Gravity 2) and wandering from the peak of the mountains down to the 'human abyss' (Z IV The Honey Sacrifice). The metaphor of the mountain and the sea emphasizes a multidimensional perspective from height to depth, in order to harmonize inward and outward chaotic reality into a whole. Nietzsche asserts that 'at the proper height everything comes together and harmonizes — the philosopher's thoughts, the artist's works, and good deeds' (U 19 [1]). In this way, ultimately, one who experiences the wholeness and fullness of life affirms the totality of life. 'Only now are you going your way to greatness! Peak and abyss — they are now joined together' (Z III The Wanderer). However, it is a difficult and dangerous task to attain such oneness and total affirmation in a transient life journey.

The abyss image reveals a terrible truth of life. It reveals the world as *dangerous* and unpredictable, changing and beyond human control. The message of the wise *Silenus* to men supports this truth: ‘The very best thing,’ it says, ‘not to have been born, not to *be*, to be *nothing*. However, the second best thing for you is: to die soon’ (*BT* 3). Life is a struggle for power, for growth, and thus man needs to overcome self-conflicts and contradictions. Zarathustra claims that ‘life wants to build itself up into the heights with pillars and steps; it wants to look into vast distances and out toward stirring beauties: therefore it requires height. And because it requires height, it requires steps and contradiction among the steps and the climbers. Life wants to climb and to overcome itself climbing’ (*Z* II On the Tarantulas). To build the height involves seeing the whole of life from a distance, rather than focusing on parts of it. ‘Behold,’ Life says to Zarathustra, ‘I am *that which must always overcome itself*’ (*Z* II On Self-overcoming). This is the secret or an innermost will that Nietzsche attempts to implant in the human mind through his *Zarathustra*. It is ‘a will to procreate or a drive to an end, to something higher, farther, more manifold: but all this is one, and one secret’ (*Z* II On Self-overcoming). Human life is transient and unpredictable, yet it is necessary for man to make an effort to give himself and his finite existence a meaning. Zarathustra claims that this meaning is to be found in the *Übermensch*:

Behold, I teach you the overman. The overman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say: the overman *shall be* the meaning of the earth! (*Z* Prologue 3)

Zarathustra, Nietzsche’s mouthpiece, urges us to will and to strive for such an attempt by teaching us the *Übermensch*. He envisions that the world ‘shall be created only by you [lovers of knowledge]: your reason, your image, your will, your love shall thus be realized’ (*Z* II Upon the Blessed Isles). Nietzsche believes that man, as an individual organism, is never static, but always evolving and growing, always existing in a state of becoming where all events involve a new and fresh interpretation. He states that ‘with every real growth in the whole, the “meaning” of the individual organs also changes’ (*GM* II 12). In this sense only the existence of the *Übermensch*, as the ripest fruit of mankind, can be the justification of the organic world, the significance of existence, as a whole. Nietzsche indicates that the *Übermensch* is as yet still ‘invisible like a too distant star: his *victory over strength* remains without eyes to see it and consequently without song and singer’ (*D* 548). In fact, this human ‘supreme achievement’ is still lacking hitherto, so he prompts us to strive for such an attempt.

Nietzsche's way of reaching this supreme achievement is 'to take possession of oneself, to organize the chaos, to jettison all fear of "cultivation" and be honest.' Nietzsche states that it is crucial 'to know what our genuine needs are. From that point boldly toss aside everything foreign and grow from within your own self, do not make yourself fit the mold of something outside yourself' (*U* 29 [192]). Nietzsche's key point is to cultivate self-knowledge of one's real needs rather than confirming the value judgements and expectations of others and society. Since we have existed in a utilitarian system where money has been the measure of all, ordinary people 'are afflicted day and night by a fearful impatience at the slow way with which their money is accumulating and by equally fearful pleasure in and love of accumulated money' (*D* 204). In this sense, man is lost and subjugated in the endless quest of wealth and fame. Nietzsche observes that 'it is most peculiar how constrained men's ideas and imaginations are: they never truly perceive life as a whole. They fear the words and opinions of their neighbours' (*PB* 52), so man seems to strive to become what he is *not* rather than what he is. Nietzsche teaches that the *Übermensch* 'organize[s] the chaos within him by thinking back to his real needs. His honesty, the strength and truthfulness of his character, must at some time or other rebel against a stage of things in which he only repeats what he has heard, learns what is already known, imitates what already exists' (*UDH* 10). Man always strives for his lowest needs, for mere self-preservation, because of fear and laziness (*SE* 1). Nietzsche encourages us to learn to think differently and not to conform to the false norms of others.

Nietzsche's idea of the *Übermensch* involves an emancipated man who liberates himself totally and who makes and carries out his own law in order to become what he is. Such a 'sovereign individual' is

like only to himself, liberated again from morality of custom, autonomous and supramoral ... the man who has his own independent, protracted will and the *right to make promises* — and in him a proud consciousness, quivering in every muscle, of *what* has at length been achieved and become flesh in him, a consciousness of his own power and freedom, a sensation of mankind come to completion. This emancipated individual, with the *actual* right to make promises, this master of a *free* will, this sovereign man ... [this] 'free' man, the possessor of a protracted and unbreakable will, also possesses his *measure of value*. ... The proud awareness of the extraordinary privilege of *responsibility*, the consciousness of this rare freedom, this power over oneself and over fate, has in his case penetrated to the profoundest depths and become instinct, the dominating instinct. What will he call this dominating instinct, supposing he feels the need to give it a name? The answer is beyond doubt: this sovereign man calls it his *conscience*. (*GM* II 2)

The 'sovereign man' is sovereign to himself. He arrives at his ability of self-mastery by exercising his free will. He seeks to affirm himself in the totality of his activities. He is his own lawgiver, so he is free, independent and autonomous. The sovereign man overcomes the human weakness of disregarding the disparity between commanding and obeying the will. His power is to command himself and at the same time to obey the will, because 'he who wills believes with a fair amount of certainty the will and action are somehow one; he ascribes the success, the carrying out of the willing, to the will itself, and thereby enjoys an increase of the sensation of power which accompanies all success' (*BGE* 19). The Will to power is always in a state of becoming. In carrying out his will, the sovereign man does not strive for certainty, but, in a state of becoming, he strives for increasing power, for growth. In this way he does not only attain a feeling of power, but exercises the right to make promises and is able to keep his promises, to make things happen, or to make dreams come true. He makes things happen out of his free will, his strength and full self-mastery. The sovereign or emancipated man takes total responsibility for living a full life. He is capable of mastering his chaotic instincts without being disturbed by external turmoil. Above all, his action is dictated by his *conscience*.

The emancipated individual is 'supramoral.' He is free from making assessments as others do. Zarathustra claims that 'no people could live without first esteeming; but if they want to preserve themselves, then they must not esteem as the neighbor esteems. Much that was good to one people was scorn and infamy to another' (*Z I On the Thousand and One Goals*). This implies that no universal moral codes exist to assess human behaviour. The emancipated man is free from the assessment of others, of society, of tradition, free to carry out his will. His ability of mastering himself in this way simultaneously 'gives him mastery over circumstances, over nature' and elevates him above 'all more short-willed and unreliable creatures' (*GM II 2*). With a free and strong spirit the emancipated man lives only out of his nature and sees his personal goal and takes responsibility to carry it out in order to become what he is. The sovereign man is uncommon and unique in commanding and obeying his own law. It is in this sense that the sovereign individual is supramoral, yet it does not follow that he or she does not lead an ethical life, because his gift-giving nature distributes abundance as well as richness.

The traits of the *Übermensch* can be found in the figures of the genuine philosopher, the noble, the heroic human being, the sovereign man and the artist.

Nietzsche states that ‘these investigators and microscopists of the soul [are] fundamentally brave, proud, and magnanimous animals, who know how to keep their hearts as well as their sufferings in bounds and have trained themselves to sacrifice all desirability to truth, *every* truth, even plain, harsh, ugly, repellent, unchristian, immoral truth’ (*GM I 1*). They seek to stretch their limited existential horizon to perceive all possibilities from different vantage points. These free spirits live ‘no longer in the fetters of love and hatred, without yes, without no, near or far as one wishes’ (*HAH P 4*). In this way they can affirm the totality of life, especially so the Dionysian artist who ‘first *creates* truth, a *world-governing* spirit, a destiny’ (*EH Z 6*).

The Dionysian artist creates himself as a creator of truth; he recognizes *himself* as the master and creator of his virtues. The artist ‘wants to be entirely the spirit of his virtue: thus he strides over the bridge as spirit’ (*Z Prologue 4*). The bridge allows man to cross over to become *Übermensch*, and in the crossing he frees himself to create his life as a work of art. If man is a ‘bridge’ between beast and *Übermensch*, then art has played a major role in the creation of the bridge, which is self-mastery, discipline and rigorous control exercised in relation to the instincts, drives and passions. Nietzsche champions a state where ‘one enriches everything out of one’s own fullness: whatever one sees, whatever one wills, is seen swelled, taut, overloaded with strength. A man in this state transforms things until they mirror his power — until they are reflections of his perfection. This *having* to transform into perfection is — art’ (*TI Skirmishes of an Untimely Man 9*). Above all, an artist can make things beautiful, attractive, and desirable to himself.

Nietzsche perceives that the artist seeks to create and to affirm the fullness and totality of life in terms of art. He claims that ‘art is the great stimulus to life: how could one understand it as purposeless, as aimless, as *l’art pour l’art*?’ (*TI Skirmishes of an untimely Man 24*) Albert Camus’s absurd hero, Sisyphus, gives a nice example of a purposeless and aimless life. ‘The gods had condemned Sisyphus to ceaselessly rolling a rock to the top of a mountain, whence the stone would fall back of its own weight’ (Camus 1955:96). The punishment of Sisyphus’s futile and hopeless labour symbolizes the terrible truth of life. In this context, for Nietzsche, art is needed to veil the terrible nature of life and to strengthen ourselves in the human predicament. Nietzsche’s insight into Hamlet’s situation illustrates this point of view. As ‘knowledge kills action’ (*BT 7*), Hamlet who has gazed into the true essence of things has acquired knowledge and he finds action repulsive, for his actions ‘can do nothing

to change the eternal essence of things' (*BT* 7). In this sense, Nietzsche champions the power of art to veil life and the world which appears 'an ongoing illusion.' He states that 'owing to the superficiality of our intellect we indeed live in an ongoing illusion; i.e. at every instant we need art in order to live. Our eyes detain us at the *forms*. But if we have gradually acquired such eyes for ourselves, then there is an *artistic power* which holds sway within us' (*P* 51).

Nietzsche explains the character of this artistic power in stating that 'there exists within us a power which permits the *major* features of the mirror image to be perceived with greater intensity, and again there is a power which emphasizes rhythmic similarity beyond the actual inexactitude. This must be an *artistic power*, because it is *creative*. Its chief creative means are *omitting, overlooking, and ignoring*' (*P* 55). Man has the potential to attain an 'artistic power' in terms of a life-learning and self-practicing process to become an artist of his life. One should strive for unifying self-conflicts and internal and external chaos with artistic power. Nietzsche points to the paradox that 'in man *creature* and *creator* are united: in man there is material, fragment, excess, clay, dirt, nonsense, chaos; but in man there is also creator, form-giver, hammer hardness, spectator divinity' (*BGE* 225). If one can unify this contrast as creator and creature, one may create something out of, and greater than, himself. Ultimately this Dionysian artist is an *Übermensch*. Nietzsche claims that 'in him all opposites are blended into a new unity. The highest and the lowest energies of human nature, what is sweetest, most frivolous, and most terrible wells forth from one fount with immortal assurance. Till then one does not know what is height, what depth; one knows even less what truth is. There is no moment in this revelation of truth that has been anticipated or guessed by even *one* of the greatest' (*EHZ* 6). Above all, the *Übermensch* experiences life in a unity.

The *Übermensch* has the tremendous strength to self-transforming and self-overcoming with artistic power. Nietzsche indicates that the overcoming of the initial meaningless and distasteful character of existence through the creative transformation of existence basically characterizes both art and life. Life is essentially artistic, and art is an expression of the basic nature of life. Nietzsche suggests that man creates himself as a work of art in life that *one thing is needful*:

University of Pretoria etd – Ku, H L H (2003)

To 'give style' to one's character — a great and rare art! It is practiced by those who survey all the strengths and weaknesses of their nature and then fit them into an artistic plan until every one of them appears as art and reason and even weaknesses delight the eye. Here a large mass of second nature has been added, there a piece of original nature has been removed — both times through long practice and daily work at it. ...

It will be the strong and domineering natures that enjoy their finest gaiety in such constraint and perfection under a law of their own. (*GS 290*)

Creating one's life as a work of art, the daily task is important in the process of becoming. Man needs to overcome and to control his 'original nature' or instincts as well as to add his 'second nature', which involves qualities, such as honesty or integrity. Thus, the attainment of self-mastery, discipline and virtue can be seen as giving style to one's character. Nietzsche claims that 'in the end, when the work is finished, it becomes evident how the constraint of a single taste governed and formed everything large and small. Whether this taste was good or bad is less important than one might suppose, if only it was a single taste!' (*GS 290*) For Nietzsche, the content is not as important as the process of self-creation in educating and cultivating the mind, although its outcome is considered as only 'a single taste' among the creations of Nature.

The animal man, as an artist, strives to create himself and ultimately becomes a work of art. With regard to the creativity involved in turning monotonous daily labour into a work of art, in terms of cultivating the mind, Chuang Tzu (1996:22-23) provides a vivid illustration: 'Cook Ting was butchering an ox for Lord Wen Hui. Every movement of his hand, every shrug of his shoulder, every step of his feet, every thrust of his knee, every sound of the sundering flesh and the swoosh of the descending knife, were all in perfect accord, like the Mulberry Grove Dance or the rhythm of the Ching-shou.'⁸ The cook accounts for his experience to the Lord:

When I started to cut up oxen, what I saw was just a complete ox. After three years, I had learnt not to see the ox as whole. Now I practise with my mind, not with my eyes. I ignore my sense and follow my spirit. I see the natural lines and my knife slides through the great hollows, follows the great cavities, using that which is already there to my advantage. Thus, I miss the great sinews and even more so, the great bones. A good cook changes his knife annually, because he slices. An ordinary cook has to change his knife every month, because he hacks. Now this knife of mine I have been using for nineteen years, and it has cut thousands of oxen. However, its blade is as sharp as if it

⁸ Two very ancient forms of music.

had just been sharpened ... when I come to a difficult part and can see that it will be difficult, I take care and pay due regard. I look carefully and I move with caution. Then, very gently, I move the knife until there is a parting and the flesh falls apart like a lump of earth falling to the ground. I stand with the knife in my hand looking around and then, with an air of satisfaction, I wipe the knife and put it away.

After overcoming constraints, Ting attains happiness and increases a sense of power, 'an air of satisfaction.' His daily labour becomes an artwork. The cook becomes the artist of his life, in the way that Nietzsche sets out, describing 'that strength which employs genius *not for works* but for *itself as a work*; that is, for its own constraint, for the purification of its imagination, for the imposition of order and choice upon the influx of tasks and impressions' (D 548). Every human activity can be a work of art, such as the performance of Cook Ting. By engaging oneself thus, one ultimately becomes oneself the meaning and justification of existence in life, an *Übermensch*.

The artist is capable of reordering, rearranging, coordinating, and stimulating his chaotic drives or instincts. An appropriate arrangement of the soul is able to realize and to stretch its inner capacities. This requires self-knowledge, that is, an awareness of one's drives, their individual strengths, weaknesses, and interactions in order to grow in the play of chaotic inward and outward forces. To bring something to order reveals the power of strong drives of multiple souls. Regulated strong drives give birth to greatness in this ongoing process of self-overcoming. In this way life can be made more enduring and adorable than hitherto, acquiring 'great style.' Nietzsche defines great style as 'keeping our strength, our *enthusiasm* in harness. Reverence for oneself; love of oneself; unconditional freedom before oneself' (A P). Giving great style to oneself is central to an artist of life.

In his article *Nietzsche's Zerography: Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, R.E. Kuenzli (in O'Hara 1985:107) claims that 'central to Nietzsche's view of artistic creation is his notion of active forgetfulness.' In self-creating, Nietzsche's *Übermensch* leads an artistic life, and forgetfulness, as a creative means parallel to 'omitting, overlooking, and ignoring' (P 55), opens the possibilities of self-creating and self-transforming within oneself. Nietzsche writes:

Forgetting, is no mere *vis inertiae* [inertia] as the superficial imagine; it is rather an active and in the strictest sense positive faculty of repression, that is responsible for the fact that what we experience and absorb enters our consciousness as little while we are digesting it (one might call the process 'inpsychation') as does the thousandfold

University of Pretoria etd – Ku, H L H (2003)

process, involved in physical nourishment — so-called incorporation. To close the doors and windows of consciousness for a time; to remain undisturbed by the noise and struggle of our underworld of utility organs working with and against one another; a little quietness, a little *tabula rasa* [clean slate] of the consciousness, to make room for new things, above all for the nobler functions and functionaries, for regulation, foresight, premeditation (for our organism is an oligarchy) — that is the purpose of active forgetfulness, which is like a doorkeeper, a preserver of psychic order, repose, and etiquette: so that it will be immediately obvious how there could be no happiness, no cheerfulness, no hope, no pride no *present*, without forgetfulness. (*GM II 1*)

Nietzsche believes that ‘to become what one is, one must not have the faintest notion *what one is*’ (*EH Clever 9*). It is the *Übermensch* who has the power to exercise the faculty of ‘active forgetfulness,’ suggested by the child metaphor, and even to become indifferent to any assessment of his own deeds. Nietzsche champions the heroic human being whose ‘strength lies in forgetting himself; and if he does think of himself he measures the distance between himself and his lofty goal and seems to see behind and beneath him only an insignificant heap of dross’ (*SE 4*). Nietzsche looks up to the heroic human being who ‘despises his happiness and his unhappiness, his virtues and vices, and in general the measuring of things by the standard of himself’ (*SE 4*). By forgetting, one opens to the possibility to liberate oneself from conventional and utilitarian thinking. Nietzsche states that ‘uncommon is the highest virtue and useless’ (*Z I On the Gift-giving Virtue 1*). To become ‘something better,’ as Nietzsche says, is not only ‘*to become* a good citizen, or scholar, or statesman,’ (*SE 4*) as many people would be proud of becoming. Nietzsche does not consider virtue according to the frame of reference of utility or of the preservation of the self and the community, but from the growth of mankind as a whole. Forgetting appears to be one of the preconditions for one who wills to become what one is. By forgetting himself, the artistic or the heroic human being makes new room for his soul in facing new things or new people, enabling himself to offer them new responses and to welcome unexpected events, surprises or promises, and incorporating new experiences into self-knowledge. Daily activities provide man with a chance to create, to make new things according to his own will, especially those whose creation is out of a rich, prodigal and noble soul. Zarthusra loves the noble soul that ‘is overfull so that he forgets himself, and all things are in him’ (*Z Prologue 4*). Forgetting enables one to embrace everything within one’s soul, and more importantly to carry out one’s words. By keeping one’s promise, one is able to determine one’s own future. In other words,

one is able to actualise one's dream or to make things happen. It is the state of active forgetfulness that enables the artist, the heroic human being or the noble to regulate his inward and outward chaos in order to actualise his ideal. Nietzsche's insight is that active forgetfulness and the fullness and richness of one's soul allow the organic and complex system to remain undisturbed by internal and external turmoil.

The ideal of a spirit who plays naively — that is, not deliberately but from overflowing power and abundance — with all that was hitherto called holy, good, untouchable, divine; for whom those supreme things that the people naturally accept as their value standards, signify danger, decay, debasement, or at least recreation, blindness, and temporary self-oblivion; the ideal of a human, superhuman well-being and benevolence that will often appear *inhuman* ... it is perhaps only with him that *great seriousness* really begins, that the real question mark is posed for the first time, that the destiny of the soul changes. (*EH Z 2*)

This game of self-overcoming of morality, for Nietzsche, *should be played with seriousness*, within the abundant nature of the human soul. The passage shows that Nietzsche attacks morality because conventional morality is not grounded in an overflowing and abundant nature. As a result, the ideal of a superhuman well-being might be misinterpreted as 'inhuman.' In this sense Nietzsche calls for a revaluation of values which is generated by a playing attitude out of overflowing and abundant power in dealing with the great seriousness that is life. This is a great task or a test for all of us, an infinite process of self-creating and self-overcoming in our finite existence. Nietzsche indicates that 'nothing can come to him from the outside. For him everything increasingly becomes play' (*U 34 [32]*), and he asserts no 'other way of associating with great tasks than *play*: as a sign of greatness, this is an essential presupposition.' (*EH Clever 10*). 'Test in all seriousness,' (*Z II On Self-overcoming*) Nietzsche says, 'one must be honest in matters of the spirit to the point of hardness before one can even endure my seriousness and my passion' (*A P*). The reward for an individual for engaging in this process is cheerfulness, gained through self-overcoming 'old' morality. Nietzsche claims that 'there seems to be nothing *more* worth taking seriously, among the rewards for it being that some day one will perhaps be allowed to take them *cheerfully*. For cheerfulness — or in my own language *gay science* — is a reward: the reward of a long, brave, industrious, and subterranean seriousness, of which, to be sure, not everyone is capable. But on the day we can say with all our hearts, "Onwards! our old morality too is part of *the comedy!*" we shall

have discovered a new complication and possibility for the Dionysian drama of “The Destiny of the Soul’ (GM P 7) Nietzsche envisions an unfolding comedic drama of existence within the human soul with regard to the problem of morality. He does not answer the problem of morality, but simply indicates that our ‘old’ morality itself is a problem. Instead of seeking a universal moral law or a set of moral codes as many moralists do, he only provides us his personal experiences of how to become what one is as the counterpart of ‘old’ morality. Above all, with the ability to affirm the totality of life, the *Übermensch* attains the greatest happiness in his human finitude. Figure 1 is an attempt to illustrate Nietzsche’s ‘formula for our happiness: a Yes, a No, a straight line, a goal’ (A 1).

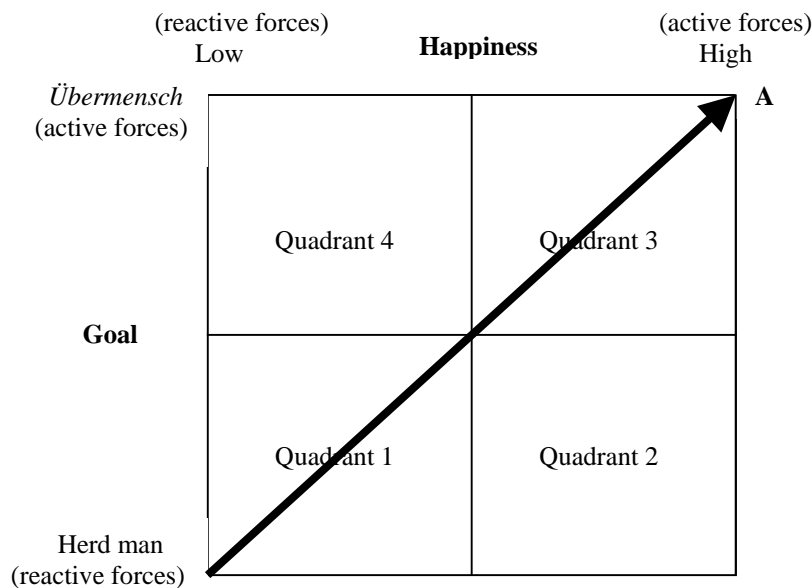


Figure 1: Formula for our happiness in the world of the will to power

Figure 1 illustrates the movement of the active and reactive forces which are without beginning and without end. It shows the dynamic relationship between happiness and our goal. The dynamic forces can move from any position in the matrix according to one’s free will. In the play of forces Nietzsche emphasizes a total life-affirmation, a yes and a no to life. Position A represents the supreme achievement — the *Übermensch* — the goal of mankind suggested by Nietzsche. Maslow’s hierarchy of needs may explain the level of happiness in relation to this goal. If an individual’s need could be satisfied, then he or she would attain happiness, so the more needs are

satisfied, the more happiness the individual would have. As the physiological needs represent the lowest level of all needs, the satisfaction of these needs attains the lowest level of happiness in comparison with the growth needs, because the latter implies that all the other needs may be satisfied, or partially satisfied. Position A represents the highest happiness that an individual can attain because of an achievement of self-actualisation. However, in this position it seems that none has been reached yet, but we can strive to arrive at Quadrant 3. According to Nietzsche, men, such as Goethe, Caesar and Voltaire, would seem to have existed in this state. If an individual aims to reach position A, even then he could not reach it. Yet he has the possibility of arriving at Quadrant 3 through self-overcoming.

Figure 1 shows that in the play of the self-overcoming of morality we reveal 'our entire instinctive life as the development and ramification of *one* basic form of the will — namely, of the will to power' (*BGE* 36). Nietzsche employs the image of the abyss to emphasize that life is constantly changing, unpredictable and dangerous. In this sense, although Nietzsche conceives of the *Übermensch* as being able to dance freely and happily in the play of forces, his ideal *Übermensch* appears as an unreachable goal to us. The question is where the strength and courage of the *Übermensch* come from, not to be crushed by, in the encounter of suffering and resistance and in the struggle with chaotic forces within ourselves and within the external changing and imperfect environment? Even Zarathustra exclaims: 'Nausea, nausea, nausea — woe unto me' (*Z* III The Convalescent 1), and Nietzsche's image of 'seasickness' to describe his dangerous insight into morality (*BGE* 23) suggests doubt. The answer lies in Nietzsche's doctrine of *Eternal Recurrence* and *Amor Fati* which show affinity with the practice of the Bodhisattva spirit of gratitude, friendship, kindness, joy and equanimity, emphasized in Humanistic Buddhism. Let us look into the relationship between Nietzsche's philosophy and Humanistic Buddhism in the concluding chapter.

Chapter 4: Humanistic Buddhism as complement to Nietzsche's philosophy?

May kindness, compassion, joy and giving pervade all Dharma realms;
May all people and heavenly beings benefit from our blessings and friendship;
May all ethical practice of Ch'an and Pureland help us to realize equality and patience;
May we undertake the Great Vows with humility and gratitude.

Venerable Master Hsing Yun, *Transferring merit statement of Fo Guang Shan*

Humanistic Buddhism

Owing to the influence of the prevailing cliché distinction between the Oriental 'denial of reality' and the Occidental 'affirmation' in the nineteenth century (Mistry 1981:193), Nietzsche interprets the Buddhist perspective of human existence in a negative way: 'to deny the will as the Buddhist does' (*BT* 7). He also refers to a withdrawal 'from pain into that Oriental Nothing — called Nirvana'⁹ (*GS* P 3) and condemns Gautama Buddha (Shakyamuni Buddha, the founder of Buddhism) for encouraging an 'ill spectacle' to the world by saying 'let your sins be seen before the people and hide your virtues!' (*D* 558)¹⁰ Walter Kaufmann (1974:277) criticizes Nietzsche's assertion that 'the truly powerful need not escape into any Nirvana: they can win their triumph in this world and be creative. This emphasis on creativity reveals a certain limited validity.' Nevertheless, Humanistic Buddhism, as propagated

⁹ Nirvana, Sanskrit word, means extinction. 'Extinction of all causes leading to rebirth. The ultimate goal of all Buddhist practice. Nirvana is not complete annihilation, but rather another mode of existence' (Hsing Yun 1999c: 121).

¹⁰ Even nowadays there are still a lot of misconceptions about Buddhism. Some people conceive of Buddhism as a pessimistic religion. Some say that 'Buddhism teaches that the life in the world is a misery and it discourages and prevents man's progress' (Anandamaitreya 1993:46). In his paper *Household Life in Buddhism: Lectures and Essays*, Venerable Balangoda Anandamaitreya (1993:9) writes that: 'some scholars who have read very little of Buddhist literature have stated that Buddhism is a religion meant only for persons that have renounced household life. Still others have tried to show it as a kind of pessimistic religion. Some others due to their prejudice or poor knowledge of Buddhism, have tried from their opinionatedness to prove that Buddhism is a kind of religion hostile to worldly progress.'

establish a transcendent source as the foundation of morality, something given from outside ourselves and imposed on us, it ignores the importance of looking within ourselves, more precisely, into our ‘mind.’ Voltaire’s *Candide* (1990:100) advises us to train our mind by stating that ‘we must cultivate our garden.’ Nietzsche proposes different possibilities concerning ‘what we are at liberty to do’ as a gardener, a cultivator of our mind, in *Daybreak*.

One can dispose of one’s drives like a gardener and, though few know it, cultivate the shoots of anger, pity, curiosity, vanity as productively and profitably as a beautiful fruit tree on a trellis; one can do it with the good or bad taste of a gardener and, as it were, in the French or English or Dutch or Chinese fashion; one can also let nature rule and only attend to a little embellishment and tidying-up here and there; one can, finally, without paying any attention to them at all, let the plants grow up and fight their fight out among themselves – indeed, one can take delight in such a wilderness, and desire precisely this delight, though it gives one some trouble, too. All this we are at liberty to do: but how many know we are at liberty to do it? Do the majority not *believe in themselves* as in complete *fully-developed facts*? (D 560)

In this passage, the various styles of cultivating a garden justify Zarathustra’s question: ‘This is *my* way; where is yours?’ (Z III On the Spirit of Gravity 2) As Nietzsche advocates a supra-moral life, he believes that one should invent one’s own virtue to become what one is. However, he simply offers us a riddle, stating that ‘to become what one is, one must not have the faintest notion *what* one is’ (EH Clever 9). As a practitioner of Humanistic Buddhism, my path follows the bodhisattva vow proposed by the Sixth Patriarch. I offer it as an answer to Nietzsche’s riddle and as a conclusion to this dissertation:

the vow to save all sentient beings no matter how many there are;
the vow to end all forms of delusion no matter how many there are;
the vow to learn all methods for doing the above no matter how long it takes;
and the vow to achieve perfect enlightenment no matter how long it takes.
(Hsing Yun 2000:146)

by Venerable Master Hsing Yun,¹¹ the founding master of Fo Guang Shan, can be regarded as a complement to Nietzsche's philosophy, especially to his idea of the *Übermensch*.

Robert G. Morrison (1997:224-225) states that 'by skilfully channelling certain deep rooted tendencies, man can venture on a path of continual self-overcoming that eventually culminates in a new kind of being: a Buddha. Perhaps, by borrowing much from the Buddhists, Nietzsche could have found a practical way of creating his as yet hypothetical *Übermensch*.' Venerable Master Hsing Yun (2000:155) states that 'a Buddha¹² is a human being who did the work necessary to become a Buddha; morality is the means with which he did that work.' To attain enlightenment and buddhahood, a practical morality is needed. For many Buddhists, the ultimate goal in committing themselves to a spiritual path is to become Buddha. For Nietzsche, it is to become what one is. According to Nietzsche, to create one's life as a piece of artwork, as poet of one's life (*GS* 299), and giving 'style' to one's character (*GS* 290), one needs continually to fight against unfavourable conditions. He remarks that 'a *species* comes to be, a type becomes fixed and strong, through the long fight with essentially constant *unfavourable* conditions' (*BGE* 262). In this concluding chapter I propose that Humanist Buddhism may prove valuable to those who fight against constant unfavourable conditions and seek to organize chaos within themselves in order to give birth to a dancing star — the *Übermensch*.

Venerable Master Hsing Yun has promoted Humanistic Buddhism for decades, as he believes that people can lead simultaneously a spiritually and materially prosperous life in terms of Humanistic Buddhism. Master Hsing Yun (1999a:2) indicates that 'Humanistic Buddhism is the integrating of our spiritual

¹¹ After the Sixth Patriarch, in China, the school of Ch'an flourished and developed into five schools, which have become the mainstream of Chinese Buddhism, and Lin-Chi Ch'an is the largest school. Venerable Master Hsing Yun is the 48th Patriarch of the Lin-Chi Ch'an lineage. (1995:1) Venerable Master Hsing Yun began the construction of the Fo Guang Shan monastery in Taiwan, a centre for teaching the Buddhist dharma through education, cultural activities and acts of charity. Since he established Fo Guang Shan in 1967, it has evolved from a mountain top bamboo forest to the largest Buddhist monastery in Taiwan and an internationally recognized site of pilgrimage.

¹² Buddha, Sanskrit word, means awakened one. There are innumerable buddhas in the universe. Shakyamuni Buddha (463-383 BC.) was the historical Buddha who taught the Dharma (Buddhist teachings) on earth. (Hsing Yun 1999c:118)

practice into all aspects of our daily lives.’ In fact, ‘Humanistic Buddhism is not a new kind of Buddhism; it is simply a name used to emphasize the core teachings of the Buddha’ (Hsing Yun 2000:154). Shakyamuni Buddha’s ‘very life as a human being has given us all an inspiration and a model for the spiritual path and for making our own lives a spiritual practice’ (Hsing Yun 1999 a:2). In short, Humanistic Buddhism is founded firmly in the physical world, with an emphasis on creating our daily life through spiritual practice. In *The Fundamental Concepts of Humanistic Buddhism*, Venerable Master Hsing Yun (1999a:30-31) asserts the values of Humanistic Buddhism:

Humanistic Buddhism recognizes that the material and spiritual are equally important in life and therefore calls for a life that provides for both. There is the external world of pursuits, and there is also the internal world of the mind. There is the world before us, and there is also the world behind us. If one insists on charging forward blindly, one inevitably gets hurt; one must also look back and within. Humanistic Buddhism allows for both existence and emptiness, possession and non-possession, the world of companionship and that of solitude. By harmonizing everything in the world, Humanistic Buddhism allows people to achieve a beautiful and wonderful life.

The passage illustrates how Humanistic Buddhism emphasizes the importance of harmonizing oppositions, such as ‘existence and emptiness, possession and non-possession,’ in daily practice in order to lead a spiritually and materially prosperous life. In order to ‘achieve a beautiful and wonderful life,’ one should discipline and cultivate oneself physically, mentally, spiritually and also materially on a daily basis through a diligent cultivation of mind. One has to commit oneself to a life-cultivation in order to witness one’s inner treasure — Buddha nature. This infinite process of cultivation can be associated with Nietzsche’s ongoing process of the ‘self-overcoming of morality.’ In attaining buddhahood in terms of tremendous personal effort through numerous lives according to Buddhist teachings, the *Übermensch* may well appear as a by-product¹³ in the process of self-development and of self-overcoming in a transient existence. With determination and the diligent practice of Buddhist teachings, one has the possibility of even going beyond the *Übermensch*, as

¹³ The idea that the *Übermensch* is the by-product in the practice of attaining buddhahood was first introduced in my Management Report *Promoting Ch’an Meditation at Fo Guang Shan Nan Hua Buddhist Temple: A Marketing Management Approach*. I try to elaborate on this idea in this thesis.

all beings have the potential of becoming Buddhas because of having Buddha nature. Venerable Master Hsing Yun (2000:154) indicates that ‘when the Buddha became enlightened under the bodhi tree, he said, “All sentient beings have Buddha nature,”’ and ‘in the *Great Nirvana Sutra*, the Buddha says, “All sentient beings have mind and all beings that have mind eventually will attain complete enlightenment. This is the reason why I say that all sentient beings have Buddha nature.’ (Hsing Yun 2000:106). The Sixth Patriarch of the Ch’an (Zen) school of Chinese Buddhism, Master Hui Neng¹⁴ (1998: 28) also points out that ‘our very nature is Buddha, and apart from this nature there is no other Buddha.’ The possibility of witnessing our Buddha nature belongs to every sentient being. In his first interview with the Master Hwang Yan, the Fifth Patriarch, Master Hui Neng (1998:13) says to Master Hwang Yan: ‘Although there are northern men and southern men, north and south make no difference to their Buddha-nature. A barbarian is different from Your Holiness physically, but there is no difference in our Buddha-nature.’ According to Conditioned Genesis, one of the core Buddhist teachings, the potential to become Buddha is equal to, and within all beings, male or female, old or young, and even animal, depending on the causes and conditions.

According to the basic Buddhist teaching of Conditioned Genesis, ‘all existing phenomena for this universe arise due to the coming together of the appropriate causes and conditions and will cease to exist when the necessary causes and

¹⁴ The school of Ch’an Buddhism is one of the eight main schools in Chinese Buddhism. It moved into Japan as Zen in the thirteenth century. (Humphrey 1974:102) An Indian monk named Arya Bodhidharma who came to China in the year 526 founded the Ch’an school of China. (Hui Neng 1998:ii) He was the first Patriarch of Ch’an school. Rev. Kong Ghee (Hui Neng 1998:ii) states that ‘during the life of the 5th Patriarch Grand Master Hwang Yan, a Kwangtung firewood vendor first heard of the text of the Diamond Sutra and he became enlightened. He was to become the 6th Patriarch Hui Neng [638-713] (Wei Lang). He left his mother to pay homage to the 5th Patriarch at Tung Shan Monastery in Hwang Mei Prefecture. He was told to split firewood and pound rice. He worked there for eight months. Once during his day in the Monastery, he dictated a stanza which took all disciples and others by surprise. Fearing that jealous ones should do him injury, the Patriarch dropped him a hint. He knew what the hint meant and called at the Patriarch’s room in the third watch of the night. There the robe and the dharma were secretly transmitted to him and he was made the 6th Patriarch after the 5th Patriarch had uttered “My teachings will now spread southwards.”’ Christmas Humphreys. (Hui Neng 1998:5-7) indicates that Mr. Wong Mou-lam who completed the first English translation of the *Sutra of Wei Lang* in 1930, translated the 6th Patriarch’s name as Wei Lang.

conditions are no longer present’ (Hsing Yun 1998:14). Venerable Master Hsing Yun (2000:74) employs a seed metaphor to explain this principle, stating that ‘if a seed is to grow it must have soil, water, air, and sunshine. The seed corresponds to what is meant by cause while the soil, water, air and sunshine correspond to what is meant by conditions. When all of the right causes and conditions are present, a result or effect will occur.’ Our vision or vow is the seed, and our actions are the possible conditions that make this seed grow. The realization of one’s Buddha nature depends on cause and conditions, one’s determination and one’s own effort and practice to cultivate one’s mind.

The cultivation of mind is crucial to Ch’an Buddhism, because ‘the mind should be framed in such a way that it will be independent of external or internal objects, at liberty to come or to go, free from attachment and thoroughly enlightened without the least beclouding’ (Hui Neng 1998:33).¹⁵ In order to attain enlightenment or buddhahood one has to look within oneself and cultivate one’s mind to be attached to nothing. The emphasis on non-attachment of the mind paradoxically connects with Nietzsche’s insistence on the cultivation of a ‘comprehensive soul’ or a ‘mirror soul.’ Nietzsche states that an *objective* spirit is ‘a *mirror* — he is no “end in himself”’ (BGE 207). The mirror image reveals a reflective quality in which non-attachment plays an important role in self-reflection. Nietzsche champions an objective man who becomes ‘a passageway and reflection of strange forms and events even to himself’ (BGE 207). He asserts the genius of the heart that lies still ‘as a mirror, that the deep sky may mirror itself in [it]’ (BGE 295). In *Ecce Homo*, he describes the Dionysian artist who possesses

the most comprehensive soul, which can run and stray and roam farthest within itself; the most necessary soul that plunges joyously into chance; the soul that, having being, dives into becoming; the soul that *has*, but *wants* to want and will; the soul that flees itself and catches up with itself in the widest circles; the widest soul that folly exhorts most sweetly; the soul that loves itself most, in which all things have their sweep and countersweep and ebb and flood. (EH Z 6)

¹⁵ In the original Chinese text, the word ‘heart’ is used instead of the word ‘mind.’ It seems that what the Chinese understand as ‘heart’, English-speaking people understand as ‘mind,’ so to write idiomatic English the word ‘mind’ is used in the English translation. In Nietzsche’s writings, he favours the word ‘heart’ instead of ‘mind,’ as in ‘the genius of the heart’ (BGE 295). Sometimes he uses the word ‘soul’ (BGE 295 & EH Z 6) to refer to the same concept.

The comprehensive or mirror soul seems to correspond to the non-attached mind or pure mind in Ch'an Buddhism. It is a state of mind possessed by a Ch'an master or practitioner who strives for enlightenment and the witnessing of his own Buddha nature. The Sixth Patriarch states that 'when we are free from attachment to all outer objects, the mind will be in peace. Our Essence of Mind is intrinsically pure, and the reason why we are perturbed is because we allow ourselves to be carried away by the circumstances we are in' (Hui Neng 1998:52). The 'Essence of Mind' refers to our Buddha nature which is within each of us. The experience of the Sixth Patriarch's attainment of enlightenment illustrates the importance of understanding how to free the mind from attachment. This event occurs as the Fifth Patriarch expounds the *Diamond Sutra* to Master Hui Neng. When Master Hui Neng hears the sentence: 'One should use one's mind in such a way that it will be free from any attachment,'¹⁶ he 'at once became thoroughly enlightened, and realised that all things in the universe are the Essence of Mind itself.' (Hui Neng 1998:19-20). Everything is the manifestation of the Essence of Mind or 'One mind.' Heaven is the manifestation of an enlightened person with a pure mind, while hell is the manifestation of an ignorant person with a contaminated mind. An individual who realizes this is enlightened, while those who fail to realize it are ignorant.

Buddha nature or 'One Mind,' however, remains unchanged. Master Hui Neng (1998: 27) indicates that 'the Wisdom of Enlightenment is inherent in every one of us. It is because of the delusion under which our mind works that we fail to realise it ourselves.' He continues that 'so far as Buddha-nature is concerned, there is no difference between an enlightened man and an ignorant one. What makes the difference is that one realises it, while the other is ignorant of it.' Master Hui Neng

¹⁶ Dih Ping Tsze, Mr. Wong Mou-lam's patron and inspirer, quotes from the notes by Ch'an Master On: "“To be free from any attachment” means not to abide in form or matter, not to abide in sound, not to abide in delusion, not to abide in enlightenment, not to abide in the quintessence, not to abide in the attribute. “To use the mind” means to let the “One Mind” (*i.e.*, the Universal mind) manifest itself everywhere. When we let our mind dwell on piety or on evil, piety or evil manifest itself, but our Essence of Mind (or Primordial mind) is thereby obscured. But when our mind dwells on nothing, we realise that all the worlds of the ten quarters are nothing but the manifestation of “One Mind”” (Hui Neng 1998:19)

(1998:41) states that ‘it is a common practice for monks and laymen to recite the name of Amitabha with the hope of being born in the Pure Land of the West.’¹⁷

To those of inferior mentality certainly it is far away, but to superior men we may say that it is quite near. Although the Dharma is uniform, men vary in their mentality. Because they differ from one another in their degree of enlightenment or ignorance. ... Ordinary men and ignorant people understand neither the Essence of Mind nor the Pure Land within themselves, so they wish to be born in the East or the West. But to the enlightened everywhere is the same. As the Buddha said, ‘No matter where they happen to be, they are always happy and comfortable.’ (Hui Neng, 1998:41).

Master Hui Neng’s point is that one has to look for Buddha within rather than outside. However, human beings are used to find solutions to problems outside rather than within. If people understand that they are the cause of their own problems, they are able to look within, then they may discipline and cultivate their mind in order to make a difference. Venerable Master Hsing Yun (1998:14) points to the possibility of human enhancement, an exit out of life’s labyrinth:

From the teaching of Conditioned Genesis, we can infer that all beings are equal and have the Buddha Nature. All beings have the potential of becoming Buddhas. The process leading to the fruition of this potential is dependent upon the determination and practice of the individual. Our own actions determine our future. Thus, correct understanding and diligent practice of this Buddhist teaching will help us to develop a progressive and positive outlook on life.

In terms of a *genuine* and *diligent practice* of Buddhist teaching in each and every action, one can command one’s life to a better future. Apart from the teaching of Conditioned Genesis, the Law of cause and effect can also help us to develop a positive and progressive attitude toward life. Master Hsing Yun (2000:75) quotes the *Samyuktagama*: ‘Because there is this, therefore there is that. Because this arises, therefore that arises. If this is not, then that will not be. If this is obliterated, then that will be obliterated.’ The ‘this’ and ‘that’ of the quote show that cause and effect have

¹⁷ Pure Land School is based on the *Amitabha Sutra* in which gives detailed descriptions of Amitabha’s pure land of ultimate bliss. Its emphasis is placed on the power of Amitabha Buddha to help the practitioners. The world of ultimate bliss is a place of grandeur. Chanting Buddha’s name is a common approach in this school. Pure Land School is the most popular among the eight major schools of Chinese Buddhism.

a dependent nature. They exist together in a state of dynamic interaction. The law of cause and effect implies that the present is a result of one's past behaviour and deeds, so each and every present deed may sow a seed for the future. As all is in 'One Mind,' when one performs a deed to harm others, one may be sowing the seed of harming oneself in the future. Thomas Hardy's tragic hero, Michael Henchard, in the novel *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, may serve as an example of this viewpoint. Henchard, the mayor, is doomed to fail in the present because of what he did in the past. The selling of his wife leads to his downfall even though this tragic event happened twenty years ago. His will reveals his repentance and acceptance of blame for his cruel treatment of his wife:

Michael Henchard's Will

"That Elizabeth-Jane Farfrae [Henchard's daughter] be not told of my death, or made to grieve on account of me.

"& that I be not bury'd in consecrated ground.

"& that no sexton be asked to toll the bell.

"& that nobody is wished to see my dead body.

"& that no mourners walk behind me at my funeral.

"& that no flours be planted on my grave.

"& that no man remember me.

"To this I put my name.

"Michael Henchard."

(Hardy 1987:333)

Lord Buddha teaches us that actions performed in the past or present attain certain results or effects in the future, not only in this life but also in numerous other lives. In chapter four of *Bodhisatta Kishitigarbha Sutra*, Lord Buddha says: 'Bodhisatta Kishitigarbha persuades those who kill any creature not to kill, otherwise they will die young. Bodhisattva Kishitigarbha persuades those who steal things or rob people not to steal or rob, otherwise they will be poor and receive a hard lot.' In this way a prosperous present life could be seen as the result of past or present good deeds, while a miserable future would be the result of past or present bad deeds. In *Liao-Fan's Four Lessons*, a popular Chinese spiritual book written nearly five hundred years ago, a monk called Master Yun tells Liao-Fan that 'in the world, why there are people who are rich or who have starved to death is because they have created their own fate, and heaven simply rewards that which people have sown' (1998:6). Master Yun says that if one understands the reason for creating destiny, then one is able to have a bright future by changing the reasons

from miserliness to giving, from intolerance to understanding, from arrogance to humility, from laziness to diligence, from cruelty to compassion, from deception to sincerity, then one accumulates as much merit as one can. In loving oneself and not wasting oneself, letting the past be the past and starting a new day, one can start a new life. Once one understands the principles in creating one's destiny, then one can create anything that one wishes. (1998:7)

One cannot change the cause of one's misery or misfortune, which come into being due to the seeds of the past, but with a correct understanding of them, one is able to react in a positive fashion to them, and thus to receive a less harmful result or even an inspiring effect. Nietzsche criticizes the men of *ressentiment* and the men of 'bad conscience' who deny their instincts, their true reactions, the resentful nature of their deeds, 'and compensate themselves with an imaginary revenge' (*GM I 10*). In contrast to the men of *ressentiment*, the noble or master is capable of discharging his instincts outwardly into deeds of growth and power. Nietzsche states that one needs to be strong in self-creation and self-transformation. The 'tremendous inward tension then discharge[s] itself in terrible and ruthless hostility to the outside world' (*TI What I Owe to the Ancients 3*). In the process of self-overcoming, cultivating a detached and pure mind, one fosters a correct understanding of the cause of one's misery. If one reacts positively to *ressentiment*, one can alter the direction of misery to effect a better future, 'just as salty water can be diluted with fresh water so that it does not taste so salty' (Hsing Yun 2000:41). Above all, if one knows the reason for misery and stop the tendency to build up the misery, and by putting appropriate conditions together, one may create a promising life. Like giving water, sunshine and fertile soil to cultivate a seed to grow, and finally to become a plant with many fruits, Master Hui Neng (1998:117-118) urges us that 'my preaching to you now may be likened to the seasonable rain which brings moisture to a vast area of land. The Buddha-nature within you may be likened to the seed which, being moistened by the rain, will grow rapidly. He who carries out my instructions will certainly attain Bodhi.¹⁸ He who follows my teaching will certainly attain the superb fruit (or Buddhahood).' In fact, there are many ways to attain this fruit in Buddhism.

Shakyamuni Buddha has taught us numerous paths to free ourselves from suffering and to attain enlightenment. The Four Noble Truths are a basic path leading

¹⁸ Bodhi, Sanskrit word, means enlightenment, to be awakened to one's own Buddha nature. (Hsing Yun 1999c:117)

us to the liberation from human suffering. The first three affirm the truth of suffering, the cause of suffering and the possible cessation of suffering.¹⁹ The fourth noble truth suggests the Noble Eightfold Path that leads to the cessation of suffering: He who is wise will choose this path and make an end of suffering. The Noble Eightfold Path is: (1) Right Views,²⁰ (2) Right Thought,²¹ (3) Right Speech,²² (4) Right Action,²³ (5) Right Work,²⁴ (6) Right Progress,²⁵ (7) Right Mind,²⁶ (8) Right Concentration.²⁷ The

¹⁹ The first Noble truth is the Truth of suffering. We all have the suffering of birth, old age, illness and death. The Second Noble truth is the Cause of suffering. Venerable Master Hsing Yun (2000:33) states that ‘the origin of all suffering is greed, anger and ignorance.’ The Third Noble Truth is the Cessation of suffering. ‘If there is a complete avoidance, abandonment, release and detachment of craving, all sufferings cease.’ (Swe 2000:46-47)

²⁰ ‘The *Lion’s Roar of Queen Shrimala Sutra* says that Right views are those views that will not lead to our downfall. The *Flower Garland Sutra* says that Right Views are those views that will lead us away from delusion. The *Series of Doors to the Dharma Realm* says that Right Views are a clear and perfect perception of the Four Noble Truth’ (Hsing Yun 2000:55) ‘Right views’ basically means views in accordance with the teachings of Buddha. Having right views is crucial, as all of the rest of Buddhism flows directly from them.

²¹ ‘The *Treatise on the Stages of Yoga Practice* says, “When energy is applied to Right Views, one achieves a state of no anger and no harm. This is Right Thought’ (Hsing Yun 2000:56) It appears to be a tool that helps us apply right views in our daily lives.

²² Venerable Master Hsing Yun (2000:57) states that ‘in its most basic form, Right Speech can be defined as not lying, not being two-faced or duplicitous, not being harsh, and not being sarcastic or mocking when speaking to others.’

²³ Right action means ‘using our bodies to implement and express the right conclusions we have drawn from Right Thought and Right Views.’ (Hsing Yun 2000:58)

²⁴ ‘The *Treatise on the Stages of Yoga Practice* says, “Right Work means that in the pursuit of clothing, food, drink and other items, nothing is done that violates good morality.” ... Our work should not harm anyone and it should not encourage any one else to harm anyone’ (Hsing Yun 2000:58).

²⁵ Venerable Master Hsing Yun (2000:59) indicates that ‘Right Progress means that each day we come to understand a little more of the Dharma, and that each day we learn how to apply it a little more in our lives.’

²⁶ ‘Right Mind means finding and dwelling within the inherent purity of the Buddha mind that lies within [us]. Right Mind means not letting that purity be obscured by greed, anger, or ignorance. [It] is an outcome of the first six aspects of the Noble Eightfold Path.’ (Hsing Yun 2000:60)

²⁷ Venerable Master Hsing Yun (2000:62) points out that ‘the Sanskrit word for concentration is *samadhi*, which refers to a profound state of concentration or a profound state of meditative equipoise. All meditation is based on concentration. When we learn how to concentrate long and hard on the

practice of Buddhist teachings 'is based on morality, meditation, and wisdom. Right speech, Right Action, Right Work, and Right Progress are essentially designed to help us improve morally. Right Views, Right Thought, and Right Mind are essentially designed to help us become wiser, if not wise. Right Concentration is designed to help us learn to meditate and to benefit from meditation' (Hsing Yun 2000:62). The peace and serenity a practitioner finds in meditation are the foundations of Buddhist wisdom. The realisation of 'One Mind' or Buddha nature needs wisdom, so Lord Buddha teaches us numerous different ways to get out of the state of ignorance, such as the teachings of the Pure land school and Ch'an school. 'The *Flower Garland Sutra* says, "The teachings of the Buddha are like a great sea. They are entered by faith and crossed by wisdom.' (Hsing Yun 2001:68). Buddhism can be regarded as a path which leads us out of ignorance and the labyrinth of life.

Apart from learning the teachings of Buddha, one has to look within oneself by practicing meditation in order to cultivate one's mind and to implement mindfulness in everyday living in order to attain enlightenment and buddhahood. The Sixth Patriarch points to the fact that 'what the ignorant merely talk about, wise men put into actual practice with their mind' (Hui Neng 1998:29). The practice of meditation is especially emphasized in Ch'an School of Chinese Buddhism. Master Hsing Yun (1998:1) indicates that 'Ch'an is the abbreviated form of the Chinese transliteration of the Sanskrit term *dhyana*; it means quiet contemplation.' The legend, originated in India, tells that

during an assembly on Vulture Peak (Grdhrakuta), the Buddha picked up a flower and held it up to the assembly without saying a word. The millions of celestial and human beings who were gathered at the assembly did not understand what the Buddha meant, except for Mahakasyapa [a disciple], who smiled. (Hsing Yun 1998:1)

The legend implies that Ch'an was imparted, if only to one receptive mind, 'without utilizing any spoken or written language: it was transmitted directly from mind to mind' (Hsing Yun 1998:1-2). Ch'an Master Ch'ing Yuan states that Ch'an is our 'true mind ... [which] transcends all tangible existence, yet it manifests itself in all existences in the universe' (Hsing Yun 1998:2). Another Ch'an Master Pai Chang

immutable truths of Buddhism and when we begin to discover the fullness of these truths in mental states that lie beyond language, we are practicing Right Concentration.'

suggests that ‘Ch’an is “everyday living.”’ He [says] that ‘chopping firewood, carrying water, putting on clothes, eating food, standing, and walking are all Ch’an. Ch’an is not something mysterious. Ch’an is closely related to our daily life. Therefore, every one of us can experience Ch’an’ (Hsing Yun 1998:2). Thus the Ch’an school does not flee from reality, but rather grounds its root in daily life. ‘When applied to everyday living,’ says Venerable Master Hsing Yun (1998:3), ‘Ch’an adds color. It expands our minds, enriches our lives, elevates our character, helps us to perfect our morality.’ Morality is the foundation of Buddhism, such as the Five Precepts taught by Lord Buddha,²⁸ because it is the means by which an individual performs the work necessary to become a Buddha. As all sentient beings have Buddha nature, ‘the oneness of all life and the unity of all life inspire us to participate in life’ (Hsing Yun 2000:154).

The genuine and diligent practice of Buddhist teachings in everyday life plays a crucial role in Humanistic Buddhism. Master Hsing Yun (1998:12-13) reminds us of the saying that ‘practicing is “like drinking water — only you will know for yourself whether it is cold or warm.” If we want to truly understand Buddhism and Ch’an, it is up to us to practice personally and attain realization. No one else can tell us what Buddhism and Ch’an truly are.’ Lord Buddha can show us the ways to become a Buddha, but no one can make our mind pure for us. ‘Because it is by our innate wisdom that we enlighten ourselves, and even the extraneous help and instructions of a pious and learned friend would be of no use if we were deluded by false doctrines and erroneous views’ (Hui Neng 1998:34). Nietzsche also emphasizes personal endeavour in self-creation. He destroys ‘old morality’ which attempts to impose external moral codes on all in order to make human behaviour conform, because he believes that it obscures a ‘right view’ — to will to become what one is. As each individual is unique, Nietzsche champions creativity in the process of self-overcoming and self-transforming, stating that ‘all great, all beautiful things can never be common property’ (*TI What the Germans Lack* 5). In giving ‘great style’ to one’s character the decisive factor is ‘a tremendous drive to bring out the main features so that the others disappear in the process’ (*TI Skirmishes of an Untimely Man* 8). By commanding and

²⁸ Venerable Master Hsing Yun (2000:45) points out that ‘the Five Precepts are the basis of all Buddhist morality and the beginning of all real growth as a human being. The Five Precepts are: no killing, no stealing, no lying, no sexual misconduct, and no use of drugs or alcohol.’

obeying his own will, the Dionysian artist creates and transforms himself; he enters ‘into any affect: he constantly transforms himself’ (*TI Skirmishes of an Untimely Man* 10). For Nietzsche, in the process of self-overcoming, no one but ourselves can create who we really are. In Ch’an Buddhism too, Master Hui Neng reminds us, no one but ourselves can cultivate a pure mind to witness our Buddha nature. Master Hui Neng (1998:34) quotes from the *Bodhisattva Sila Sutra*: ‘Our Essence of Mind is intrinsically pure, and if we knew our mind and realised what our nature is, all of us would attain Buddhahood.’ Realizing our Buddha nature depends on our personal endeavours in cultivating our mind through meditation and in performing each and every deed according to the teachings of Buddha.

Ch’an patriarchs and masters practice meditation to attain enlightenment. ‘With enlightenment, they are able to realize liberation and settle their minds and bodies in the here-and-now of daily life. What is most gratifying to Ch’an practitioners is to find peace of body and mind, or in other words, “to illumine the mind and see one’s True nature.” Thus, Ch’an practitioners are very much focused on life in this world’ (Hsing Yun 1999a:29). Master Hui Neng (1998:52) states that ‘to meditate means to realise inwardly the imperturbability of the Essence of Mind.’ Thynn Thynn (1995:16) suggests that ‘meditation in Buddhism means cultivation of the mind in order to achieve insight wisdom ... , ultimately leading to liberation’. Meditation would help practitioners become physically healthier, teach them calmness, help them see more clearly what it means to become enlightened, and ultimately show them the full brilliance of their inner Buddha nature. It fosters healthy and helpful social behavior, because Ch’an practitioners practise meditation in order to relax and cultivate their mind, and thus transcend desire, attachment, anger and such emotions, and ultimately attain enlightenment. ‘The *Flower Garland Sutra* says, “The mind is a painter. It paints its own world”’ (Hsing Yun 2001:42). By cultivating a pure mind through meditation, we create our own world where we can enjoy and improve our lives to a better future.

Humanistic Buddhism emphasizes the integration of Buddha’s teachings in daily life in this physical world in order for practitioners to attain enlightenment or buddhahood. Nietzsche, however, misunderstands Buddhism as a ‘nihilistic withdrawal’ from existence, or ‘a desire for nothingness’ (*GM II 21*). He criticizes Buddhism as an escape into ‘Oriental Nothing’ (*GS P 3*), yet ironically Buddhism complements his philosophy. In *Gay Science*, Nietzsche writes the section titled *Evil*:

Examine the lives of the best and most fruitful people and peoples and ask yourselves whether a tree that is supposed to grow to a proud height can dispense with bad weather and storms; whether misfortune and external resistance, some kinds of hatred, jealousy, stubbornness, mistrust, hardness, avarice, and violence do not belong among the *favourable* conditions without which any great growth even of virtue is scarcely possible. The poison of which weaker natures perish strengthens the strong. (GS 19)

The Sixth Patriarch expressed a similar remark in the seventh century:

The Kingdom of Buddha is in this world,
Within which enlightenment is to be sought.
To seek enlightenment by separating from this world
Is as absurd as to search for a rabbit's horn. (Hui Neng 1998:37)

Enlightenment is to be sought within this imperfect world. According to the teachings of Buddha, the cultivation of a strong mind can help us to resist and triumph over unfavourable conditions. 'The *Sutra of Bequeathed Teachings* says, "If Mind is strong, then even if one enters the thieving realm of the five desires, no harm will come to one. It is like wearing armor into battle; one need fear nothing"' (Hsing Yun 2000:60). Nietzsche points out that 'one must know how *to conserve oneself*' (BGE 41), in confronting the tests of life. By learning and practising the teachings of Buddha, one may attain great wisdom and act without fear and thus one is capable of conserving oneself. Nietzsche recognizes that these tests 'may be the most dangerous game one could play and are tests that are taken in the end before no witness or judge but ourselves' (BGE 41). One has to be independent, responsible and self-mastering in order to create one's own life and to invent one's own virtue. Nietzsche describes this dangerous game as a picture of the inner conflicts and uncertainty of labyrinthine life: 'How greedily this wave approaches, as if it were after something! How it crawls with terrifying haste into the inmost nooks of this labyrinthine cliff!' (GS 310) In fact, the process of the self-overcoming of morality is challenging and dangerous due to its unpredictable nature.

Nietzsche's 'campaign against morality' aims to destroy the old horizon in order to make room for something new. He exclaims: 'How could we drink up the sea? Who gave us the sponge to wipe away the entire horizon?' (GS 125) With his famous slogan that 'God is dead,' the horizon appears free at long last to open-minded ones of free spirit. Nietzsche's writings present a vision or a goal for the future development of the human species, recommending a trial and error approach. There

are different goals and paths of learning and practising Buddhist teachings, depending on one's choice and tendency. For example, Venerable Master Hsing Yun does not only favour the Ch'an school, but also the Pure Land school, stating that 'if you practice both the Ch'an and the Pure Land Dharma methods, you are truly practicing Humanistic Buddhism' (Hsing Yun 1999a:29). He even urges us to strive for creating a pure land on earth, stating that 'instead of resting our hopes on being reborn in a pure land in the future, why don't we work on transforming our planet Earth into a pure land of peace and bliss? Instead of committing all our energies to pursuing something in the future, why don't we direct our efforts toward purifying our minds and bodies right here and now in the present moment?' (Hsing Yun 1999a:9) Master Hsing Yun (1999b:31) emphasizes that 'the goal of Humanistic Buddhism as promoted by Fo Guang Shan is to make Buddhism relevant in the world, in our lives, and in each one of our hearts. Simply close your eyes, and the entire universe is there, within.' By following Buddha's paths in our daily life to cultivate a spacious mind or heart, all of us have the possibility to liberate ourselves from suffering, and ultimately attain enlightenment or buddhahood. This remains the essence of Humanistic Buddhism.

Humanistic Buddhism, aiming to make Buddhism relevant in the world in terms of genuine and diligent practice of Buddhist teachings, may serve as a complement to Nietzsche's philosophy. Nietzsche claims that 'whoever looks into himself as into a vast space and carries galaxies in himself, also knows how irregular all galaxies are: they lead into the chaos and labyrinth of existence' (*GS* 322). Nietzsche's metaphor of the labyrinth symbolizes the uncertainty and chaotic nature of life and the world that most people are afraid of. Who has the ability to cultivate such a spacious heart to overcome chaos and uncertainty? Perhaps the answer lies in Humanistic Buddhism, because it emphasizes cultivating the spirit of bodhisattva. This may inspire those who are interested in cultivating a spacious heart or mind in order to triumph over an uncertain and rapidly changing world and the labyrinth of existence that for Nietzsche is a considerable concern. By cultivating a spacious heart to embrace all, to affirm the totality of life in Nietzsche's language, one may be capable of carrying galaxies in oneself, being at ease with all encounters, regularity or irregularity of things, at ease with all circumstances, even the worst and chaotic situations. By practising Buddhist teachings in this way one is on the path of

bodhisattva towards Buddha, and this way is especially emphasized in Humanistic Buddhism.

Nietzsche's doctrine of eternal recurrence and *amor fati* plus the spirit of Bodhisattva

Venerable Master Hsing Yun prompts us to participate in the world and be a source of energy that is beneficial to others. This implies leading a bodhisattva way of life. He indicates that 'to fully realize the bodhisattva way of being is the goal of Humanistic Buddhism' (Hsing Yun 1999a:9). Master Hsing Yun refers to Master T'ai Hsu's explanation of what a bodhisattva is, stating that 'a bodhisattva is an energetic, enlightened, and endearing person who strives to help all sentient beings liberate themselves' (Hsing Yun 1999a:9). Master Hsing Yun (2000:141-142) explains that

the word 'bodhisattva' is a compound of two Sanskrit words. *Bodhi* means 'enlightened' and *sattva* means 'sentient being.' A bodhisattva, thus, is an 'enlightened sentient being' or someone who 'enlightens sentient beings.' Sometimes *bodhisattva* is rendered in English as 'enlightenment being.' The word 'bodhisattva' should be understood in two basic ways. First, a bodhisattva is a sentient being who has attained some measure of enlightenment himself. Second, he is a sentient being whose wisdom has shown him that the greatest enlightenment of all is to help others.

For a bodhisattva, 'the greatest enlightenment of all is to help others.' This doctrine, at least on the surface, diverges from Nietzsche's idea of the *Übermensch*, which emphasizes self-creation and self-overcoming, as the *Übermensch* is liberated from the morality of custom, is autonomous and supramoral (*GM II 2*). Yet, Nietzsche's mouthpiece Zarathustra champions a gift-nature as the highest virtue (*Z I On the Gift-giving virtue 1*). The bodhisattva whose goal is to enlighten and to liberate all sentient beings shares this distinct characteristic of the *Übermensch*. When one has made a bodhisattva vow to help liberate all sentient beings from delusion, one becomes a bodhisattva. Master Hsing Yun (1999b:3) states that 'we can all become bodhisattvas as long as we have the commitment to "seek the Buddha Way and deliver all beings."' In fact we describe anyone who has made such a commitment a "bodhisattva with initial determination.'" The bodhisattva path is a way to become a Buddha. This path or process involves five stages of growth, from the lowest rank of

bodhisattvas (a bodhisattva with initial determination) to the highest rank, that is, a Buddha. In *Flower Garland Sutra*, Lord Buddha describes five basic stages of growth that a bodhisattva must go through. The sutra says that

first a bodhisattva must rely on faith and trust in order to learn the teachings of the Buddha. Following this, he can begin to rely on his awakened wisdom to implement the Buddha's teachings in the world in which he lives. In the third stage, the sutra says, he will begin to practice the Dharma [the teachings of the Buddha] in a much deeper way than he did at first. In the fourth stage, his understanding of the Dharma will be so deep that his ability to share it with others will also be deepened. In the last stage of growth, the sutra says, the bodhisattva will begin to experience levels of awakened consciousness that he had hitherto only dreamed of. (Hsing Yun 2000:142-143)

According to Buddhist teachings, Bodhisattva is the one who strives for the attainment of the fruit of buddhahood by helping all sentient beings to liberate themselves. The 'ripest fruit' symbolizes the *Übermensch* in Nietzsche's tree metaphor; in *Flower Garland Sutra* Shakyamuni Buddha employs a King Bodhi-tree metaphor to illustrate the bodhisattva way of attaining the fruits, stating that 'all beings are the roots of the Bodhi-tree, the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas are its fruits and its flowers. If (Bodhisattvas) apply the water of great compassion to all beings (who form its roots), the Bodhi-tree will bloom with flowers, and bear the fruits of the wisdom of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas' (Lee 1996:15). This metaphor shows that bodhisattvas attain buddhahood by enlightening others in terms of great compassion and wisdom. Practising great compassion towards all beings, cultivating a pure mind and implementing Buddhist teachings with wisdom in our daily life is essential to Humanistic Buddhism.

Humanistic Buddhism emphasizes the practice of the spirit of bodhisattva in daily life. Avalokiteshvara, the ten great vows of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva²⁹ and

²⁹ The ten vows of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva are: First is to pay the highest homage and veneration to all Buddhas. Second is to preach (the virtues of) and to praise (the glories of) the buddhas. Third is to make abundant offerings for the veneration to the Buddhas. Fourth is to be penitent and confess one's evil deeds and hindrances. Fifth is to approve of and rejoice at the merits and virtues of others. Sixth is to request Buddhas to set in motion 'The Wheel of Dharm.' [To 'set in motion the wheel of Dharma' means proclaiming the doctrine of the Buddhas to the world.] Seventh is to beseech Buddhas to remain in the world. Eighth is to be a zealous follower of the "Way of Buddhas" for ever. Ninth is to be always

that of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva serve as good examples to illustrate the spirit of bodhisattva. ‘Avalokiteshvara has vowed to go anywhere in the world to help anyone who is in need and who calls on him’ (Hsing Yun 2000:143). Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva vowed to help all sentient beings who suffer in hell, stating that ‘I vow not to enter into Buddhahood until all hells are empty’ (Hsing Yun 1999b:11). This implies that he will defer his attainment of buddhahood as long as there is one single being left suffering in hell. The transferring merit statement of Fo Guang Shan, quoted as epigraph to this chapter, also illustrates the spirit of bodhisattva that strives to benefit all beings. Humanistic Buddhism’s emphasis is on practising the spirit of bodhisattva to help others, while Nietzsche’s *Übermensch* focuses on self-creation and self-transformation. However, both are aimed of self-transformation. A bodhisattva transforms himself by giving, which can be associated with Zarathustra’s gift-giving nature. As a bodhisattva ‘gives to others, he cleanses and transforms himself. As he improves himself, he shows others the way’ (Hsing Yun 2000:152). Master Hsing Yun (1999b:8) describes the bodhisattva spirit that ‘the great kindness and compassion of bodhisattvas can be compared to the warmth of the sun that is available to all without discrimination; the compassion is limitless, as they tend to all our pleas without reservation.’ Nietzsche’s mouthpiece, Zarathustra, also employs the sun metaphor to describe a gift-giving nature which is similar to the great love of bodhisattva, saying that ‘all solar love is innocence and creative longing.’ He continues that the sun ‘approaches impatiently over the sea. Do you not feel the thirst and the hot breath of her love? She would suck at the sea and drink its depth into her heights’ (Z II On Immaculate Perception). Yet, the concepts of thirst and heat recall the dangerous and threatening qualities of the sun or the gift-giving nature. Perhaps, in order to overcome inner tension, the spirit of bodhisattva that emphasizes *great kindness and compassion* serves as a complement to Nietzsche’s *Übermensch*. A bodhisattva helps himself by helping all sentient beings without threat or danger to others. The sun warms and illuminates everything it touches; it shines upon all things and beings without the expectation of any reward from them. Zarathustra longs for the great sunshine at ‘noon; moment of the briefest shadow; end of the longest error; high point of humanity’ (TI How the “True World” Finally Became a Fable).

in harmony with all beings (bestowing on them gifts according to their needs). Tenth is to turn over all one’s merits to (benefit) all beings. (Lee 1996:5-6)

Although both Nietzsche and Master Hsing Yun emphasize the great love of the sun to symbolize *Übermensch* and bodhisattva, Nietzsche's Zarathustra is only concerned with the human and we cannot follow his way, for the way does not exist and we have to invent our own way and virtue (Z On the Spirit of Gravity 2 & A 11), while bodhisattvas are concerned with all sentient beings and clearly show us the ways to be a Bodhisattva and progressing to become Buddha.³⁰

Nietzsche urges us to strive for a gift-giving virtue, which is the highest virtue (Z I On the Gift-giving Virtue 1), yet he points to the fact that a gift-giving heart 'flows broad and full like a river, a blessing and a danger to those living near' (Z I On the Gift-giving Virtue 1). Nietzsche warns us of the coexistence of both blessing and danger in cultivating the highest virtue. He has to shake the ground of morality in order to open our mind to envision the future supreme human development that has never been willed hitherto, so that 'at long last our ships may venture out again, venture out to face any danger; all the daring of the lover of knowledge is permitted again; the sea, *our* sea, lies open again; perhaps there has never been such an "open sea"' (GS 343). Nietzsche has only a vision of greatness, but fails to show us a feasible way to overcome the danger that arises within ourselves and toward others in such an 'open sea.' He states that 'not to perish of internal distress and uncertainty when one inflicts great suffering and hears the cry of this suffering — that is great, that belongs to greatness' (GS 325). Nietzsche's description of the way to the *Übermensch* is a riddle, saying that 'at times we need a rest from ourselves by looking upon, by looking *down* upon, ourselves and, from an artistic distance, laughing *over* ourselves or weeping *over* ourselves. We must discover the *hero* no less than the *fool* in our passion for knowledge' (GS 107). This description consists of opposition, such as looking upon and looking down, hero and fool, that seems to be an enigma and impossible to follow. Shakyamuni Buddha, however, clearly presents different ways for different people to attain enlightenment and buddhahood with his teachings, such

³⁰ Venerable Master Hsing Yun (2000:144-145) points out that in 'the *Treatise on the Stages of Yoga Practice* there are four basic ways to be a bodhisattva.' First are the six basic virtues, the six *paramitas* (a Sanskrit word that literally means "crossing over to the other shore.") — generosity, morality, patience, constant progress, concentration, and wisdom (Hsing Yun 2000:154) and the five basic precepts of Buddhism. Second is to practice the art of communication, or "skilful means." Third is to bring benefit to others, and the fourth is to seek the reward of enlightenment for himself and others, and nothing else.

as the Noble Eightfold Path, the practice of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra³¹ and the six paramitas.³² To commit oneself to the bodhisattva way is a secure path to enlightenment and ultimately buddhahood. So, on this path too, one can overcome oneself to become what one really is.

Nietzsche's *Übermensch* appears to be a model of the Maslowian self-actualized individual. To become what one is seems to be a by-product of practising the spirit of bodhisattva, because Buddhist teachings go beyond the idea of self-actualization and teach how to become a Buddha. Lord Buddha emphasizes that all beings have Buddha nature, and that all humans have the possibility to attain enlightenment and even to become Buddha. Bodhisattvas see beyond themselves to look after others' well-being and to enlighten others; they enlighten themselves and attain buddhahood by committing themselves to the enlightenment of all sentient beings. The *Eight Realizations of the Bodhisattva Sutra* says, 'A bodhisattva is always thinking, studying, and listening in order to deepen his wisdom and understanding of life. With these skills he teaches others and helps them find joy' (Hsing Yun 2000:142). In this way a bodhisattva maintains a harmonious relationship between himself and others, being capable of creating peace and balance among chaotic forces. In short, a bodhisattva is one who participates actively and positively in life by learning different skills to help others and thus to grow constantly. In the process to enlightenment, the growth needs, or to become what one is in Nietzsche's language, appears as only a by-product. Lord Buddha attained buddhahood by committing to the bodhisattva path in various lives. Cyclical thought shows affinity with Nietzsche's doctrine of the Eternal Recurrence.

Nietzsche's idea of eternal recurrence has affinities with Eastern thinking, such as the wheel of rebirth in Buddhism. Venerable Master Hsing Yun (2002:1) explains that 'existence is dynamic. It is like a wheel. It is therefore called the wheel of rebirth.' The change of the four seasons is rebirth in terms of time and an individual's birth, maturation and death are rebirth. To stop the eternal wheel of rebirth is one of the main objectives in Buddhism. According to Buddhist teachings, the realm in which one is reborn depends on one's past deeds. The *Great Nirvana Sutra* says: 'It is causes that result in our being born in heaven. And it is causes that

³¹ See footnote 29.

³² See footnote 30.

result in our being born in the lower realms.’ (Hsing Yun 2000:75).³³ ‘The *Flower Garland Sutra* says that serious acts of stealing will lead to rebirth in one of the three lower realms. It also says that once one is reborn as a human being, one will be poor and harried by material cares.’ (Hsing Yun 2000: 48). There are different realms of rebirth in Buddhism, but the emphasis on the endless repetition of life shows affinity with Nietzsche’s doctrine of eternal recurrence. Zarathustra, the teacher of the doctrine of eternal recurrence, affirms that he comes ‘again, with this sun, with this earth, with this eagle, with this serpent — *not* to a new life or a better life or a similar life: [he comes] back eternally to this same, selfsame life, in what is greatest as in what is smallest, to teach again the eternal recurrence of all things’ (Z III The Convalescent 2). Zarathustra’s emphasis on the word ‘same’ demonstrates that the notion of Nietzsche is unique. Joan Stambaugh (1988:5) states that in the West or in the East, nobody makes a statement as Zarathustra does.

The notion of Eternal recurrence came to Nietzsche through mystical inspiration as he was walking through the woods along the lake of Silvaplana and stopping at a huge pyramidal rock not far from Surlei, in August 1881, ‘6000 feet beyond man and time’ (EH Z 1). Although Nietzsche characterizes the idea of Eternal Recurrence as the ‘highest formula of affirmation that is at all attainable’ (EH Z I), he regards it as a terrifying idea, the ‘most abysmal idea’ (EH Z 6). Arthur C. Danto (1965:203) depicts Nietzsche’s prudential and extraordinary reaction to it: ‘Overbeck³⁴ tells us that Nietzsche spoke of it in whispers (as Zarathustra speaks to the dwarf) and alluded to it as an unheard-of revelation. Lou Salomé tells of the

³³ When we perform ten meritorious deeds we may reborn in heaven, asura or human realms, otherwise to violate them we may reborn in hell, hungry ghost, or animal realms. Venerable Master Sek Fu Ho (1969:31-32) points out that the ‘ten meritorious deeds are classified into this way: (a) The Purification of Actions: 1. To abstain from destroying living creatures. 2. To abstain from stealing. 3. To abstain from adultery. (b) The Purification of Speech: 1. To abstain from telling lies. 2. To abstain from carrying tales. 3. To abstain from using harsh language. 4. To abstain from impure talk. (c) The Purification of the Mind: 1. To be free from greed. 2. To be free from anger. 3. To be free from erroneous views. ... These ten meritorious deeds are the foundation of a Meritorious Life in human being and peace to each other on earth, and the spiritual food of all beings. Those, who know Cause and Effect, will be kind to people and will love each other. The great teacher, the sixth patriarch of the Ch’an (Zen) school, said, “It is heard that those who practise these in the right way, heaven will present before them.”’

³⁴ Carl Bernoulli, *Franz Overbeck und Friedrich Nietzsche* (Jena, 1908), II, 217 (Danto 1965:203).

“unforgettable moment” when Nietzsche confided this teaching to her “in a low voice.”³⁵ Danto (1965:209) suggests that Nietzsche’s initial response seems to have been one of great horror. His later attitude towards the notion was disproportionately manic. The outcome of horror seems to be an influence in terms of the traditional classical view of the forward-looking teleology.

Nietzsche’s doctrine of Eternal recurrence of the same involves the notion that the world repeats itself eternally and exactly, i.e. whatever there is will return again and is a return of itself in that it has all happened before and will happen again forever, in exact repetitions of itself. Zarathustra’s animals speak of how the world looks like under the notion of eternal recurrence:

Everything goes, everything comes back; eternally rolls the wheel of being. Everything dies, everything blossoms again, eternally runs the year of being. Everything breaks, everything is joined anew; eternally the same house of being is built. Everything parts, everything greets every other thing again; eternally the ring of being remains faithful to itself. In every Now, being begins; round every Here rolls the sphere of There. The centre is everywhere.’ (Z III The Convalescent 2)

In this passage, the ‘wheel’ and the ‘ring’ are the images of a circle, which signify the essence of the world, or life that has no end. It repeats itself in an endless fashion without any purpose. The ‘ring’ also symbolizes the whole, the oneness between death and birth in time and between here and there in space. Nietzsche insists that ‘time in itself is nonsense; it exists only for a being capable of sensation. It is the same with space. All *shape* appertains to the subject. It is the grasping of *surfaces* by means of mirrors’ (P 121). The manifestation of all shapes belongs to the creation of the subject. The notion of time and space means nothing in the ring because it is only a human attempt to make sense of the world we live in. The concepts of end and beginning are our concepts of time, man-made devices to predict and to control uncertainty and change. The ‘ring,’ like the sun or Buddha nature, remains pure and unchanging despite human discernment of time and space. Time and space are simply human manifestations. Nietzsche’s cyclical thought is familiar to the Eastern mind, such as is shown by the Sixth Patriarch’s insight that ‘our Essence of Mind is intrinsically pure; all things are only its manifestations’ (Hui Neng 1998:59).

³⁵ Lou-Andreas Salomé, *Friedrich Nietzsche in seinen Werken* (Vienna, 1894), p. 321 (Danto 1965:203).

Traditionally, however, the Western mind holds a linear perspective of time, a conviction that by adding up constituent parts, the invisible whole can be predicted and controlled. It believes that eventually man will come to understand the invisible mechanism of the cosmic clock, since the ‘history of science has demonstrated repeatedly that when we understand the way things are at invisible level, we are better able to understand, control and predict the visible world in which we live’ (Pine 1989:235). However, human devices limit our horizon and make little contribution to solve our finite existential predicament. Nietzsche claims: ‘Only for us is anything finite. Time is *infinitely* divisible’ (P 123). Nietzsche employs the ring or wheel image to open our eyes to an unlimited horizon. In fact, everything exists in the ring which is without boundary, end or beginning, as emphasized by his notion that the world is ‘a monster of energy, without beginning, without end: ... a sea of forces flowing and rushing together, eternally changing’ (WP 1067). That ‘the centre is everywhere’ implies that there is no ultimate end or goal and that each individual has to create meaning for his or her existence. While Nietzsche affirms the impermanent and meaningless nature of life in his notion of eternal recurrence, Buddhism affirms the reality of impermanence in the Three Dharma Seals. The First Dharma Seal — the truth of impermanence — emphasizes that ‘nothing in the world is stable or unchanging’ (Hsin Ting 30). Both Shakaymuni Buddha and Nietzsche urge us to recognize that constant change is the only reality. Zarathustra’s animals state that ‘in every now, being begins.’ The focus on *now* or *moment* appears as a solution to the constant rapidly changing reality. Zarathustra, ‘the teacher of the eternal recurrence’ (Z III The Convalescent 2), expresses this idea to the dwarf in the section entitled *The Vision and the Riddle*.

Zarathustra speaks to the dwarf who represents the spirit of gravity: ‘From this gateway, Moment, a long, eternal lane leads *backward*: behind us lies an eternity’ (Z III The Vision and the Riddle 2). The dwarf considers the eternal lane as consisting of only two paths meeting in eternity. Zarathustra instructs the dwarf to behold this moment, to stand in the path, i.e. the moment. Martin Heidegger (in O’Hara 1981:35) suggests that an individual cannot remain a spectator but has to be ‘*himself* the Moment, performing actions directed toward the future and at the same time accepting and affirming the past.’ Kathleen Higgins (in Solomon & Higgins 1988:145) also arrives at an insight into the doctrine of eternal recurrence, stating that ‘every part of life is causally bound together; the present moment is a configuration of all the

tendencies that the past has contributed to it. ... The cyclical aspect of the doctrine's model of time gives every moment equal prominence. At every moment the currents of life are equally in flux. Every aspect of the present is causally conditioned by the past, according to the doctrine of eternal recurrence.' Nietzsche's doctrine of Eternal Recurrence teaches that one needs to live in the moment rather than outside it, in the future or past. Thus 'eternity *is* in the Moment' (in O'Hara 1981:35) in the circular movement of the ring. Change is eternalised in every moment, and thus presents no threat to man, because no future is to be worried about and no past is to be regretted. In this sense one may harmonize chaotic forces in constant change and be able to affirm the totality of life. If one really recognizes that each and every moment makes a contribution to one's life, then one will make the most of it, and dare not waste it in regretting the past and being afraid of the uncertain and unpredictable future. Owing to constant changing reality, Zarathustra urges the dwarf to behold the moment. In Buddhism too we are prompted to behold each and every moment.

Venerable Master Hsing Yun (2000:85) states that 'the First Dharma Seal says that all phenomena are impermanent. ... The First Dharma Seal also says that each and every phenomenon is changing from one moment to the next.' This includes our bodies, minds and perceptions which are constantly changing from one moment to the next. 'The *Rain of Treasures Sutra* says, "This deluded mind is like so much running water; it rises and falls without ceasing. Like lightning, the moments come and go without ceasing" (Hsing Yun 2000:86). In this way, cultivating a pure mind is important in the Ch'an school. In order to cope with impermanent reality, the notion of living in the moment also plays a crucial role in the school of Ch'an. Venerable Master Hsing Yun describes a moment's realization in which the oneness of the universe is experienced. He stresses the importance of seizing the moment: 'In the brightness of the lake and colors of the mountains, and the countless changes that the scenery exhibits, the sublimed oneness of heaven and earth is fully comprehensible. The profundity of "a thousand years in one moment; one moment in a thousand years" ... , lost in speechlessness,' Master Hsing Yun (1994:37) says. Instead of turning to the future or to the past, Nietzsche indicates that one needs to live in the moment and to experience it as eternity. By living within each eternal moment, one may make peace and cope with the rapidly changing and impermanent reality.

Nietzsche acknowledges the transience of human existence, so he urges us to make the most of our present life. When he recognizes the brevity and the

preciousness of human existence, he exclaims: ‘Alas this brief span of time! We at least want to deal with it grandly and freely. We should not become slaves to the giver on account of such a small gift!’ (*PB* 52) Thus, Nietzsche prompts us to strive for the supreme human achievement in our transient existence. The shortness of human existence is also emphasized in Buddhist teachings. In the *Sections Forty-Two Sutra*, Lord Buddha reminds us that human life is as short as a breath. He does not simply have knowledge of the transience of human existence, but also emphasizes the difficulty of achieving a human form. According to Buddhist teachings, one has to accumulate a lot of merit to become a human, as every being has the possibility to be reborn in six realms in endless lives.³⁶ In the *Lotus Sutra*, Lord Buddha employs an analogy ‘to illustrate both the difficulty and the preciousness of being born as a human. The sutra states:

In a pitch black night, a blind turtle hopes to find a shallow shore. In the vast ocean and endless darkness there is only one piece of wood. This piece of wood has one hole. Over the course of one hundred years, the turtle only comes up for air one time. Only if it is able to find that hole will it be able to survive.’ (Hsing Yun 1999a:6)

The analogy shows us how precarious and precious human existence is in order to prompt us to make maximum use of our opportunity to attain enlightenment. ‘Only in the human world could one practice the teachings of the Buddha, realize the truth, and attain liberation’ says Venerable Master Hsin Ting (6).³⁷ Recognizing the transient nature of human existence and the preciousness of life, one should not waste, but try one’s best to become what one is. In this way one create meaning in one’s transient existence, as Zarathustra claims that the *Übermensch* shall be the meaning of the earth (*Z* Prologue 3), and one may escape the meaninglessness of the endless recurrence. Nietzsche considers eternal recurrence as ‘the greatest weight’ —

³⁶ The six realms of existence are hell, hungry ghost, animal, human, asura, and heaven.

³⁷ In the realm of hell and hungry ghost, there is only pain and suffering without any knowledge of liberating these beings from such miserable and terrible states of existence. In the realm of animal, beings are ignorant of enlightenment. In the realm of heaven and asura, beings do not encounter any suffering and thus thoroughly enjoy their states of existence without thinking about the need to attain buddhahood. Thus, the possibility of encountering both suffering and happiness makes the human realm the best among the six realms of existence for practising Buddhist teachings in order to attain enlightenment and buddhahood.

University of Pretoria etd – Ku, H L H (2003)

What, if some day or night a demon were to steal after you into your loneliest loneliness and say to you: 'This life as you now live it and have lived it, you will have to live once more and innumerable times more; and there will be nothing new in it, but every pain and every joy and every thought and sigh and everything unutterably small or great in your life will have to return to you, all in the same succession and sequence — even this spider and this moonlight between the trees, and even this moment and I myself. The eternal hourglass of existence is turned upside down again and again, and you with it, speck of dust!'

Would you not throw yourself down and gnash your teeth and curse the demon who spoke thus? Or have you once experienced a tremendous moment when you would have answered him: 'You are a god and never have I heard anything more divine.' If this thought gained possession of you, it would change you as you are or perhaps crush you. The question in each and every thing, 'Do you desire this once more and innumerable times more?' would lie upon your actions as the greatest weight. Or how well disposed would you have to become to yourself and to life *to crave nothing more fervently* than this ultimate eternal confirmation and seal? (GS 341)

There is a paradox in this passage. The idea of eternal recurrence can be interpreted as a divine message to inspire those who strive for becoming what they are. Then one will treasure such a precious existence to create one's life fervently toward this eternal confirmation in every moment and action. On the other hand, the notion appears as a horror for some people because of the emphasis of repetitive meaninglessness. It makes one gnash one's teeth, and appears to be the greatest burden, because human beings are only considered as a 'speck of dust', without serving any purpose or having any superior status among other living organisms. The term 'speck of dust' may shock those who believe that human beings are creatures of God and made in his image. The conception of man as at the top of the chain of being, controlling the world, is rooted within such a mind. The concepts of self, dignity and identity are highly valued in the Western mind. Charles Taylor (1989:27) particularly emphasizes the question of identity, of 'who am I?', claiming that 'my identity is defined by the commitments and identifications which provide the frame or horizon within which I can try to determine from case to case what is good, or valuable, or what ought to be done, or what I endorse or oppose.' An 'identity crisis' will occur when one expresses uncertainty as to what one is and where one stands. Thus, the meaningless nature of reality and existence may appear as a horror to those people who emphasize identity.

The hourglass of existence, which is turned upside down eternally, represents the constantly changing nature of reality. Since change and uncertainty are recognized

in Nietzsche's notion of the eternal recurrence, how can one take it as a divine message, when one carries such a great burden in every action? With the notion of eternal recurrence, how can one change or transform to become what one is without being crushed by change? Nietzsche admits that the danger of uncertainty and unpredictability is like setting sail for 'uncharted seas' (GS 283), asserting that 'the secret for harvesting from existence the greatest fruitfulness and the greatest enjoyment is — to *live dangerously*' (GS 283). Nietzsche shows us the possibility of such an achievement through his idea of the *Übermensch*, aiming to harvest 'more fruitful human beings, happier beings' (GS 283). Nietzsche's basic concern is the possibility of a total affirmation of life and of the world and the emergence of an enhanced form of life, strong and rich enough to stand as a justification of life. For Nietzsche, the world is eternally meaningless, yet it is invested with meaning by the life-affirmation of the *Übermensch*. The *Übermensch* does not flee from danger, but resists 'any ultimate peace' and wills 'the eternal recurrence of war and peace.' (GS 285); he abides in eternal moments and learns that 'midnight too is noon; pain too is a joy; curses too are a blessing' (Z IV The Drunken Song 10), thus acknowledging the intricate nature of all things. Zarathustra states: "'Abide, moment!" then you wanted *all* back. All anew, all eternally, all entangled, ensnared, enamored ... , then you *loved* the world. Eternal ones, love it eternally and evermore' (Z IV The Drunken Song 10). Zarathustra prompts us to love all because all is eternally interweaved together. In order to become what one is, one has to learn to live in the moment and to affirm the totality of the world in the process of becoming-*Übermensch*.

The question is how to affirm the totality of life and the world? The answer is that one has to learn to see beyond good and evil. The Sixth Patriarch points out that 'good and evil are opposite to each other, but their quintessence cannot be dualistic. This non-dualistic nature is called the true nature (*i.e.*, the absolute reality) which can neither be contaminated by evil nor affected by good' (Hui Neng 1998:60). When we are thinking of neither good nor evil, at that particular moment is our real nature, as 'Buddha nature is non-duality.' (1998:25) Buddha nature is pure within each of us, so 'good deeds and evil deeds are only the result of good thoughts and evil thoughts respectively. Thus, within the Essence of Mind all things are intrinsically pure, like the azure of the sky and the radiance of the sun and the moon which, when obscured by passing clouds, may appear as if their brightness had been dimmed' (Hui Neng 1998:59). In this context, Master Hui Neng (1998:122) asserts that 'when your mind

is crooked or depraved, you are ordinary beings with Buddha-nature latent in you.’ ‘From the point of view of ordinary men,’ he says, ‘enlightenment and ignorance are two separate things. Wise men who realise thoroughly the Essence of Mind know that they are of the same nature. This same nature or non-dual nature is what is called the “real nature,” which neither decreases in the case of ordinary man and ignorant persons, nor increases in the case of the enlightened sage’ (Hui Neng 1998:108). The manifestation of good or evil among things depends on our mind. We create our own world, whether it is paradise or hell. ‘By dwelling our mind on evil things, hell arises. By dwelling our mind on good acts, paradise appears. Dragons and snakes are the transformation of venomous hatred, while Bodhisattvas are mercy personified’ (Hui Neng 1998:61). This cultivation of one’s mind distinguishes between bodhisattvas and ordinary men in Buddhism, while Nietzsche states that ‘what distinguishes the higher human beings from the lower is that the former see and hear immeasurably more, and see and hear thoughtfully’ (GS 301). Higher human beings are those who perceive and affirm the totality of life and the world.

What sets the *Übermensch* apart is a matter of attitude. This attitude is *amor fati* — the love of fate, to love the totality of life and the world. It is a total life-affirmation. Nietzsche claims: ‘My formula for greatness in a human being is *amor fati*: that one wants nothing to be different, not forward, not backward, not in all eternity. Not merely bear what is necessary, still less conceal it ... — but *love* it’ (EH Clever 10). His formula is to love life, with a complete love of one’s fate and of the world, no matter what negative or positive aspects one encounters. A total life-affirmation means to say ‘Yes to opposition and war’ (EH BT 3). Oppositions such as joy and sorrow or happiness and suffering are inseparable, so that one must accept and endure both sides in an eternal becoming. Nietzsche asserts that the Dionysian artist strives for the highest affirmation of life ‘in order to be oneself the eternal joy of becoming’ (EH BT 3). Zarathustra points out that joy ‘wants love, it wants hatred, it is overrich, gives, throws away, begs that one might take it, thanks the taker, it would like to be hated; so rich is joy that it thirsts for woe, for hell, for hatred, for disgrace, for the cripple, for *world*’ (Z IV The Drunken Song 11). The attitude of *amor fati* is born out of an overwhelming richness of love and joy towards life and the world. Nietzsche postulates ‘a formula for the highest affirmation, born of fullness, of overfullness, a Yes-saying without reservation, ... even to everything that is questionable and strange in existence’ (EH BT 2). His formula affirms oppositions

and conflicts because of having excessive strength and richness. Nietzsche points to the highest formula as the ‘ultimate, most joyous, most wantonly extravagant Yes to life’ (*EH BT 2*). With this formula one may create a new world for oneself by affirming one’s fate. The total affirmation of life sets the *Übermensch* above all ordinary men. To love the totality of one’s fate implies to love the whole, including oneself and all other beings. Nietzsche describes the practice of *amor fati* in this way:

Anyone who manages to experience the history of humanity as a whole as *his own history* will feel in an enormously generalized way all the grief of an invalid who thinks of health, of an old man who thinks of the dreams of his youth, of a lover deprived of his beloved, of the martyr whose ideal is perishing, of the hero on the evening after a battle that has decided nothing but brought him wounds and the loss of his friend. But if one endured, if one *could* endure this immense sum of grief of all kinds while yet being the hero who, as the second day of battle breaks, welcomes the dawn and his fortune, being a person whose horizon encompasses thousands of years past and future, being the heir of all the nobility of all past spirit — an heir with a sense of obligation, ... if one could burden one’s soul with all this — the oldest, the newest, losses, hopes, conquests, and the victories of humanity, if one could finally contain all this in one soul and crowd it into a single feeling — this would surely have to result in a happiness that humanity has not known so far: the happiness of a god full of power and love, full of tears and laughter, a happiness that, like the sun in the evening, continually bestows its inexhaustible riches, pouring them into the sea, feeling richest, as the sun does, only when even the poorest fisherman is still rowing with golden oars! This godlike feeling would then be called — humaneness (*GS 337*).

This passage exhorts us to expand our horizon to be able to see the whole. If one ‘*whose horizon encompasses thousands of years past and future, being the heir of all the nobility of all past spirit*’ feels a sense of *obligation* or responsibility, then one will enjoy a full life with the godlike happiness and the higher humanity that man has never experienced hitherto. In this state of being, one harmonizes internal and external chaos, uniting with others and the world as a whole. *Amor fati* is not an experience — a moment of ecstasy, which one searches for in one’s life, but rather an attitude that one needs to cultivate and to practice every day in order to create and transform the self. How can one create such a great horizon in one’s soul to see the wholeness and oneness of all beings? The answer, ‘to broaden our limited horizon,’ may lie in Buddhism — cultivating and practising bodhisattva spirit in understanding the notion of No-self. Unlike traditional Western thinking that emphasizes self, or identity, the notion of No-self in Buddhism may present an innovative answer to this question.

Venerable Hsin Ting (30) describes the notion of No-self: ‘All things in the world generated by causes and conditions have no self and are beyond control. Since they are not independent, they must rely on one another.’ Everything exists due to causes and conditions, and the same also applies to the self. If one understands that the existence of the self depends on another, then this will expand one’s limited self-horizon to an unlimited whole. For example, a glass of water can only contain a limited volume of water whether it is a small or a big glass. If one puts the glass of water into the sea, the volume of water will become unlimited as part of the sea. The practice of bodhisattva spirit can be regarded as a manifestation of the doctrine of No-self. In the *Avatamsaka Sutra*, Buddha points to the oneness of all things, saying that ‘there is no difference between the mind, the Buddha, and all sentient beings’ (Hsing Yun 1999c:67). Bodhisattvas take notice of the wonder of oneness, as they realize that sentient beings, bodhisattvas and Buddhas have Buddha nature, so they strive to help and to liberate all sentient beings and thus attain enlightenment, eventually buddhahood.

Bodhisattvas reveal a rich sun-nature towards all beings. The ninth vow of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra — ‘Always in compliance with beings’ (Lee 1996:14) in the *Flower Garland Sutra*, shows clearly the practice of bodhisattva spirit and the oneness between all beings, Bodhisattvas and Buddhas. The vow implies that Bodhisattva Samantabhadra

would be a good physician to the sick, a guide to those who have wandered from the path, setting their feet in the right way, [He] would be a light to those who wander in darkness. [He] would enable the people in poverty to discover the vaults of treasure. A Bodhisattva should thus benefit all beings in equal treatment, and bestow his loving care on all beings alike. And why? because if a Bodhisattva serves all beings that is equal to serving Buddhas dutifully. To hold all beings in high esteem, and render them respectful services, that is equal to reverencing and serving the Tathagatas [one of the ten names of the Buddha]. To make all beings happy, is to please all Tathagatas. And why? because the Great Compassionate Heart is the essence of Buddha-hood. For the sake of (delivering) all beings, (the Bodhisattva) develops great compassion, and from the great compassion springs the Bodhi-heart, from the Bodhi-heart comes the enlightenment. (Lee 1996:14-15)

Bodhisattvas attain the fruit of buddhahood or enlightenment by striving to liberate all sentient beings. The great vow of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra is a well-known example to represent the spirit of bodhisattva that seeks to benefit all beings within the whole. In fact, we are all interdependent upon one another, as constituent parts of

the whole. We are members of an evolving system. Paul Cilliers (1998:111) indicates that the ‘modelling of evolutionary (or self-organising) systems has shown that purely selfish behaviour by members of a system is detrimental not only to the system, but ultimately also to the particular individuals.’ The growth of oneself is the growth of others and the world, while the destruction of others and of the world is the destruction of oneself. An individual who cultivates the spirit of bodhisattva may make a big difference to his or her environment. In this sense cultivating and practising the spirit of Bodhisattva should not only be a task for Buddhists but for all human beings.

Through the process of the self-overcoming of morality, Nietzsche attempts to destroy Christian morality and to provide a vision of the evolution of a higher form of existence in terms of self-creating and self-transforming. His idea of the *Übermensch* presents a future development of the human species that can live the fullest life, but the way to attain such an achievement is unknown. The way is unknown, because it is different for each person, each person’s fate being different. One has to create one’s own way. Humanistic Buddhism propagates the bodhisattva way which leads to enlightenment and buddhahood. As a Fo Guang Buddhist, I practise the Fo Guang motto which presents a way for me to live the fullest life:

Render others faith,
Render others joy,
Render others hope,
Render others convenience.

Conclusion

Nietzsche sets up a ‘campaign against morality’ to destroy Christian morality. He postulates the process of the self-overcoming of morality, but without providing any alternative moral codes. He calls himself the first immoralist, but his *Übermensch* appears to be a paradox — the destroyer of morality but also supreme human achievement. It seems that Nietzsche employs an extraordinary strategy to provoke us to become aware of the problem of morality itself. His ‘campaign against morality’ appears to be a tremendous threat to many moralists because of his shocking assertion about the death of God that shakes the very foundation of morality. Nietzsche fails to offer us any moral law or set of moral codes, and thus gives rise to criticism of his ‘campaign against morality’ and his idea of the *Übermensch*.

Nietzsche commits himself a genealogical critique of morality, as he believes that the source of morality is not supernatural. His interpretation of morality shows that traditional moralists have falsely focused on causes of human moral behaviour and have thus ignored the fact that morality is a symptom of an ongoing process. Nietzsche proposes a trial and error approach for the process of the self-overcoming of morality. Man is always involved in a process of evolution, always between beast and *Übermensch*. Within this process, man needs to balance inward and outward chaos. Nietzsche only warns us of the danger inherent in the play of chaotic forces without providing a definite answer to all adventurers and seekers who participate in this dangerous and wonderful life-game. He makes an impressive statement about the dangerous and uncanny nature this game: ‘Every profound thinker is more afraid of being understood than of being misunderstood. The latter may hurt his vanity, but the former his heart, his sympathy, which always says: “Alas, why do *you* want to have as hard a time as I did?”’ (*BGE* 290) The question is what gives an individual strength to triumph over chaotic forces? Perhaps, Humanistic Buddhism may serve as a complement, to harmonize ‘chaos in oneself to be able to give birth to a dancing star’ (*Z Prologue* 5) — the *Übermensch*. Figure 2 is an attempt at a diagramme to illustrate this point of view. It shows the integration of Nietzsche’s strategy and Humanistic Buddhism within an ongoing process.

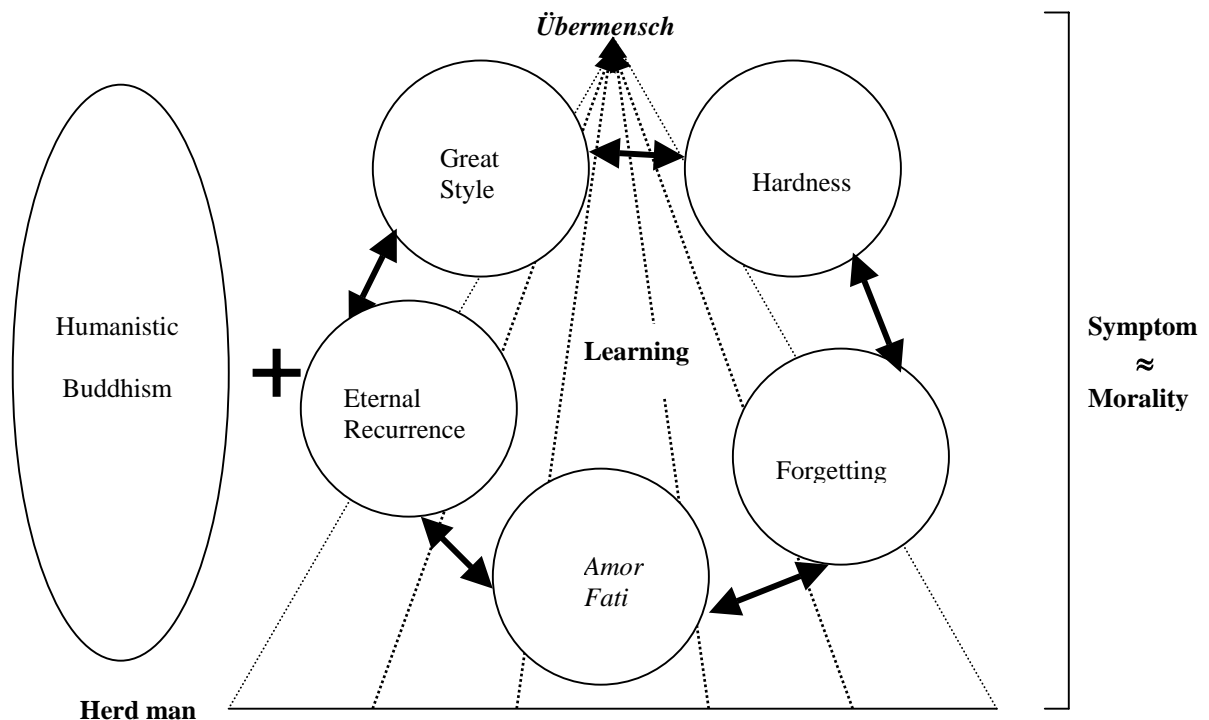


Figure 2: Humanistic Buddhism plus the process of the ‘self-overcoming of morality’ analysis

Figure 2 reveals a mountain shape to illustrate the process of self-transforming or self-overcoming, from beast to *Übermensch*. This process consists of five major components — Nietzsche's notion of eternal recurrence, the attitude of *amor fati*, forgetting, the creation of a great style and the practice of hardness, symbolized by the diamond that 'all creators are hard' (*TI The Hammer Speaks*) — that the creator has to commit himself to. Humanistic Buddhism, which emphasizes the integration of the spirit of bodhisattva in everyday life, is proposed to serve as a complement to this process. Similar to the sun, with a gift-giving nature that shines on all, one who practises the spirit of bodhisattva may grow as a constituent part by making a contribution to the whole. In this way one affirms oneself as well as the relationship between oneself and the world in the ongoing process. The process is evolving eternally, allowing differences and encouraging creativity rather than seeking moral codes to make human behaviour conform. Morality is a 'mere symptomatology' (*TI The 'Improvers' of Mankind*) of a personal commitment of such a process. The dash lines imply various ways to climb to the top of the mountain — to become what one is, *Übermensch*, because each individual is unique and his way of participating in the process is different. Zarathustra tells us that *the* way does not exist, yet Lord Buddha provides us many feasible ways to attain enlightenment and even Buddhahood through his teachings. Nietzsche simply warns us that 'no matter how much we have faced up to the beautiful chaos of existence and denied it all providential reason and goodness, we still have to pass our hardest test' (*GS 277*). Humanistic Buddhism, which emphasizes the practice of Buddhist teachings and the spirit of bodhisattva in our daily lives, may help us to pass this hardest test of life.

The five components of the diagramme, shown in Figure 2, is an attempt to summarize the major characteristics which are necessary in the process of becoming *Übermensch*. Nietzsche's notion of eternal recurrence, a major component of the process, stresses the importance of living in the *moment* in the play of forces. Man is always afraid of change and impermanence because it brings about uncertainty and unpredictability, but change is reality. If one recognizes that each moment is eternal and practises living in the moment, then the fear of change may diminish. The memory of past bad experiences and the anxiety of an unpredictable future may engender a feeling of fear and a desire to escape from reality. Forgetting, however, makes room for new things. Nietzsche introduces a new attitude of *amor fati*, to love

the totality of one's fate, no matter whether it is good or bad, positive or negative, but learn 'to be a Yes-sayer' (GS 276). His paradox is that the opposition may motivate an individual to take war-like action and thus keep on growing. In this sense one may affirm one's life by living beyond good and evil, as the Dionysian artist to create one's life by attaining a great style. Finally, the quality of hardness is crucial, a constant and diligent practice of shaping, transforming and creating oneself in the ongoing learning process.

Nietzsche favours a trial and error approach to morality where learning plays a crucial role in an ongoing process. Learning focuses on the attainment of experiences and knowledge to improve oneself. In this context, the consideration of human worth should be shifted from determination by moral values to an ability to grow constantly. Learning facilitates self-improvement, helping us to create the 'bridge' to create the hypothetical goal — the *Übermensch*. Nietzsche claims that 'we must become the best learners' (GS 335), and that we have 'to learn more and more to see as beautiful what is necessary in things; then [we] shall be one of those who make things beautiful' (GS 276). We have to be life-learners. We learn and create at the same time as artists in the creation of our own life. Charles E. Scott (1990:7) remarks that the question of ethics arises from within and that learning plays an important role: 'Learning to name things anew, to become alert to exclusions and to forgotten aspects in a people's history, to overhear what is usually drowned out by the predominant values, to rethink what is ordinarily taken for granted, to find out how to hold itself in question: these are aspects of the thought of the question of ethics.' By associating the question of ethics with learning, one focuses on the learning process that makes one grow rather than to seek moral laws, or an absolute 'truth' that evaluate human behaviour or worth according to moral standards.

Nietzsche asks for a paradigm shift with regard to ethics, from the 'will to truth' to the *Übermensch*, a self-transforming process of growing or a process of the 'self-overcoming of morality' in his language. This is what Nietzsche defines as a 'supra-moral' version of ethical life. He attacks our traditional accepted moral values, yet he urges us to *will*, or to *vow* in Buddhist terms, the *Übermensch* which has never been willed hitherto. To make such a vow is important, because to get the ripest fruit of the *Übermensch* one has to will it. Nietzsche strives to make us become aware of such a will, because he believes that our current understanding of morality is an obstacle to the harvest of the ripest fruit. Because traditional Western thinking tries to

Epilogue

Nietzsche's idea of the *Übermensch* implies a never-ending struggle for self-perfection and self-fulfilment. This indomitable human spirit is exactly what South Africans need, not only for spiritual, but also for technological, social and economical growth. Individuals need to move towards a better life for themselves and for all instead of waiting for, or depending on, others, or government to act. African people should look at a bigger picture, to go beyond themselves. J.F. Kennedy (in Maxwell-Mahon & Titlestad 1993:134) in his Presidential Inaugural Address urged the Americans to 'ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country.' It is important to understand that the growth of society depends on the effort of all members of the society. To strive for satisfying the growth needs, to become what one is, may make a valuable contribution to the prosperity and growth of society as a whole.

To become what one is can be associated with the need for self-actualization which appears at the top of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. At this level an individual strives for growth. In this way his or her potential tends to be developed. In fact, human potential is unlimited, but many people are used to self-imposed mental limitations. Nietzsche's mystical experience in coming across the doctrine of eternal recurrence seems to imply that he tapped the unlimited life-force of the universe which is beyond the understanding of reason or logic. Human potential is similar to the profound life-force of the universe. Zarathustra exclaims: 'Alas! Alas! *The world is deep*' (Z IV The Drunken Song 5). Likewise, the bodhisattva vow may help one to tap into unlimited human potential by going beyond oneself to strive for the attainment of buddhahood. If one can shift one's paradigm so as to respond to the need of self-actualization first of all, to live life to the fullest and to become what one is, then all the needs for esteem, love, security and also the physiological needs can probably be satisfied in the same process. These needs seem to be by-products of satisfying the need for self-actualization. An individual who tends to the growth needs may make a big difference to his or her environment. This idea is apparent in the Butterfly Effect.

The Butterfly Effect describes a phenomenon called "sensitive dependence on initial conditions," ... the notion that a butterfly stirring the air today in Peking can transform storm systems next month in New York' (Gleick 1987:8). This suggests

that a small input can lead to dramatic results. A chain of events can have a point of crisis that might amplify small changes. Since an individual is a self-organising system, he or she 'reacts to the state of affairs in the environment, but simultaneously transforms [himself or herself] as a result of these affairs, often affecting the environment in turn' (Cilliers 1998:108). Thus, by shifting one's paradigm to respond primarily to the growth need, one may make a significant difference in the economic development of Africa.

Economic development and advanced technology have raised living standards for many people, yet people in the poorest countries cannot share the fruit of growth. The income gap between the richest and the poorest countries has grown in the past half-century. For example, in 1960 the richest fifth of the world's nations received about 70 percent of all income, which in 1994 increased to 86 percent. In 1960 the poorest fifth received about 2 percent of all income, which in 1994 had decreased to little more than 1 percent (Post, Lawrence & Weber 2002:242).³⁸ Some may find reasons to justify the inequality and manipulation among countries, just as reasons were found to justify the worldwide exploration and colonization by the Europeans. Solomon (1988:7) indicates that 'in the realm of morality, politics, and religion it is the effort to prove that there is but one legitimate set of morals (the middle-class morals of Europe), one legitimate form of government (the form of parliamentary monarchy that ruled most of Western Europe) and one true religion, to be defended not just by faith and with force of arms, but by rational argument, by "reason alone."

Although the colonial period is over, today Africa is still defined as a place of poverty, disease and war. According to Nepad (New Partnership for Africa's Development) in Africa, half the population live on less than US\$ 1 per day. More than 25 million African people are living with HIV/Aids. One of the objectives of Nepad is to achieve and sustain an average gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate of over 7 per cent per annum for the next 15 years. It appears to be difficult to attain such an ambitious goal, but the case of Fo Guang Shan may inspire those who are interested in how to make things happen by a personal commitment.

Master Hsing Yun found himself penniless when he went to Taiwan in 1949. He established Fo Guang Shan in Taiwan in 1967. According to his great vow, 'the Buddha's light shines universally while the Dharma water flows in the five

³⁸ See appendix 2.

continents.’ Today, after a few decades, the branches of Fo Guang Shan flourish in these continents. Over one hundred Buddhist temples have been established both in Taiwan and overseas. These include Hsi Lai Temple in USA, Nan Tian Temple in Australia, and the largest of the Order, Nan Hua Temple in South Africa, which is the headquarter for teaching Buddhism on the African continent. The achievement of Venerable Master Hsing Yun demonstrates the importance of making a bodhisattva vow and genuinely and diligently practising the spirit of bodhisattva in order to make things happen.

The experience of the former President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, also gives a vivid example of making things happen. In *Long Walk to Freedom*, Mr. Mandela describes his long walk as one of climbing hills, reminding one of Zarathustra’s endeavour of climbing the mountains. He spent twenty-seven years in jail, illustrating the courage and strength to sustain the freedom struggle. He triumphed over the great hill of apartheid, but the hills of poverty, disease, crime and so on still exist, waiting for him to climb. He insists that freedom goes hand in hand with responsibility. Today, we are the ‘lucky ones’ to enjoy the fruit of freedom in South Africa. To set up a vision of becoming what one is may remind *everybody* to do his or her best in the creation of a rainbow nation. If one can commit oneself to the process of self-overcoming, to strive for the overcoming of *ressentiment* and to fight against unfavourable conditions, one can eventually triumph over resentful feelings, rancour and bitterness, like the noble who is capable of discharging his instincts into deeds for growth. One would open opportunity for cultivating a spacious heart which is capable of tolerating others, no matter what their differences, such as race, gender, religion and so on; one would advance towards spiritual and material growth. The growth of individuals signifies the growth of a society as a whole. In this sense, climbing the ‘hills’ should not be only Mr. Mandela’s privilege, as all members of the society have the responsibility to participate in this continuous process in order to enjoy freedom and to attain spiritual and material prosperity. The continuous process of self-creating and self-overcoming are well expressed in lines from Mandela’s autobiography:

I have walked that long road to freedom. But I have discovered that after climbing a great hill, one only finds that there are many more hills to climb. I have taken a moment here to rest, to steal a view of the glorious vista that surrounds me, to look back on the distance I have come. But I can rest only for a moment, for with freedom come responsibilities, and I dare not linger, for my long walk is not yet ended. (Mandela 1994:202)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 1995. *Our Report*. Fokuangshan Buddhist Order.
- 1998. *Liao-Fan's Four Lessons*. Translated by Chiu-Nan Lai. The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation: Taipei.
- Allison, D.B. 1977. (ed.) *The New Nietzsche: Contemporary Styles of Interpretation*. Dell: New York.
- Anandamaitreya, B.1993. *Buddhism: Lectures and Essays*. Samayawardhana: Sri Lanka.
- Antonites, A.J. 1997. *Theory of Complexity and Chaos*. University of Pretoria: Pretoria.
- Bernstein, R.J. 1983. *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism*. Basil Blackwell: Oxford.
- Blake, W. 1971. *Blake the complete poems: The Poems of William Blake*. (ed.) W.H. Stevenson. Longman: London.
- Camus, A. 1955. *The Myth of Sisyphus*. Translated by Justin O'brien. Hamish Hamilton: London.
- Chuang Tze. 1996. *The Book of Chuang Tzu*. Translated by Martin Palmer. Arkana: London.
- Cilliers, P. 1998. *Complexity and Postmodernism: Understanding complex systems*. Routledge: London.
- Conway, D. W. 1997. *Nietzsche's Dangerous Game: Philosophy in the Twilight of the Idols*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.
- Conway, D. W. 1998. The genius as squanderer: some remarks on the *Übermensch* an higher humanity, *International studies in philosophy*. 30(2):81-95.
- Danto, A.C. 1965. *Nietzsche as Philosopher*. Columbia Univ. Press: New York.
- Gleick, J. 1987. *Chaos: Making a New Science*. Viking: New York.
- Hsin Ting. *Buddhism for the Perfection of This Life*. Fokuangshan Disciples: Taipei.
- Hsing Yun. 1994. *Perfectly Willing*. Buddha's Light International Association: Hacienda Heights, CA
- Hsing Yun. 1998. *The Essence of Ch'an*. Buddha's Light International Association: Hacienda Heights, CA.

University of Pretoria etd – Ku, H L H (2003)

Hsing Yun. 1999 (a). *The Fundamental Concepts of Humanistic Buddhism*. Translated by Amy Lam & Susan Tidwell. Buddha's Light International Association: Hacienda Heights, CA.

Hsing Yun. 1999 (b). *On Becoming a Bodhisattva*. Translated by Amy Lam & Susan Tidwell. Buddha's Light International Association: Hacienda Heights, CA.

Hsing Yun. 1999 (c). *Only a Great Rain: A Guide to Chinese Buddhist Meditation*. Trans. by Tom Graham. Buddha's Light International Association: Hacienda Heights, CA.

Hsing Yun. 2000. *Lotus in a Stream*. Translated by Tom Graham. Buddha's Light International Association: Hacienda Heights, CA.

Hsing Yun. 2001. *Buddhism: pure and simple*. Translated by Tom Graham. Buddha's Light International Association: Hacienda Heights, CA.

Hsing Yun. 2002. Wheel of Rebirth. *Nan Hua Buddhist Temple Newsletter*. 2(3):1.

Hui Neng, 1998. *The Sutra of Hui Neng*. H.K. Buddhist Book Distributor Press: Hong Kong.

Humphreys, C. 1974. *Exploring Buddhism*. The Theosophical Publishing House: Wheaton.

Jordaan, W. & Jordaan, J. 1984. *Man in Context*. 2nd Edition. Lexicon: Johannesburg.

Kaufmann, W. 1974. *Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist*. Princeton University Press: Princeton.

Lee, P.C. 1996. *The Two Buddhist Books in Mahayana*. The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation: Taiwan.

Magnus, B. & Higgins, K.M. (ed.) 1996. *The Cambridge Companion to Nietzsche*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.

Mandela, Nelson. 1994. *The Illustrated Long Walk to Freedom: The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela*. Little, Brown: Boston.

Maxwell-Mahon, W.D. & Titlestad, P.J.H. (ed.) 1992. *Ways with Words*. 3rd Edition. Lexicon: Johannesburg.

Mistry, F. 1981. *Nietzsche and Buddhism: Prolegomenon to a Comparative Study*. Walter de Gruyter: Berlin.

Morrison, R. G. 1997. *Nietzsche and Buddhism: A Study in Nihilism and Ironic Affinities*. Oxford University Press: Oxford.

Nehamas, A. 1985. *Nietzsche: Life As Literature*. Harvard University Press: Cambridge.

University of Pretoria etd – Ku, H L H (2003)

Newman, E. G. 1982. The meta-moralism of Nietzsche, *The Journal of value inquiry*. (16): 207-222

O'Hara, D. (ed) 1981. *Why Nietzsche Now*. Indiana University Press: Bloomington.
Pine, R.C. 1989. Our Time: Quantum physics and reality. *Science and the human prospect*. Wadsworth: Belmont.

Schacht, R. (ed.) 1994. *Nietzsche, Genealogy, Morality: Essays on Nietzsche's On the Genealogy of Morals*. University of California Press: Berkeley.

Schacht, R. (ed.) 2001. *Nietzsche's Postmoralism: Essays on Nietzsche's Prelude to Philosophy's Future*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.

Schrift, A. D. 1995. *Nietzsche's French Legacy: A Genealogy of Poststructuralism*. Routledge: New York.

Schutte, O. 1984. *Beyond Nihilism: Nietzsche Without Masks*. The University of Chicago Press: Chicago.

Scott, C.E. 1990. *The Question of Ethics: Nietzsche, Foucault, Heidegger*. Indian University Press: Bloomington.

Sek, F.Ho. 1969. *A Lecture of The Excellent Karma Resulting from the Practice of the Ten Commandments*. Translated by Chia Lai Ching. Buddhist Book Distributor: Hong Kong.

Shaffer, P. 1964. *The Royal Hunt of the Sun*. Penguin Books: London.

Shakespeare, W. 1980. *Hamlet*. (ed.) T.J.B. Spencer. Penguin Books: London.

Shakespeare, W. 1978. *Henry IV, Part 1*. (ed.) Angus Rose. Maskew Miller Longman: Cape Town.

Solomon, R. C. 1988. *Continental Philosophy since 1750. The Rise and fall of the Self*. Oxford Univ. Press: Oxford.

Solomon, R. C. & Higgins, K. M. (ed.) 1988. *Reading Nietzsche*. Oxford University Press: New York.

Stambaugh, J. 1988. *Nietzsche's Thought of Eternal Return*. Center for Advanced Research in Phenomenology & University Press of America: Washington, D.C.

Stern, J.P. 1979. *A Study of Nietzsche*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.

Swe, K.M.M. 2000. *The Teaching of the Buddha*. Lari Tiller Power: Mercer Island WA.

Taylor, C. 1989. *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge.

University of Pretoria etd – Ku, H L H (2003)

Thiele, L.P. 1990. *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Politics of the Soul: A Study of Heroic Individualism*. Princeton University Press: Princeton.

Thynn Thynn. 1995. *Living Meditation, Living Insight: The Path of Mindfulness in Daily Life*. The Corporate Body of the Buddha Educational Foundation: Taipei.

Tongern, P. J. M. van. 2000. *Reinterpreting Modern Culture: An Introduction to Friedrich Nietzsche's Philosophy*. Purdue University Press: West Lafayette, Indiana.

Voltaire. 1990. *Candide and Other Stories*. Translated by Roger Pearson. Oxford University Press: Oxford.

Zeitlin, I.M. 1994. *Nietzsche: A Re-examination*. Polity Press: Cambridge.

Appendix 1

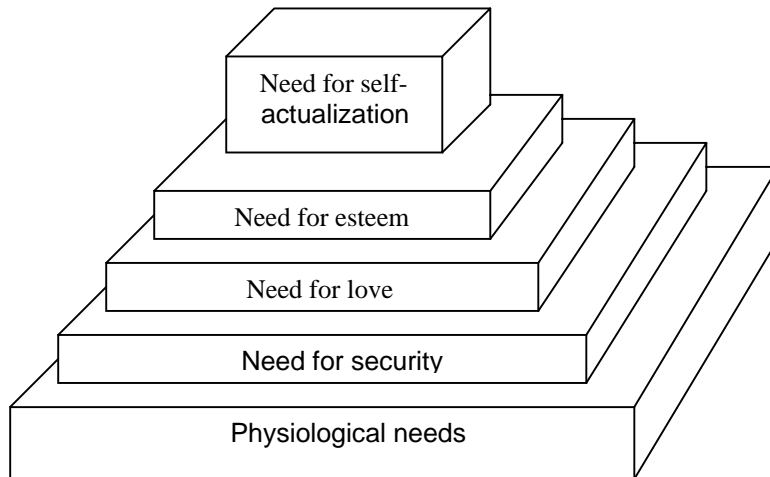


Figure 1: A hierarchy of needs

Source: W. Jordaan & J. Jordaan, *Man in context*, 2nd edition, Johannesburg: Lexicon, 1984.

Appendix 2

Table 1: Global income distribution, 1960-1994

Year	Share of Global Income (%)		Ratio of Richest to Poorest
	Richest 20 Percent	Poorest 20 Percent	
1960	70.2%	2.3%	30 to 1
1970	73.9	2.3	32 to 1
1980	76.3	1.7	45 to 1
1991	84.7	1.4	61 to 1
1994	85.8	1.1	78 to 1

Source: United Nations Development Program, *Human Development Report 1992, 1994, and 1997* (New York: Oxford University Press). (Post, Lawrence & Weber 2002:242)