



The President Who Is Beyond Good and Evil: A Nietzschean Pantomime

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This paper draws many parallels between Guy Debord's *Society of the Spectacle* and the philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche particularly *Beyond Good and Evil* and *Thus Spake Zarathustra* in anticipating and predicting the rise of the Superman, the 45th President of the United States Donald J. Trump. Debord identified the spectacle as "The moment when the commodity has achieved the total occupation of life". What Debord didn't foresee is the rise of Donald J. Trump which Nietzsche would describe as the "noontide" or transcendence of the society of the spectacle, and indeed the eternal recurrence of the society of the spectacle. The spectacle is capable of regenerating itself in perpetuity through the essential slogan in Trumpism—make America great again! Nietzsche prophesizes that nihilism will be turned into the new religion where he predicts the rise of the Superman. Here it will be argued that Donald J. Trump is the nominal head of this new religion and may therefore be identified as the Anti-Christ.

Keywords: Nietzsche, Debord, Spectacle, Anti-Christ, Superman, Donald J. Trump, nihilism, Zarathustra

Introduction

To understand the phenomenon of Trumpism we have to go back to the Situationist movement that started in 1957. The Situationists' starting points were that the original working class movements had been crushed, by the bourgeoisie in the west. Trade unions and leftist political parties had sold out; and capitalism could appropriate even the most radical ideas and return them safely in the form of harmless ideologies. In opposition to this process, leading Situationist Guy Debord formulated his theory of the Spectacle: "The moment when the commodity has achieved the total occupation of life" (Debord, 1967). Western culture had become The Society of Spectacle. Debord argued that through computers, television, rapid transport systems, etc, capitalism controlled the very conditions of existence. Hence the world we see is not the real world, but the world we are conditioned to see: the Society of the Spectacle. Debord saw the end result as alienation, but didn't necessarily see this as a bad thing as he felt this would eventually break the stranglehold of spectacular society. What Debord didn't foresee is the rise of Donald J. Trump which Nietzsche would describe as the "noontide" or transcendence of the society of the spectacle, and indeed the eternal recurrence of the society of the spectacle.

Alternative lifestyles can be turned into commodities, safely recuperated and sold back to people, inducing a yearning for the past. For those bored with the possession of mere things, the Spectacle is capable of commodifying the possession of experiences in the form of package holidays, pop culture, etc. The spectacle is

capable of regenerating itself in perpetuity through the essential slogan in Trumpism—make America great again! The situationist movement flourished in the late 1960s with the student unrest and it was essentially a revolutionary movement, but the fact is that capitalism, via, Trumpism, has now appropriated this radical idea and rendered it not only a harmless ideology, but in fact capitalism has managed to appropriate the society of the spectacle as it's supreme achievement. Through Trumpism we can now bask in the splendor of the society of the spectacle. Effectively Trumpism has turned the meaning of life into a commodity.

We will see when I get onto the philosophy of Nietzsche that he prophesizes that nihilism will be turned into the new religion. In this regard it is interesting to see what Feuerbach says, in his preface to *The Essence of Christianity*: But certainly for the present age, which prefers the sign to the thing signified, the copy to the original, representation to reality, the appearance to the essence... illusion only is sacred, truth profane. Nay, sacredness is held to be enhanced in proportion as truth decreases and illusion increases, so that the highest degree of illusion comes to be the highest degree of sacredness.

Debord starts his book *The Society of the Spectacle*: In societies where modern conditions of production prevail, all of life presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles. Everything that was directly lived has moved away into a representation. The so-called French intellectuals have re-stated this basic proposition in many different ways, but the bottom line is that modern life has become divorced from reality: it is now only the sign, the simulacra, the image that is all we care about. Modern life has become totally unreal, and without meaning or value. It is Nietzsche that started this way of thinking.

Debord says: The spectacle grasped in its totality is both the result and the project of the existing mode of production. It is not a supplement to the real world, an additional decoration. It is the heart of the unrealism of the real society. In all its specific forms, as information or propaganda, as advertisement or direct entertainment consumption, the spectacle is the present model of socially dominant life. It is the omnipresent affirmation of the choice already made in production and its corollary consumption. The spectacle's form and content are identically the total justification of the existing system's conditions and goals. The spectacle is also the permanent presence of this justification, since it occupies the main part of the time lived outside of modern production. The bottom line here is that we are no longer intelligent beings who have values, spiritual aspirations, ideals, we are merely consumers. If we have thoughts of right and wrong, good and evil at all, it is only in the sense that it affects us as consumers. We have no higher values (Debord, 1967).

Essentially the spectacle becomes a self-perpetuating goal. When I get on to the philosophy of Nietzsche we will see that he calls it "eternal recurrence". Debord says: The language of the spectacle consists of signs of the ruling production, which at the same time are the ultimate goal of this production. In the simplest terms we are talking about a never-ending story. It is the social and historical movement in which we are caught (Debord, 1967).

It says nothing more than "that which appears is good, that which is good appears". The attitude which it demands in principle is passive acceptance which in fact it is already obtained by its manner of appearing without reply, by its monopoly of appearance. In the spectacle, which is the image of the ruling economy, the goal is nothing, development everything. The spectacle aims at nothing other than itself. The spectacle is capital to such a degree of accumulation that it becomes an image (Debord, 1967).

The spectacle does not realize philosophy, it philosophizes reality. The concrete life of everyone has been degraded into a speculative universe. The spectacle is the material reconstruction of the religious illusion. Spectacular technology has not dispelled the religious clouds where men had placed their own powers detached

from themselves; it has only tied them to an earthly base.

If the spectacle, taken in the limited sense of “mass media” which are its most glaring superficial manifestation, seems to invade society as mere equipment, this equipment is in no way neutral but is the very means suited to its total self-movement. If the administration of this society and all contact among men can no longer take place except through the intermediary of this power of instantaneous communication, it is because this “communication” is essentially unilateral. The concentration of “communication” is thus an accumulation, in the hands of the existing system’s administration, of the means which allow it to carry on this particular administration (Debord, 1967).

The economic system founded on isolation is a circular production of isolation. The technology is based on isolation, and the technical process isolates in turn. From the automobile to television, all the goods selected by the spectacular system are also its weapons for a constant reinforcement of the conditions of isolation of “lonely crowds.” The spectacle constantly rediscovers its own assumptions more concretely. The spectacle is nothing more than the common language of this separation. What binds the spectators together is no more than an irreversible relation at the very center which maintains their isolation. The spectacle reunites the separate, but reunites it as separate (Debord, 1967).

The spectacle is the moment when the commodity has attained the total occupation of social life. Not only is the relation to the commodity visible but it is all one sees: the world one sees is its world. Modern economic production extends its dictatorship extensively and intensively. In the advanced regions, social space is invaded by a continuous superimposition of geological layers of commodities. At this point in the “second industrial revolution”, alienated consumption becomes for the masses a duty supplementary to alienated production. The spectacle is a permanent opium war which aims to make people identify goods with commodities and satisfaction with survival that increases according to its own laws (Debord, 1967).

Modern western economies have gone far beyond just producing commodities for our continued survival—food and shelter for example. When economic necessity is replaced by the necessity for boundless economic development, the satisfaction of primary human needs is replaced by an uninterrupted fabrication of pseudo-needs which are reduced to the single pseudo-need of maintaining the reign of the autonomous economy. Consumption for its own sake literally becomes the *raison d’être* of human society and the meaning of life for the individual. The collective consciousness of consumption literally becomes the society of the spectacle, where the commodity contemplates itself in a world it has created (Debord, 1967).

Debord thought a lively new polemic about the concepts “one divides into two” and “two fuse into one” is unfolding on the philosophical front in this country—that is, France. This debate is a struggle between those who are for and those who are against the materialist dialectic, a struggle between two conceptions of the world. But the fact is that in the USA there is no such dichotomy of thinking. The entire political and social superstructure of the country, including established religion, has totally embraced the materialist dialectic and the omnipotence of the society of the spectacle.

What hides under the spectacular oppositions is a unity of misery. Behind the masks of total choice, different forms of the same alienation confront each other, all of them built on real contradictions which are repressed. The spectacle exists in a concentrated or a diffuse form depending on the necessities of the particular stage of misery which it denies and supports. In both cases, the spectacle is nothing more than an image of happy unification surrounded by desolation and fear at the tranquil center of misery.

The imposed image of the good envelops in its spectacle the totality of what spectacularly exists, and is

usually concentrated in one man, who is the guarantee of totalitarian cohesion. Everyone must magically identify with this absolute celebrity or disappear, in the sense of being a non-entity or an outsider. This celebrity is a hero of consumption, and the heroic image which gives an acceptable meaning to the absolute exploitation and deception of the masses. The society of the spectacle allows the individuals to identify with the power, success and splendor of their hero to the point where they become unaware of their own inadequacies. They are living the good life by proxy (Debord, 1967).

The spectacle, then, is the epic poem of this conflict between reality and illusion, an epic which cannot be concluded by the fall of any Troy. The spectacle does not sing the praises of men and their weapons, but of commodities and their passions. In this blind struggle every commodity, pursuing its passion, unconsciously realizes something higher: the becoming-world of the commodity, which is also the becoming-commodity of the world. Thus, by means of a ruse of commodity logic, what's specific in the commodity wears itself out in the fight while the commodity-form moves toward its absolute realization (Debord, 1967).

The satisfaction which no longer comes from the use of abundant commodities is now sought in the recognition of their value as commodities: the use of commodities becomes sufficient unto itself; the consumer is filled with religious fervor for the sovereign liberty of the commodities. Waves of enthusiasm for a given product, supported and spread by all the media of communication, are thus propagated with lightning speed (Debord, 1967).

The pseudo-need imposed by modern consumption clearly cannot be opposed by any genuine need or desire which is not itself shaped by society and its history. The abundant commodity stands for the total breach in the organic development of social needs. Its mechanical accumulation liberates unlimited artificiality, in the face of which living desire is helpless. The cumulative power of independent artificiality sows everywhere the falsification of social life (Debord, 1967).

A product acquires prestige when it is placed at the center of social life as the revealed mystery of the ultimate goal of production. But the object which was prestigious in the spectacle becomes vulgar as soon as it is taken home by its consumer—and by all its other consumers. It reveals its essential poverty (which naturally comes to it from the misery of its production) too late. But by then another object already carries the justification of the system and demands to be acknowledged. The fraud of satisfaction exposes itself by being replaced, by following the change of products and of the general conditions of production. That which asserted its definitive excellence with perfect impudence nevertheless changes, both in the diffuse and the concentrated spectacle, and it is the system alone which must continue (Debord, 1967).

America is said to be a deeply divided country right now with the rise of Donald J. Trump, but this division seems to center more on the personality of the man, rather than on any fundamental questioning of American values. The fact that a reality TV star has become President has made the downside of the society of the spectacle all too obvious to people who still harbor some ideals about human nature. The fact that he epitomizes and personifies the society of the spectacle, has enabled the entire world to see just how superficial and devoid of value the society of the spectacle really is. Up to now all Americans were able to fully participate in the society of the spectacle and still retain some ideals that they had some sort of intellectual and spiritual life over and above mere consumerism, but the rise of Donald J. Trump has made it painfully obvious to all just how shallow, phony and devoid of value the society of the spectacle really is. The rise of Donald J. Trump has brought all Americans face to face with nihilism as a fact of life, which was the original thesis of Nietzsche. With the rise of Trump the society of the spectacle has become so divorced from a meaningful reality that it has

a macabre parody of itself. It has reached its spectacular summit.

Nietzsche is considered to be a philosopher, but the fact is that *Thus Spake Zarathustra* reads as a prophecy for the future. Even before *Thus Spake Zarathustra* he had been developing his notions about nihilism. And he was already talking about a future time that was coming that was essentially a call to action:

I greet all the signs that a more manly, warlike age is coming, which will, above all, bring valour again into honor! For it has to prepare the way for a yet higher age, and assemble the force which that age will one day have need of—that age which will carry heroism into knowledge and wage war for the sake of ideas and their consequences... For believe me!—the secret of realizing the greatest fruitfulness and the greatest enjoyment of existence is: to live dangerously! Build your cities on the slopes of Vesuvius! Send your ships out into uncharted seas! Live in conflict with your equals and with yourselves! Be robbers and ravagers as long as you cannot be rulers and owners, you men of knowledge! (Hollingdale, 1973)

A new image of man, of what mankind might be, begins to appear:

Excelsior! You will never again pray, never again worship, never again repose in limitless trust—you deny it to yourself to remain halted before an ultimate wisdom, ultimate good, ultimate power, and there unharness your thoughts—you have no perpetual guardian and friend for your seven solitudes ... there is no longer for you any rewarder and recompenser, no final corrector—there is no longer any reason in what happens, no longer any love in what happens to you—there is no longer any resting-place open to your heart where it has only to find and no longer to seek, you resist any kind of ultimate peace, you want the eternal recurrence of war and peace—man of renunciation, will you renounce in all this? (Hollingdale, 1973)

He had also stated his notion of “eternal recurrence” in rather mystical terms, but still it is clear that he is talking about actual life on this earth, and not some sort of “life everlasting in Heaven”. Scholars of Nietzsche are not in full agreement about what he was aiming at with his eternal recurrence, but it will be clear from the theory about the society of the spectacle that this notion of eternal recurrence is at the heart of capitalism. Remember what Debord says that the product becomes vulgar as soon as it the consumer takes it home, but already a new object “carries the justification of the system and demands to be acknowledged”. Individual products are continually rising and then sinking into oblivion, but the commodity form goes on forever. This is literally an eternal recurrence of the commodity. With this in mind let’s listen to what Nietzsche says:

The heaviest burden. What if a demon crept after you one day or night in your loneliest solitude and said to you: “This life, as you live it now and have lived it, you will have to live again and again, times without number; and there will be nothing new in it, but every pain and every joy and every thought and sigh and all the unspeakably small and great in your life must return to you, and everything in the same series and sequence—and in the same way this spider and this moonlight among the trees, and in the same way this moment and I myself. The eternal hour-glass of existence will be turned again and again—and you with it, you dust of dust I”—Would you not throw yourself down and gnash your teeth and curse the demon who thus spoke? Or have you experienced a tremendous moment in which you would have answered him: “You are a god and never did I hear anything more divine!” If this thought gained power over you it would, as you are now, transform and perhaps crush you; the question in all and everything: “do you want this again and again, times without number?” would lie as the heaviest burden upon all your actions. Or how well disposed towards yourself and towards life would you have to become to have no greater desire than for this ultimate eternal sanction and seal? (Hollingdale, 1973)

The last rhetorical question really says it all: Or how well disposed towards yourself and towards life would you have to become to have no greater desire than for this ultimate eternal sanction and seal? It is submitted that here is the quintessential definition of Trumpism. Can there be any doubt that Donald J. Trump would be over the moon if he was told that his life would go on forever, exactly as it is, continually rewinding

and replaying itself. There would be no purpose or meaning or goal or intelligence in it, just more of the same forever. An eternal recurrence of new commodities that lose their glitter and are replaced. If Donald J. Trump was told that this was to be his lot he would certainly say: Never did I hear anything more divine!—although perhaps not in those exact words. He would probably say something like: Peachy! I can eat my two big macs and my two filet-o-fish burgers for lunch every day for lunch for all eternity. Bring it on!

The Cambridge Companion to Nietzsche asks the question: But what sort of creature would desire the unaltered repetition of its exact life, would prefer each and every moment of its life just as it is, and would prefer this to any alternative possibility it could imagine? What sort of attitude is suggested by a person, a quester, who could regard his or her life as Leibniz's God regarded the world: the best of all possible worlds? The answer to this question is perfectly straightforward: Donald J. Trump. Donald J. Trump epitomizes the Nietzschean concept of *amor fati* [love of fate], in which one loves one's life, with all its flaws, just for what it is. And would like it to continue forever.

There can't be any doubt that Nietzsche was speaking as a prophet in *Thus Spake Zarathustra*. He believed he was writing a vision that was given to him from a higher authority. "Has anyone at the end of the nineteenth century a distinct conception of what poets of strong ages called inspiration?" he asked in *Ecce Homo*, apropos of Zarathustra:

If not, I will describe it. —If one had the slightest residue of superstition left in one, one would hardly be able to set aside the idea that one is merely incarnation, merely mouthpiece, merely medium of overwhelming forces. The concept of revelation, in the sense that something suddenly, with unspeakable certainty and subtlety, becomes visible, audible, something that shakes and overturns one to the depths, simply describes the fact. One hears, one does not seek; one takes, one does not ask who gives; a thought flashes up like lightning, with necessity, unfalteringly formed—I have never had any choice... The involuntary nature of image, of metaphor is the most remarkable thing of all; one no longer has any idea what is image, what metaphor, everything presents itself as the readiest, the truest, the simplest means of expression. It really does seem, to allude to an expression of Zarathustra's, as if the things themselves approached and offered themselves as metaphors ... This is my experience of inspiration; I do not doubt that one has to go back thousands of years to find anyone who could say to me "it is mine also". (Hollingdale, 1973)

At this point we may recall what Debord says about the absolute celebrity that everyone had to identify with—the hero of consumption of a never-ending stream of commodities. Nietzsche's message to humankind is:

I teach you the Superman. Man is something that should be overcome... The Superman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say: The Superman shall be the meaning of the earth... All gods are dead: now we want the Superman to live—let this be our last will one day at the great noontide!... A table of values hangs over every people. Behold, it is the table of its overcomings; behold, it is the voice of its will to power. Of Self-Overcoming ... Where I found a living creature, there I found will to power ... And life itself told me this secret: "Behold," it said, "I am that which must overcome itself again and again ... Where there is perishing and the falling of leaves, behold, there life sacrifices itself—for the sake of power! ... And you too, enlightened man, are only a path and footstep of my will: truly, my will to power walks with the feet of your will to truth! ... The living creature values many things higher than life itself; yet out of this evaluation itself speaks—the will to power!" ... O my Will! ... Preserve me from all petty victories! ... That I may one day be ready and ripe in the great noontide ... a bow eager for its arrow, an arrow eager for its star—a star, ready and ripe in its noontide, glowing, transpierced ... Spare me for one great victory! (Tanner, 1973)

This is Nietzsche's "blond beast". "At the center of all these noble races we cannot fail to see the blond beast of prey, the magnificent blond beast avidly prowling round for spoil and victory". This is the essence of the overcoming of the real world. The power and victory the blond beast seeks is the transcendence of the

spectacle.

But the complex of causes in which I am entangled will recur—it will create me again! ... I shall return ... not to a new life or a better life or a similar life: I shall return eternally to this identical and self-same life ... to teach once more the eternal recurrence of all things, to speak once more the teaching of the great noontide of earth and man, to tell man of the Superman once more ...

For Nietzsche the Superman is:

the ideal of the most exuberant, most living and most world-affirming man, who has not only learned to get on and treat with all that was and is but who wants to have it again as it was and is to all eternity, insatiably calling out *da capo* not only to himself but to the whole piece and play, and not only to a play but fundamentally to him who needs precisely this play—and who makes it necessary. (Tanner, 1973)

The Superman epitomizes the master morality. Indeed the Superman regards his power and authority as being a blessing or gift to the herd. He is imparting onto them his joy of life and the consciousness of his wealth.

The noble type of man feels himself to be the determiner of values, he does not need to be approved of, he judges “what harms me is harmful in itself”, he knows himself to be that which in general first accords honour to things, he creates values. Everything he knows to be part of himself, he honours: such a morality is self-glorification. In the foreground stands the feeling of plenitude, of power which seeks to overflow, the happiness of high tension, the consciousness of a wealth which would like to give away and bestow... (Tanner, 1973)

I will “Make America Great Again”. The Superman, the will to the Superman, the will to power and self-overcoming. Live dangerously! *Amor fati* (love of fate), eternal recurrence, total affirmation of life. The great noontide. These are the slogans, the “signs”, by which Nietzsche surmounted his nihilism and resolved his crisis. But be clear on this, these signs these metaphors that Nietzsche was writing as if in a dream were a prophesy for a future time.

This is how Zarathustra asserts the slogan of Trumpism, “Make America Great Again”: “To redeem those who lived in the past and to recreate all ‘it was’ into a ‘thus I willed it’—that alone should I call redemption.... All ‘it was’ is a fragment, a riddle, a dreadful accident—until the creative will says to it, ‘But thus I will it; thus shall I will it.’”

Zarathustra asserts “I am the truth”. The Superman is only interested in the truth from his own perspective. For what, at this level, is truth, “the truth”? Isn’t it the discovery that no truth is discoverable except the truth which you yourself are? That there is no truth (sense, meaning) in the world except the truth (sense, meaning) you yourself give it? That “truth” is a concept belonging to the human mind and will and that apart from the human mind and will there is no such thing as “truth”? Finally, that the resolute determination that your own truth shall be the truth is the sole origin of “the truth” on earth? (Hollingdale, 1973)

To give life a meaning: that has been the grand endeavor of all who have preached “truth”; for unless life is given a meaning it has none. At this level, truth is not something that can be proved or disproved: it is something which you determine upon, which, in the language of the old psychology, you will. It is not something waiting to be discovered, something to which you submit or at which you halt: it is something you create, it is the expression of a particular kind of life and being which has, in you, ventured to assert itself. (Hollingdale, 1973)

Thus Zarathustra declares: “The Superman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say: The Superman shall be the meaning of the earth”. He is a prophet, not of the truth that is, but of the truth that shall be. What determines the nature of “truth”? The nature of the I which asserts “I am the truth”. Why truth, and not rather untruth or indifference to truth? Because each particular life and being needs a fortress within which to preserve and protect itself and from which to reach

out in search of aggrandizement and more power, and truth is this fortress. Or, as life says to thinking mankind: “My will to power walks with the feet of your will to truth. Truth is will to power. Thus spake Zarathustra” (Hollingdale, 1973). Or as Trumpathustra would say: Truth is my will to power, and false is anything that would thwart my will to power. Especially if it is in the New York Times or on CNN.

In *Beyond Good and Evil*, the subtitle of which is *A Prelude to a Philosophy of the Future*, Nietzsche suggests that lies and false judgements are essential for the effective operation of social life. Falsehood is built into the human condition.

The falseness of a judgement is to us not necessarily an objection to a judgement: it is here that our new language perhaps sounds strangest. The question is to what extent it is life-advancing, life-preserving, species-preserving, perhaps even species-breeding; and our fundamental tendency is to assert that the falsest judgements (to which synthetic judgements a priori belong) are the most indispensable to us, that without granting as true the fictions of logic, without measuring reality against the purely invented world of the unconditional and self-identical, without a continual falsification of the world by means of numbers, mankind could not live—that to renounce false judgements would be to renounce life, would be to deny life. To recognize untruth as a condition of life: that, to be sure, means to resist customary value-sentiments in a dangerous fashion; and a philosophy which ventures to do so places itself, by that act alone, beyond good and evil.

This is how Nietzsche describes the “fake news” of Trumpism:

What then is truth? A movable host of metaphors, metonymies, and anthropomorphisms: in short, a sum of human relations which have been poetically and rhetorically intensified, transferred, and embellished, and which, after long usage, seem to a people to be fixed, canonical, and binding. Truths are illusions which we have forgotten are illusions; they are metaphors that have become worn out and have been drained of sensuous force, coins which have lost their embossing and are now considered as metal and no longer as coins.

Zarathustra also has much to say about the need for the Superman to overcome the resistance, and the chaos of life which is also very much a propos to Trumpathustra. The feeling that power increases, that a resistance is overcome, then the Superman will be the happiest man and, as such, the meaning and justification of existence. Through continual increase of power to transmute the chaos of life into a continual self-overcoming of life and thus to experience in an ever greater degree the joy which is synonymous with this self-overcoming: that would now be the meaning of life. For Trumpathustra the will to power and the eternal need to overcome all resistance is total justification unto itself. It is the final overcoming of an otherwise inexorable and inevitable nihilism. In the intensity of the struggle, not only the Superman but also the slaves simply do not have the time to confront the fundamental nihilism.

What the Christian says of God, Nietzsche says in very nearly the same words of the Superman, namely: “Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever”. In fact this spake Zarathustra is an attempt by Nietzsche to turn nihilism into a religion. The main themes in Zarathustra have their counterparts in Christianity. Amor fati: Lutheran acceptance of the events of life as divinely willed, with the consequent affirmation of life as such as divine, as a product of the divine will, and the implication that to hate life is blasphemous. Eternal recurrence: as a consequence of amor fati the extremist formula of life-affirmation, strongly influenced by the Christian concepts of eternal life and the unalterable nature of God: what is, “is now and ever shall be, world without end”. Will to power: divine grace. The clue to the connection is the concept of “self-overcoming”, which is one of Nietzsche’s terms for sublimation and the hinge upon which the theory of the will to power turns from being a nihilist to a positive and joyful conception. The corresponding Christian conception is that of unregenerate nature redeemed by the force of God’s grace. In both conceptions the central

idea is that a certain inner quality (will to power) that elevates the Superman above the rest of nature. Great noontide: the Second Coming, the Last Judgement, the division of the sheep from the goats, the wheat from the chaff. Superman: God as creator and “highest being”, the “Son of Man” as God, man as the receptacle of divine grace who rejoices at the idea of eternity: the embodiment and actualization of everything regarded as desirable here on Earth, that is to say the Superman is the embodiment of the society of the spectacle, and the rise of the superman is literally the second coming of Christ.

The Superman is literally the Anti-Christ. And the second coming is not only foreshadowed by Nietzsche but also by Prosperity theology (sometimes referred to as the prosperity gospel, the health and wealth gospel, the gospel of success or seed faith) is a religious belief among some Christians, who hold that financial blessing and physical well-being are always the will of God for them, and that faith, positive speech, and donations to religious causes will increase one’s material wealth. Forget about the Kingdom of Heaven; follow me and thou can enjoy the Kingdom of Earth. Thus spake Trumpathustra. This is the materialistic dialectic elevated to religion status.

The last book of Zarathustra is quite clearly inspirational and may be compared with the *Book of Revelation* in the Bible. The last part of Zarathustra is in a spirit Nietzsche called “Dionysian” not in the sense of alcoholic debauchery but in the sense of an ecstatic joy for life here on Earth. Zarathustra is visited by sundry “higher men” who, as a consequence of Zarathustra’s instruction, become conscious of their inadequacy. These “higher men” have a veiled reference to individuals we would associate with actual wise and learned men that we might loosely describe as repositories of the conventional wisdom and morality. After Zarathustra instructs them the book finishes with unmistakable religious fervor and passion for Zarathustra’s new and enlightened religion of nihilism (Hollingdale, 1973).

“What you did was a stupidity; how could you, prudent man, do anything so stupid!” “O Zarathustra”, answered the prudent sorcerer, “you are right, it was a stupidity, and it was hard enough to do it”. “And even you”, said Zarathustra to the conscientious man of the spirit, “just consider, and lay your finger on your nose! For is there nothing here against your conscience? Is your spirit not too pure for this praying and the exhalations of these devotees?” “There is something in it”, answered the conscientious man and laid his finger on his nose, “there is something in this spectacle which even does my conscience good”. “I may not believe in God, perhaps: but it is certain that God seems to me most worthy belief in this form”. God is supposed to be eternal according to the testimony of the most pious: he who has so much timetakes his time. As slow and as stupid as possible: but such a one can in that way go very far, none the less (Hollingdale, 1973).

“But now leave this nursery, my own cave, where today every kind of childishness is at home. Come out here and cool your hot childish wantonness and the clamor of your hearts!” “To be sure: except you become as little children you shall not enter into this kingdom of heaven” (And Zarathustra pointed upwards with his hands.) “But we certainly do not want to enter into the kingdom of heaven: we have become men, so we want the kingdom of earth” (Hollingdale, 1973).

“They were all at once conscious of their transformation and recovery, and of who had given them these things: then they leaped towards Zarathustra, thanking, adoring, caressing, kissing his hands, each after his own fashion: so that some laughed, some wept. The old prophet, however, danced with pleasure; and even if he was then full of sweet wine, as some narrators believe, he was certainly fuller still of sweet life and had renounced allweariness” (Hollingdale, 1973).

The world itself has grown ripe, the grapes grow brown, now they want to die, to die of happiness. You

Higher Men, do you not smell it? An odour is secretly welling up, a scent and odor of eternity, an odour of roseate bliss, a brown, golden wine odour of ancient happiness, of intoxicated midnight's dying happiness, which sings: The world is deep: deeper than day can comprehend! (Hollingdale, 1973).

Joy, however, does not want heirs or children, joy wants itself, wants eternity, wants recurrence, wants everything eternally the same. Did you ever say Yes to one joy? O my friends, then you said Yes to all woe as well. All things are chained and entwined together, all things are in love; if ever you wanted one moment twice, if ever you said: "You please me, happiness, instant, moment!" Then you wanted everything to return! You wanted everything anew, everything eternal, everything chained, entwined together, everything in love, that is how you loved the world, you everlasting men, loved it eternally and for all time: and you say even to woe: "Go, but return!" For all joy wants—eternity! (Hollingdale, 1973).

So rich is joy that it thirsts for woe, for Hell, for hatred, for shame, for the lame, for the world—for it knows, oh it knows this world! You Higher Men, joy longs for you, joy the intractable, blissful—for your woe, you ill-constituted! All eternal joy longs for the ill-constituted. For all joy wants itself, therefore it also wants heart's agony! O happiness! O pain! Oh break, heart! You Higher Men, learn this, learn that joy wants eternity, joy wants the eternity of all things, wants deep, deep, deep eternity! (Hollingdale, 1973).

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