

deprives him of the resources to draw a distinction between a wider (positive) concept of morality and a narrower (negative) one. There are, of course, a variety of terminological options for marking such a distinction, each of which has its advantages and disadvantages. It has become increasingly fashionable for contemporary moral philosophers (sometimes self-consciously inspired by Nietzsche's critique of "the morality system") to take the word "morality" to name something undesirable, and to mark the distinction between what we should want and what we should not want by opposing "ethics" to "morality." "Morality" is then taken to refer only to that peculiar ethical institution that flourished on Christian soil. This permits one – quite correctly – to understand Nietzsche's opposition to "morality" not to entail an opposition to *valuation* per se. Here and there in his later writings, Nietzsche does occasionally warn the reader that his employment of the term "immoralism" marks not the wholesale repudiation of valuation, but rather the repudiation of a *type of human being* and a *type of morality*:

Fundamentally, my term *immoralist* involves two repudiations. First, I repudiate a type of man that has so far been considered supreme. . . . And, then I repudiate a type of morality which has attained validity and come to dominate as [if it were] morality itself – the morality of decadence or, more concretely, *Christian* morality. It is admissible to consider the latter contradiction [*Widerspruch*] the more decisive one (EH III:4, trans. amended).

Notice that, in order to clarify his own rhetorical strategy, Nietzsche distinguishes here between a particular "type of morality" (one which he seeks to repudiate) and "morality itself." According to him, the former has attained its dominance and semblance of validity by passing itself off as the latter. The former, he assumes, is now so "prevalent and predominant" as to be indistinguishable from the latter for most of his readers. Notice, further, that the distinction upon which Nietzsche here relies can have content only for a reader who is able to distinguish between the repudiation of "Christian morality" and the affirmation of nihilism.

In keeping with the rhetorical strategy of his later writings, Nietzsche often uses the term "ethics" in a broader (positive) sense (especially in connection with Greek ethical thought), on occasion opposing it to (a narrower notion of) "morality." He thus seeks to displace (what he calls, in his later writings) "morality" through recourse to an appeal to something that, as he repeatedly concedes, is not exactly not morality: "Hasn't the time come to say of morality what Meister Eckhart said of God: 'I call upon God to rid me of God'" (GS 292, trans. amended).

Moreover, Nietzsche does not cede the term "morality" to the enemy altogether. Even *Beyond Good and Evil* – the work that most loudly

trumpets his "immoralism" – permits itself an occasional lapse from this rhetorical strategy. Passages such as the following indicate that the indictment of "morality" which that work pursues is in service of something that (Nietzsche here indicates) might aptly be termed "a higher morality":

Morality in Europe today is herd animal morality – in other words, as we understand it, 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).⁷⁸

The last sentence of this passage makes clear that the identification of morality per se with a particular, historically contingent moral configuration is not a terminological innovation for which Nietzsche seeks to claim credit. Much of Nietzsche's later work is concerned to demonstrate how this identification of the wider concept with the narrower one leaves us prone to fall prey to (what Nietzsche calls) nihilism. Once (the very possibility of) morality is identified with this "*one* type of human morality," then the disillusionment brought on by the collapse of (so-called) "morality" leads us to rebound into the metaphysical mirror image of "morality": a nihilistic conception of the nature of value that drains values of their prescriptive force.⁷⁹ Such a nihilism Nietzsche predicted would haunt the moral thought of the next (*our*) century.

To view Nietzsche's later writings as offering a retraction of his call in the *Meditations* for a "visible epitome of morality for our time" – on the grounds that the term "morality" must necessarily denote something that he is, in his later writings, concerned to oppose – is to read him as conceding what he most condemned: It is to mistake his "immoralism" for a species of nihilism. In his later writings he seeks in various ways to refine the project inaugurated by his early critique of Schopenhauer, and to assist the reader in pursuing the question the focal passage poses: "How can your life, the individual life, receive the highest value, the deepest significance?" The crucial refinement lies in his seeking to refine the terms of the question so that its answer does not appear to require a forced choice between either a wholesale acquiescence in "*one* particular ideal of human perfection" or an equally indiscriminate refusal to acquiesce – so that the only alternative to acquiescence seems to entail the repudiation not only of that particular ideal but of all such ideals.

The accusation of immoralism is one that any form of moral perfectionism will tend to invite insofar as it places an emphasis on each person's obligation to cultivate her (higher) self; for such an emphasis

threatens to slide into a license for egoism. Insofar as such a perfectionist author appears to insist on the *priority* of one's duties to oneself over one's duties to others, he is bound to appear open to the charge of being excessively casual about allowing an interest in one's own development to trump one's obligations to others.⁸⁰ If such an author's aim were merely to show us that we often seek to evade our duties to ourselves by *picuring* them as if in conflict with our duties to others, then there is no great difficulty in seeing such an author's quarrel to be not with the concept of a duty to others per se, but only with much that masquerades as if it were a requirement of such a duty.⁸¹

But Nietzsche appears to wish to press a more radical claim – one not so easily taken in stride: that the strenuous cultivation of one's "higher self" is a *precondition* of the development of one's capacity for genuine responsiveness to the needs and claims of others.⁸² The burden of numerous passages (in particular, the recurrent critique of the Christian morality of *Mitleid*) throughout Nietzsche's corpus is to provide support for this more radical claim: Only once one has learned to discriminate and act upon one's own "innermost needs" is one able to discriminate, appropriately evaluate, and constructively act upon those of others. According to Nietzsche, the neglect of one's duties to one's self cripples one's capacity to formulate and recognize one's (true) duties to others. He therefore urges that a prior preoccupation with the formation of character (rendering oneself capable of exercising practical wisdom) – which he identifies as formerly having been a central preoccupation of Hellenistic and Roman philosophy – once again be restored to its rightful place at the center of philosophy. Nietzsche can be seen here as a belated participant in an eighteenth-century German neoclassical effort (found in authors such as Winkelmann, Wieland, Goethe, and Schiller) to rehabilitate (what was taken to be) a Greek conception of moral beauty and a correlative conception of moral education as the formation of the beautiful soul – where such formation is taken to be a prior condition of cultivating the capacity to recognize the moral needs of others.⁸³

It thus would be at least as accurate to say that what Nietzsche is concerned to furnish is an ethical model that "involves" an aesthetic dimension as it is to say – as Nehamas does – that what he wants to offer is an "aesthetic model" that "involves a moral dimension." But the mere suggestion that ethical valuation could so much as "involve" an aesthetic dimension seems to a number of commentators already to import into the context of ethical valuation considerations that have no place there. Philippa Foot's way of motivating this charge (of conflating distinct sorts of valuation) begins by pointing out that Nietzsche, throughout his work, is preoccupied by the sort of admiration "a splendid type of man" is able

to elicit in us. She goes on to argue that such admiration generally turns on quasi-aesthetic (as opposed to moral) features of the life or character of such a man.⁸⁴ Nietzsche, she concedes, is certainly interested in "arguing about the way in which men must live in order to *live well*"; but she argues that his own discussions of what it is to live well run together questions of moral and aesthetic valuation. Nietzsche's views on what constitutes moral flourishing, she concludes, are obscured – and to some extent rendered hopelessly confused – by his introduction of "quasi-aesthetic criteria which are irrelevant in this context."⁸⁵

Nietzsche himself will take this fact about us (namely, that his conception of the good life is bound to strike us as commending an aesthetic as opposed to an ethical ideal) to reveal as much about our late-modern conception of morality as it does about his view of the good life. For, he thinks, it is only given a certain conception of morality that the considerations he adduces will so much as appear to rest on *merely* aesthetic considerations.⁸⁶ If there is one single point that the four *Meditations* hammer away at, it is that the questions "How should I live?" (or: "What is the good life?"), "What do I admire?" (or: "What is great?"), and "What is culture?" (or: "What is beautiful?") are to be answered together. To attempt to secure an answer to any one of these questions, in isolation from the other two, is to fail to encounter the difficulty of each.

Nehamas and Foot are two of the better readers of Nietzsche we now have; and, the many differences in their respective readings of Nietzsche notwithstanding, both identify Nietzsche's philosophy as a kind of "aestheticism." Both notice that Nietzsche seeks to set his face against "morality"; but they also notice his horror of nihilism, and his abiding preoccupation (and his evident desire to instill in his reader a similar preoccupation) with questions concerning what one should value – questions such as "What sort of person(s) should I admire (and what sort of response should such admiration elicit in me)?" "How should I live (if I wish to be worthy of such admiration myself)?" And "In what ways (and by what means) should I endeavor to shape and change my self?" Given both this abiding concern with what one should value and his virulent critique of "morality," these commentators (and not only they) conclude (1) that Nietzsche's aim must be to recommend forms of valuation belonging to some category of value other than the ethical, and (2) that category must be the aesthetic. So they conclude that Nietzsche seeks to recommend answers to his questions (about what one should value) in which aesthetic values are given pride of place over ethical values. But what this reading overlooks is that Nietzsche seeks to transform our understanding of the category of the aesthetic every bit as much as he

does our understanding of the category of the ethical – and in particular our understanding of these categories as resting upon distinct and mutually independent *kinds* of valuation.

Nietzsche's aesthetics cannot be understood apart from his perfectionism. His position on these matters (from the *Meditations* on)⁸⁷ is a radical one: His criterion of "true" aesthetic (or cultural) value is that which is (in some way) able to educate or provoke us to self-transformative change. He in effect brands any art that is utterly devoid of this sort of (potential) ethical significance a species of counterfeit art.⁸⁸ He seeks, on these grounds, to expose as "fraudulent" much that is categorized by our cultural institutions as art. He seeks to oppose what he calls culture to (much of) what we call "culture."⁸⁹ The unifying theme of the *Meditations* as a whole is that, because the philistine has become the spokesman of "culture," we need to recover the concept of culture.⁹⁰ Yet what Nietzsche calls "the culture of the philistine" is strikingly reminiscent of what the perfectionist, on Rawls's portrait of him, champions in the name of culture. This is why any attempt to summarize his doctrine (*à la* Rawls) as one that "places an absolute priority on the claims of culture" is bound to lead to a misunderstanding – as is any attempt to summarize his thought by saying that he calls upon us "to turn our lives into works of art."

What we celebrate as culture Nietzsche describes as "the perversion of culture" and the use we make of art he describes as its "misappropriation" – as we earlier saw him describe our festivals in honor of great men as "slandorous" (SE p. 154). The slander lay in our representation of the great men as having done something qualitatively beyond the scope of our capacities. Similarly, the perversion of culture lies in our tendency to represent the interior of the circle of culture as accessible only to a select elite, as making no claim on how we live, and as revealing nothing to us about who we are (other than as a "lover of art"). Rawls suspects that Nietzsche, out of an impatience to promote the interests of culture, will encourage an attitude of indifference to the claims of justice. But Nietzsche himself voices a similar charge; and he too directs it against those who are "most actively engaged in promoting culture":

[T]here exists a species of *misemployed and misappropriated culture* – you have only to look around you! And precisely those forces at present most actively engaged in promoting culture do so for reasons they reserve to themselves and do so not out of pure disinterestedness (SE p. 164, trans. amended).

Nietzsche is as suspicious as Rawls of those who champion the priority of the claims of "culture," not only on Rawlsian grounds, but on other grounds as well: "culture is promoted by all those who are conscious of

possessing an *ugly or boring content* and want to conceal the fact with a so-called *beautiful form*" (SE p. 166). The taste for (much of) what passes for culture is traced here to its usefulness as an instrument of self-deception. So-called culture is the opposite of what (Nietzsche thinks) culture ought to be. It is a means of shrouding oneself in an outwardly beautiful form in order to conceal an inward absence of cultivation – a means, that is, for concealing a lack of (what Nietzsche will call) *true culture*. But, according to Nietzsche, we are all to some degree conscious and ashamed of possessing an ugly or boring content; thus, none of us is immune to the temptation of philistinism. Yet, he also says, at some time or other in a person's life, everyone experiences a moment of profound distrust in the character of our shared attraction to that which we generically call "culture":

His honesty, the strength and truthfulness of his character, must at some time or other rebel against a state of things in which he only repeats what he has heard, learns what is already known, imitates what already exists; he will then begin to grasp that culture can be something other than a *decoration of life*, that is to say at bottom no more than dissimulation and disguise. . . . [E]very increase in truthfulness must also assist to promote *true culture*: even though this truthfulness may sometimes seriously damage precisely the kind of cultivatedness now held in esteem, even though it may even be able to procure the downfall of an entire merely decorative culture (SE p. 123).

As Nietzsche's emphases seek to make clear, *true culture* is to be opposed to purely *decorative* (pseudo-)culture – to "arts and artifices for prettifying life" (SE p. 167). Here he blasts the very conception of culture Rawls takes him to champion – one that revolves around (what Rawls calls) "the duty to develop persons of a certain style and aesthetic grace."

Nietzsche's word for what true culture reveals to us is our "*humanity*." This call for *the human* pervades the essay: "Who is there then, amid these dangers of our era, to guard and champion *humanity*? . . . Who will set up the *image of the human*?" (SE p. 150, trans. amended). The paradox underlying Nietzsche's later concept of the *Übermensch* is that the human (as we know it) is something that must be overcome in order that it may become (fully) human.⁹¹ "We have to be lifted up. And who are they who would lift us? They are those *true humans, those who are no longer animal, the philosophers, artists, and saints*" (SE p. 159, trans. amended).

Rawls, Russell, and Darrow notice the tremendous importance Nietzsche attributes to the figure of the philosopher and the scientist; Rawls, Nehamas, and Foot notice his interest in art and the lives of great artists.⁹² But Nietzsche will often group the philosopher and the artist

together with each other and together with the saint, and he specifies here wherein their significance lies: We have to be lifted up – and they are the ones who can lift us. (At no point in the essay is there any suggestion that we should arrange our institutions for their benefit and not ours. It is precisely *our* benefit that is the issue here.) They are in a position to help us become “no longer animal.” Nietzsche’s (and Emerson’s, and Arnold’s, and Mill’s, and Marx’s) way of attempting to bring home to us (their readers) that our present condition is one in which the preconditions of the possibility of the moral life have yet to be fully satisfied is to describe us as *not yet human*.⁹³

As he opposes culture to what we call “culture,” and our duties to what we call our “Duty,”⁹⁴ Nietzsche also identifies what generally passes for education as an obstacle to our education: “The education of a scholar is an extremely difficult problem, if his humanity is not to be sacrificed in the process” (SE p. 132). Our educational institutions, Nietzsche argues, shrink from “the difficulty of the task of educating humans to be human” (SE p. 131, trans. amended). Culture, in Nietzsche’s vocabulary, does not refer to a luxury we can afford to forgo in the interest of accommodating other allegedly more pressing human needs. Even in the absence of (what he calls) culture, we are able to learn to identify and satisfy our animal needs; culture is the cultivation of those forms of sensitivity which enable us to recognize what, as *human*, our (real) needs are: “[T]he goal of culture is to promote the production of true *human beings* and nothing else” (SE p. 164).⁹⁵ Nietzsche refers to the proto-humanity of our condition as our “animality” or “bestiality”:

Yet let us reflect: where does the animal cease, and where does the human being begin? . . . 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. . . . [U]sually we fail to emerge out of animality; we ourselves are the animals whose suffering seems to be senseless. But there are moments *when we realize this*. . . and we see that we are pressing towards the human as towards something that stands high above us (SE pp. 157–8, trans. amended).

At what point does the animal in us cease and the human being begin? At the moment when we first realize that “we are pressing towards the human as towards something that stands high above us.” This realization, Nietzsche says, takes the form of one’s realizing that one harbors a longing (*ein Sehnen*) – a longing that is characterized in the essay in a variety of ways (which the reader is to learn to recognize as only apparently distinct): as a longing to overcome one’s animality, as that longing each person feels “for himself,” and as a longing “for a healthier and

simpler humanity” when “genius itself is summoned” and the individual can behold “with astonished eyes *the genius in himself*” (SE p. 146, my emphasis). Under this latter characterization – as a desire for the genius in oneself – this longing is also identified as “the root of all culture”:

Every human being is accustomed to discovering in himself some limitation . . . which fills him with melancholy and longing. . . . as an intellectual being he harbors a profound desire for the *genius in him*. This is the root of all culture; and . . . I understand by this the longing of the human to be *reborn* as saint and genius (SF p. 142, my emphasis, trans. amended).

Russell says that Nietzsche is interested in “the production of genius”; Rawls says that Nietzsche is interested in “the promotion of culture”; and Nietzsche says that he who fails “to consecrate himself to culture” “fails to recognize his goal” to be “the production of genius” (SE p. 163). But these claims take on a very different aspect, when we are told here that “the root of all culture” is that “longing” that *each* individual feels for the unborn “*genius in him*.”

Rawls is concerned that Nietzsche’s interest in promoting culture entails a recommendation for distributing our communal resources unjustly – the lion’s share going to scholars and artists of exceptional talent and intellect. The passage quoted above, however, continues:

Where we discover talent devoid of that longing in the world of scholars or that of the so-called cultivated, we are repelled and disgusted by it; for we sense that, with all their intellect, such people do not promote an evolving culture and the procreation of genius – which is the goal of all culture – but hinder it (ibid.).

Not only is talent in itself not celebrated in this essay, but talent “devoid of that longing to be reborn as saint and genius” is declared “disgusting.” Nietzsche’s scorn is directed not – as Russell and Rawls have it – at the reader who *happens* not to be a genius (because he happens not to be endowed with certain gifts or talents), but at the reader who *evades* his genius: “There exists no more repulsive and desolate creature in the world than the human being who has evaded his genius and who now looks furtively to left and right, behind him and all about him” (SE p. 128, trans. amended). “Genius” figures in Nietzsche’s vocabulary as the term for a “productive uniqueness” each of us harbors (SE p. 143).⁹⁶ Nietzsche does not seek to “maximize” genius (in the way that Rawls and Hurka imagine) because the only species of genius that concerns him is one that is already perfectly distributed.⁹⁷

Without the stimulus of culture, the genius within one – this “basic material of one’s being” – remains “difficult of access, bound and paralyzed.” The aim of culture, Nietzsche says, is *education*. “Education” is

his term for the process of liberating the genius within a person: "Your true educators and formative teachers reveal to you what the basic material of your being is. . . . [Y]our educators can be only your liberators" (SE p. 129). The essay bears the title *Schopenhauer as Educator*. Schopenhauer is presented in these pages not as an example of someone who deserves special rights and privileges (because he has done what very few can do), but rather as an example of someone who can serve as educator; that is, as an example of what, in principle, anyone can – but, in fact, very few – do. Schopenhauer's exemplarity inheres in the fact that "few thinkers have felt with a comparable intensity and certainty that genius moved within them" (SE p. 142). He was extraordinary, in the eyes of the author of this essay, not because he possessed extraordinary talent but because he was able to feel with an unusual degree of "intensity and certainty" something each of us is able to feel – for "each of us bears a productive uniqueness within him as the core of his being" (SE p. 143).

Democracy and the Cultivation of the Self

[I]n the final analysis, the whole classification of duties into duties toward oneself and duties toward others . . . really rests on a completely immoral distinction. Out of it emerges the notion that there are, as it were, two completely different and conflicting attitudes that either ought to be kept carefully apart or else artificially reconciled by means of some petty arithmetic.⁹⁸

One *motif* in Nietzsche's writings that has helped to kindle elitist interpretations of his work is the occasional barbed remark concerning "the democratic movement of our times." Most commentators have taken it to be self-evident that there is a straightforward connection between these remarks and the emphasis throughout his work on the significance of great human beings. It is, so the standard reading goes, *because* Nietzsche is infatuated with the good of the outstanding individual that he deplores democracy. The problem with democracy, according to this reading, is that it lowers the standard of humanity as a whole by seeking to promote an overly inclusive good (that of the insignificant ordinary citizen) instead of focusing exclusively on the only good that counts (that of the extraordinary individual).

Here is a representative example of what one of Nietzsche's remarks concerning "the democratic movement of our times" sounds like: "We have a different faith; to us, the democratic movement is not only a form of the decay of political organization but a form of the decay, namely the diminution, of the human being, making him mediocre and lowering his

value. Where, then, must we reach with our hopes?" (BGE 203). On the strength of passages such as this, it has seemed manifest to many commentators that Nietzsche seeks to advance some sort of anti-egalitarian political ideal (although it is usually by no means clear, even to them, what that ideal is supposed to be). One aim of this essay is to argue that, insofar as his perfectionism is taken to constitute the nexus of his disagreement with democracy, a confrontation between his thought and democratic political theory is not as easy to arrange as has been commonly supposed.

If perfectionism calls (as Rawls imagines it does) for a form of society in which, as a matter of policy, certain privileges or goods are conferred upon some members of the society at the expense of others, then it clearly conflicts with a democratic commitment to treat each citizen with equal respect and as of equal value. There clearly are proponents of such antidemocratic social policies.⁹⁹ But where in his writings does Nietzsche advocate such policies? He certainly wants to pick a quarrel with "the democratic movement." But this still leaves the question open: To what extent does the perfectionist dimension of his thought conflict with a commitment to democracy? To what extent does Nietzsche's perfectionism promote something – call it the cultivation of the self – that competes with the aspirations of democracy?

It is worth noticing, to begin with, that nothing in the passage quoted above forces one to take what Nietzsche calls "the democratic movement" to be an undistorted expression of the aspirations that underlie democracy. Indeed, such an equation (between the patent actuality of democracy and its highest possibilities) is often distasteful to those who most celebrate those aspirations. Many a theorist of democracy has discerned within "the democratic movement" a tendency to suppress democracy's capacity for criticism from within – a pressure to collapse into (what de Toqueville called) "a tyranny of the majority." John Adams, Matthew Arnold, William James, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, John Stuart Mill, Alexis de Toqueville (not to mention Emerson and Thoreau) all dread that debasement of democracy that both Mill and Emerson refer to as "the despotism of conformity." There is a perfectionist strain within the tradition of democratic thought that takes it as a matter of urgent concern that the antiperfectionist tendencies latent within the democratic movement be kept from eroding democracy's resources for criticism from within – where the pressure of such criticism is taken to be essential to democracy's capacity to remain faithful to its own aspirations.¹⁰⁰

Each of the theorists of democracy listed above emphasizes that democracy can flourish only if its citizens cultivate – rather than disdain

– those virtues that formerly were the sole prerogative of aristocracy (such as independence of mind, disregard for fashion, eccentricity of conduct). The aim of democracy, as conceived for example in the correspondence between Adams and Jefferson, is not to overthrow the idea of a society “ruled by the best,” but to exchange one form of aristocracy for another: to replace “an artificial aristocracy” founded on the contingent precedents of “wealth and birth” with “an unprecedented aristocracy” from whose ranks ideally no one is, as a matter of contingent social circumstance, excluded.¹⁰¹

These early theorists of democracy are acutely aware that this is not an ideal easily attained, and that there is a danger that “the democratic movement” will attempt to forestall disappointment by giving up on the ideal of an unprecedented democracy, exchanging its ideal of equality for another – one achieved through a leveling rather than a raising of its citizenry. From the point of view of these theorists, such an exchange would represent a betrayal of democracy’s promise and an avoidable outcome of the democratic experiment; from Nietzsche’s point of view, it would represent merely a predictable and rapidly impending consequence of the democratic political process. We should, however, not allow this disagreement between Nietzsche and theorists such as Mill or Emerson to obscure the extent of their underlying agreement. Nietzsche writes:

Two kinds of equality. – The thirst for equality can express itself either as a desire to draw everyone down to oneself (through diminishing them, spying on them, obstructing their progress) or to raise oneself and *everyone else* [my emphasis] (HH I:300, trans. amended).

Nietzsche’s quarrel with “the democratic movement” is a function of his belief that the ultimate consequence of its ascendancy will be the promotion the first rather than the second of these “two kinds of equality.” He and the perfectionist theorists of democracy concur on the point that within the democratic movement there exists a pressure to substitute for a noble and elusive ideal of equality a very different and far more readily attainable ideal – one that purchases equality at the cost of “a diminution of the human being.” Their disagreement lies in their relative estimation of both the capacity and the inclination on the part of those engaged in the democratic experiment to withstand this pressure.

A related way of seeing that Nietzsche’s quarrel with democracy is not a direct consequence of his perfectionism is to note that his emphasis on the importance of exemplary individuals is echoed by many of these early theorists of democracy. Mill writes, in *On Liberty* (OL):

I insist emphatically on the importance of genius and the necessity of allowing it to unfold itself freely both in thought and in practice. . . . People think a genius a fine thing if it enables a man to write an exciting poem or paint a picture but in its true sense, that of originality in thought and action, though no one says that it is not a thing to be admired, nearly all, at heart, think that they can do very well without it. . . . Originality is the one thing which unoriginal minds cannot feel the use of. They cannot see what it is to do for them: how should they? If they could see what it would do for them, it would not be originality. The first service which originality has to render them is that of opening their eyes: which being once fully done, they would have a chance of being themselves original.¹⁰²

Proponents of the elitist interpretation of Nietzsche seize upon his emphasis on the significance of great human beings as if it *sufficed* to demonstrate a sympathy for a militantly antidemocratic political ideal. Yet it is difficult to distinguish some of his remarks on this topic from those of Mill quoted above; and moreover he himself (as we have seen) is profoundly critical of the elitist conception of the great human being. This affinity between Nietzsche’s thought and that of certain theorists of democracy becomes less surprising when one discovers that his concept of the exemplar – like (as we shall see) a number of other concepts that figure prominently in SE – derives in part from a concept of Emerson’s.¹⁰³ Emerson goes beyond maintaining that the idea of the moral significance of the exemplary individual (and the correlative idea of “attaching one’s heart to an exemplar”) is not in conflict with those forms of relationship between persons that a democracy should seek to foster. He insists that, if democracy is to flourish, it is *essential* that it not be so conceived.

This insistence may be seen in the manner in which Emerson appropriates American political terminology to formulate his version of a perfectionist appeal to the role of an exemplar: In the *Essays* his term for your exemplar is your “delegate,”¹⁰⁴ and in his later writings it is your “representative.”¹⁰⁵ Emerson’s vision of democracy, like Mill’s, is one of a society in which the pursuit of an aristocratic ideal of excellence is the birthright of every citizen; but the pursuit of such an ideal cannot, for Emerson, be detached from (what he calls) “the proper uses of great men” – that is, from our acknowledging and attending to those “representative men” who are able to help us to discover the unacknowledged duties that each of us bears to herself.¹⁰⁶

How am I to identify those duties that I bear to myself and that I ought to – but do not as yet – acknowledge as *mine*? The answer that SE as a whole suggests is: By learning to ask myself certain questions. At every critical juncture in the essay, Nietzsche pauses to recommend a particular question that one should press upon one’s self; and he provides various indications of what might count as a sign that one has genuinely

asked the question of one's self: for example, feeling "ashamed of oneself without any accompanying feeling of distress" (SE p. 163). Each question that one is asked to ask oneself eventually gives way to a further such question.

Here is the first of the essay's interlocking chain of questions: "Let the youthful soul look back on life with the question: What have you truly loved up to now, what has drawn your soul aloft, what has mastered it and at the same time blessed it?" Each person is to ask himself this question, each person will answer differently. It is not a question that can be posed collectively. If you press on yourself this question "What have you truly loved up to now?" and then contemplate the answers you give, then a discovery will ensue: "Set up these revered objects before you and perhaps their nature and their sequence will give you a law, the fundamental law of your own true self" (SE p. 129).

The next sentence of the essay makes it explicit that arriving at "the fundamental law of your own true self" is not a matter of disclosing the self "which you usually take yourself to be," but rather one of bringing into imagination a further, eventual (state of your) self which lies "immeasurably high above you" (SE p. 129). What you are presently inclined to do and think and feel are not expressions of your true (untainted) self. Yet Nietzsche also tells us that in order to form some conception of our higher self, we first need to ask ourselves: What do I love? What do I admire? What do I desire? But you may wonder: How can putting such questions to yourself advance you if, at the outset of such a process, you have yet to cultivate any feelings or desires that are properly *yours*? It might seem that, as you stand now, you are not even in a position to ask (let alone answer) the question you are told to put to yourself.

Here is another of those paradoxes perfectionist authors court. How am I to act only on those inclinations that accord with "the fundamental law of my own true self," if I, in my present undeveloped condition, have hitherto only sought to suppress such inclinations? Mill, an author with a limited taste for paradox, is perhaps the least coy of the theoreticians of this dilemma. Yet he too calls upon his reader to consult the desires of a self that has hitherto failed to express itself:

Not only in what concerns others, but in what concerns only themselves, the individual or the family do not ask themselves, what do I prefer? or, what would suit my character and disposition? or, what would allow the best and highest in me to have fair play and enable it to grow and thrive? They ask themselves, what is suitable to my position? what is usually done by persons of my station and peculiar circumstances? or (worse still) what is usually done by persons of a station and circumstances superior to mine? I do not mean that they choose what is cus-

tomary in preference to what suits their own inclination. It does not occur to them to have any inclination except for what is customary. Thus the mind itself is bowed to the yoke: even in what people do for pleasure, conformity is the first thing thought of: they like in crowds; they exercise choice only among things commonly done; peculiarity of taste, eccentricity of conduct are shunned equally with crimes, until by dint of not following their own nature they have no nature to follow: their human capacities are withered and starved; they become incapable of any strong wishes or native pleasures, and are generally without either opinions or feelings of home growth, or properly of their own. Now is this, or is it not, the desirable condition of human nature? (OL pp 58-9)

This passage might have been lifted from SE. (In a standard introductory survey course on the history of political philosophy, Mill and Nietzsche usually find themselves pitted against one another as the most eloquent friend and foe respectively of the ideals of liberal democracy. One way to mark the unsatisfactory character of this textbook opposition is to notice how any number of passages from *On Liberty* can be mistaken for ones from SE and vice versa.) Not only are the questions Mill says we fail to ask ourselves (What do I prefer? What would allow the best and the highest in me to have fair play and enable it to grow and thrive?) the same as the ones Nietzsche urges on us, but Mill's diagnosis of our condition is the same as well: Our "*human* capacities are withered and starved." (Nietzsche says [SE p. 163] that one must learn "to hate one's own narrow and shriveled nature.")

Yet if, as Mill says, I lack "any inclination except for what is customary," how will asking myself the question "What do I prefer?" help me develop that "peculiarity of taste" that will allow me to nurture opinions and feelings that are properly my own? Indeed, in my present condition — where "the mind itself is bowed to the yoke" and "incapable of any native pleasures" — can I even properly aspire to pose to myself Mill's concluding question concerning my present condition: "Is this, or is it not, the *desirable* condition of human nature?" Mill's sensitivity to the delicacy and intricacy of this problematic should provoke us to rethink what happens to the doctrine of Utilitarianism in his hands — where the appeal to utility, he says, is to be understood as an appeal to what he calls "utility in the largest sense, grounded on the permanent interests of man as a *progressive being*" (OL p. 10, my emphasis).

Nietzsche's solution to the dilemma posed above parallels the solution Emerson offers (in the passage quoted earlier) in "Self-Reliance": One trusts in the work of genius what one is unable to trust in one's (present) self — one recognizes in such an exemplar a reflection of one's own rejected self. It serves as "a rough and imperfect mirror."¹⁰⁷ You "become who you are" by learning to cultivate a trust in your (higher) self as it

appears reflected in what you admire. Nietzsche says of Schopenhauer in the middle of this essay in which he declares his independence from Schopenhauer: "I trusted him at once and my trust is the same now." The role of an exemplar is twofold: to allow us to arrive at an articulate conception of what we value, and to ensure that we fasten upon duties suited to our needs – duties stringent enough to require our transformation, yet not so stringent as to be unfulfillable: "I am sure of only one thing: that from that ideal image it is possible to fasten upon ourselves a chain of fulfillable duties" (SE p. 157). The delicacy of this operation lies in the difficulty of adjusting the trajectory of our ideal toward the optimal height:

The dangers are always great when things are made too difficult for a human being and when he is incapable of *fulfilling* any duties at all. . . . The hardest task still remains: to say how a new circle of duties may be derived from an ideal and how one can proceed towards so extravagant a goal through a practical activity – in short, to demonstrate how an ideal *educates* (SE p. 156, trans. amended).

Schopenhauer is an educator only insofar as the ideal he represents is one that was able to educate. The essay justifies its exemplar's claim to be an educator by reporting on how its author was able to derive a circle of duties from the example of "his first teacher." But this represents only the retrospective dimension of the essay's demonstration of how an ideal educates; folded within its pages is also a demonstration of how its author presently proceeds "towards so extravagant a goal through a practical activity" – where one aspect of that activity is the writing of the essay itself. To grasp how Nietzsche's essay seeks to exemplify what it teaches, we need to see not just what his relation to an exemplar *was*, but what *it is* – and to see this we need to notice how his prosecution of the practical activity of authoring the essay itself represents an effort on the part of the author (not merely retrospectively to report on or imaginatively to describe, but in addition) to *exhibit* the sort of practical activity he seeks to commend.

Quoting and Saying

The mind understands something only insofar as it absorbs it like a seed into itself, nurtures it, and lets it grow into blossom and fruit.¹⁰⁸

Commentators are fond of condescending to *Schopenhauer as Educator*. As noted before, they point out how ill-conceived the essay is: Its title promises a celebration of Schopenhauer – yet Schopenhauer is barely mentioned; much of the essay contains an implicit critique

of Schopenhauer's doctrines; and the essay ends, after criticizing Schopenhauer by praising Emerson.¹⁰⁹ Why is it that an essay whose ostensible purpose is to hold up Schopenhauer as an exemplar ends by replacing his name with that of Emerson? The antepenultimate paragraph approvingly quotes a passage from Emerson's "Circles" from which the following sentence is italicized by Nietzsche: "*A new degree of culture would instantly revolutionize the entire system of human pursuits.*"¹¹⁰ This echoes Emerson's earlier call in "Self-Reliance" for "the gradual domestication of the idea of Culture," which, in turn, is echoed in SE.

But this is only the easily visible tip of the iceberg. Closer examination reveals that Nietzsche's essay contains much more than a respectful closing nod in Emerson's direction: Emerson's sentences haunt the *entire* essay. Countless passages in SE echo passages from Emerson.¹¹¹ The concepts of genius, exemplar, culture, animality, timidity, shame, custom, humanity, trusting oneself, conformity, longing, a circle of duties, and a higher self are only a handful among a seemingly endless number of concepts in SE that either repeat or accord with concepts in Emerson's essays "Self-Reliance" and "Circles."¹¹²

How are we to understand the pervasiveness of Emerson's presence in this essay whose title bears Schopenhauer's name? Here is how the essay introduces Schopenhauer:

Certainly there may be other means of finding oneself, or coming to oneself out of the bewilderment in which one usually wanders as in a dark cloud, but I know of none better than to think on one's true educators. And so today I shall remember one of the teachers and taskmasters of whom I can boast. *Arthur Schopenhauer* – and later on I shall recall others. (SE p. 130)

Eventually Emerson's name is recalled, but it is Schopenhauer's that stands italicized here at the outset of the essay. Why? Nietzsche says: "First I shall remember one of the teachers of whom I can boast." Schopenhauer is a teacher of whom he can boast. Why couldn't he boast of Emerson? Nietzsche writes elsewhere: "*Emerson.* – Never have I felt so much at home in a book, and in *my* home . . . – I may not praise it, it is too close to me."¹¹³

Schopenhauer is a teacher of whom the author may boast because he is a teacher the author has outgrown. Schopenhauer's sentences no longer represent sentences the author wishes to appropriate as his own. The essay tells us about how "Schopenhauer as a human being can serve as an example" (SE p. 137). It describes a completed process of how one can "profit from an example." Emerson is an example that, as the texture of the essay itself serves to reveal, continues to function as one of the author's current exemplars. The essay thus underscores that the task of

relating oneself to one's "higher self" is not something one does only once.

In denying that the task of self-perfection is one that culminates in the *telos* of a perfected self, Nietzsche thereby aligns himself doctrinally with Emerson as well. What Emerson calls "conformity" is the condition in which one takes one's present self as not only final (as an end that one has attained), but as last (as the end). The condition of self-reliance – which Emerson defines as the aversion of conformity – is one in which one's attained self leans toward a (further) "unattained and attainable self."¹¹ Nietzsche pictures each of us as a series of attainable selves, each, once attained, leaning toward a further unattained yet attainable successor. Nietzsche appears in SE to be recommending Schopenhauer to us as a figure who can play the role of exemplar for us – and who did play that role for him.

A temptation here is to think that this is something that one only does once – something that Schopenhauer did for Nietzsche and that now perhaps Nietzsche can do for us. Nietzsche's strategy is to elicit this temptation in order to frustrate it. It is for this reason that he chooses to depict his relation to two exemplary figures: the one to whom he once attached his heart, and the one to whom his heart is presently attached. This is what it is "to become who you are" for Nietzsche: to be negotiating the transition between a self attained and a self that is to be attained. "Becoming who you are" consists not in actualizing some preexisting entity called one's "true self," but rather in properly managing this transition. Becoming who you are is not something one is ever finished doing – or, for that matter, something one can utterly fail to be doing. The question is one of *how* one manages the economy of the structure of selfhood: whether one leans the attained self toward the attainable.

The recurring transcriptions of Emersonian sentences in Nietzsche's essay furnish a concrete demonstration of how to make use of an exemplar. Each sentence has been "absorbed like a seed," nurtured, and allowed to blossom afresh. The author, through questing in this manner for a voice that is not yet his, leans his attained self toward an as yet unattained self. This is how you, the reader, are to reclaim the rejected thoughts that you recognize as your own when they return "with a certain alienated majesty" in an exemplary work: Make what you trust in such a work yours.¹² Nietzsche's essay seeks to demonstrate how to do this. Just to offer a series of sentences surrounded by quotation marks would fail to depict the relation to an exemplar the essay aspires to illustrate. The essay ends with a quotation from Emerson only after it has unpacked the central thoughts that figure in the quotation and woven them through the fabric of the essay as a whole. Nietzsche's placement and appropriation of Emerson's sentences could usefully serve as an illus-

tration of Emerson's point in his essay entitled (and devoted to the topic of) "Quotation and Originality." Emerson writes: "By necessity, by proclivity – and by delight, we all quote."¹³

The question that Emerson's essay explicitly poses is under what conditions an act of quotation can amount to more than mere quotation. One can see Nietzsche's essay as implicitly posing this same question. The answer that Emerson's essay proposes turns on how far you can measure, and let yourself be measured by, what your quotation says. He writes: "Next to the originator of a good sentence is the first quotator of it." This is one way of summarizing the ambition of Nietzsche's early essay: to be the first quotator of an Emerson sentence. Being "the first quotator" (in this honorific sense) is a matter of being the second originator of a sentence. It involves more than putting quotation marks around it – it involves making its words your own. You had not yet sought your own voice and you found this one; now you must find your own. This problematic of finding and losing a voice that both is and is not his own is enacted in Nietzsche's essay's appropriation of Emerson's sentences.

The structure of Nietzsche's essay also mirrors a feature of the structure of the essay of Emerson's it quotes: Both climax in a quotation. Here is the concluding quotation of Emerson's essay: "A man," said Oliver Cromwell, "never rises so high as when he knows not whither he is going."¹⁴ Very early in SE we find the following: "Who was it who said: 'a man never rises so high as when he knows not whither he is going'" (SE p. 129, trans. amended).

Emerson's "Circles" is thus quoted both in the opening and in the concluding segment of Nietzsche's essay, thus framing the body of the essay. What are we to make of this transposition of Emerson's closing quotation stripped of its attribution? Once we have decoded its relation to the essay inscribed in the conclusion of Nietzsche's essay, it certainly provokes us to ponder the relation between these two essays. But should we take it for granted that the answer to Nietzsche's question is simply: "Emerson"? Nietzsche asks: "Who was it who said . . . ?" and then presents the quotation. Hollingdale provides a footnote that purports to contain *the* answer to Nietzsche's question: "Oliver Cromwell, as quoted by Cardinal de Retz in his *Memoirs*" (SE p. 129n). Is this the answer to his question Nietzsche wishes us to arrive at? Is the task he assigns us here one of tracing a series of nested quotations back to their (hidden) point of origination (so that the bit of additional erudition supplied by the provision of the name of Cardinal de Retz closes the question out)? Does this mean Emerson is not the answer to his question? (Is the author of SE – who presents us with this quotation – thus also not an answer?) What counts as someone's having *said* something?

This is the question Nietzsche's gesture of quoting Emerson quoting Cardinal de Retz quoting Cromwell (and asking "Who was it who said these words?") asks us to ask. Nietzsche has just remarked (in a passage cited earlier) that if you let another bear you across the stream of life to your further self, you "put yourself in pawn and lose your self" (SE p. 129). The words of another can disclose the way to your (further) self, but they cannot carry you there. If you seek to adopt another's words as your own, you run the risk of depriving yourself of a self. The words of a Nietzschean/Emersonian essay are misunderstood, turned against their own ambition, the instant they are invoked as authority – the instant they are *merely* quoted.¹⁷ How does one *claim* the words of another as one's own (as opposed to merely *repeating* them)? *That* is what the relation of Nietzsche's essay to Emerson's is meant to exhibit.

As we have seen, Nietzsche's essay proposes a series of questions you are to ask yourself. In each case he provides some words and tells you to say these words to your self. But what counts as your having asked (rather than merely repeated) the question? Nietzsche furnishes as an illustrative parable the following quotation from a letter by Heinrich von Kleist:

Not long ago I became acquainted with the Kantian philosophy. . . . I have no reason to fear it will shatter you so profoundly and painfully as it has me. . . . If the point of this thought does not penetrate your heart, do not smile at one who feels wounded by it in the deepest and most sacred part of his being (SE pp. 140–1).

Kleist's attempt to ask Kant's question (concerning the nature and limits of human knowledge) leaves him "shattered" and "wounded by it in the deepest and most sacred part of his being"; yet Nietzsche presents Kleist's attempt as exemplary: "When, indeed, will human beings again feel in this natural Kleistian fashion, when will they again learn to assess the meaning of a philosophy in the 'most sacred part' of their being?" (SE p. 141, trans. amended). Nietzsche then goes on to propose another of his questions:

[T]he creative human is now to answer the question: "Do you affirm this existence in the depths of your heart? Is it sufficient for you? Would you be its advocate, its redeemer? For you have only to pronounce a single, heartfelt Yes! – and life, though it faces such heavy accusations, shall go free" (SE p. 146).

This question is evidently the precursor of (what Nietzsche later calls) "the thought of eternal recurrence." The exercise of posing this question is to serve as an antidote to (what the essay identifies as) our most deeply rooted inclination: namely, "to kill time" (SE p. 128). The opening topic of SE is that what each of us most needs to affirm – and most shrinks

from – is her own uniqueness: "In his heart every human being knows quite well that, being unique, he will be in the world only once and that no imaginable chance will for a second time gather together into a unity so strangely variegated an assortment as he is: he knows it but he hides it like a bad conscience – why?" (SE p. 127, trans. amended). Each of us "cloaks" herself in the "conventionality" of her neighbor, attempting to flee her uniqueness by making herself resemble others (*ibid.*). Nietzsche's question in SE (which is the precursor of "the thought of eternal recurrence") is designed to obstruct this path of flight. Much of his subsequent authorship is concerned both with how best to frame this question and with what criteria to propose for what counts as one's having genuinely asked it.

The paradox underlying Nietzsche's later reformulations of this question is that one is best able to measure the extent of the uniqueness of one's life by imagining its recurrence. The question thus receives its most famous reformulation in *The Gay Science*:

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, speak 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 and eternal confirmation and seal? (GS 341)

The question is here posed in the form of a thought-experiment. The Kleistian response is again invoked as the criterion of whether one has fully measured the question (and thus whether it is *this* question one has addressed to one's self): "If this thought gained possession of you, it would change you as you are or perhaps crush you." The demon whispers the question to you "in your loneliest loneliness" – that is, under the very circumstances that Nietzsche, as we have seen, elsewhere identifies as those under which the whisper of your conscience becomes audible.

Attempts to pose versions of this question recur throughout *Zarathus-*

tra. Playing on the various senses of the word "*abgründlich*," Zarathustra terms it "*der abgründliche Gedanke*" – the most difficult, the most repellent, and the most bottomless of thoughts.¹¹⁸ It is literally an *abgründliche* (abysmal) question because to pose it requires that you reaffirm your life, as you live it, at every instant. As the demon says, its demand (that you continually renew your previous affirmation) is to lie upon your each and every action "as the greatest weight." The thought-experiment is designed to place the fullest possible pressure on the point of the present moment.¹¹⁹ It requires of you that you *attend* to the endless domestic details of your everyday life:

[O]ne is bound to admit that most people see the *closest things of all* very badly and very rarely pay heed to them. . . . [B]eing *unknowledgeable in the smallest and most everyday things* and failing to keep an eye on them – this it is that transforms the earth for so many into a vale of tears. Let it not be said that, here as everywhere, it is a question of human *lack of understanding*: on the contrary – there exists enough, and more than enough, understanding, only it is *employed in the wrong direction* and *artificially directed* away from these smallest and closest things. (HH II:1:6)

The thought-experiment is designed to enable you to keep an eye on (as the demon puts it) "every thought and sigh and everything unutterably small . . . in your life." What usually passes for philosophy, according to Nietzsche, tends to diagnose our confusion as due to a *lack of understanding*, thus "artificially directing" our vigilance away from the smallest and most everyday things – encouraging us to attempt an ever more sophisticated employment of the intellect in the place of the requisite exercise of attention.¹²⁰ This provides a general specification of what Nietzsche takes the task of philosophy to be: to enable us to see those closest things of all that most of us see very badly and very rarely heed.¹²¹

Zarathustra as a whole offers a vivid allegory of the problematic of speaking and quoting adumbrated in SE. The thought of eternal recurrence is first expressed by the figure named "the Dwarf" who enunciates it in the form of a doctrine – a cosmological hypothesis about the structure and nature of time. The Dwarf says: "Time itself is a circle." Zarathustra responds: "Do not make things too easy for yourself" and chastises the Dwarf for not entering the thought through the gateway that has "inscribed above it: 'Moment.'" To say that the Dwarf does not inscribe the thought of eternal recurrence under the aspect of the Moment is to say that his attempt to think it does not transform his relation to each moment of his life – it does not lie upon his actions as "the greatest weight." Later the thought is given expression again by

Zarathustra's animals: this time, more properly, as an *attitude toward life* – but as a mere attitude, one of shallow optimism, the attainment of which still requires no fundamental transformation of self.

Each of these characters in *Zarathustra* strives to give voice to a thought that they take to be the equivalent of the one to which Zarathustra aspires. In each case Zarathustra turns on the speaker(s) and rejects the thought in their mouths as a counterfeit version of the "most abysmal thought." In each case the failure to meet the demand posed by the task (of thinking this thought) does not, as Nietzsche says, turn on a *lack of understanding*: "there exists enough, and more than enough, understanding, only it is *employed in the wrong direction*."¹²²

Schopenhauer as Educator ends with the following anecdote: "Diogenes said when someone praised a philosopher in his presence: 'How can he be considered great, since he has been a philosopher for so long and has never yet *disturbed* anybody?'" (SE p. 194). This is the final question you are to ask yourself, upon completing Nietzsche's essay: Has it disturbed you? If not, it has failed its purpose; and the epithet that Nietzsche says should be applied to academic philosophy should be applied to it as well: "This, indeed, ought to be the epitaph of university philosophy: 'it disturbed nobody'" (ibid.). As our brief peek at *Zarathustra* indicates, it subsequently becomes Nietzsche's central ambition to find a way of writing philosophy that defies the conferral of that epithet. The elaborations on the theme of quoting and saying in SE represent the first, comparatively timid steps in the development of that project.

The search for a form of authorship that successfully undercuts the reader's temptation to merely quote the text – to confer a false authority on his words – spurs Nietzsche's composition of texts that increasingly resist mere quotation. This leads not only to the abandonment of the essay form in his work, but also to the gradual disappearance of an authorial voice to whom "views" can straightforwardly be ascribed. Hiding behind what he later calls his "masks," he offers genealogies and polemics designed to serve as antidotes and correctives to our natural intellectual inclinations, repudiating in advance the reader who wishes simply to subscribe to some piece of doctrine he finds in Nietzsche's prose. One is thus led to wonder: Would Nietzsche deem the contemporary reception of his (evidently quotable) work a measure of its success or its failure?¹²³

NOTES

1. *Human, All Too Human*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

2. *On the Genealogy of Morals*, trans. with *Ecce Homo* by Walter Kaufmann and R. J. Hollingdale (New York: Vintage, 1967).
3. Arthur Danto, *Nietzsche as Philosopher* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1965), p. 19.
4. It matters: (1) in what order Nietzsche's works were written; (2) out of what sort of literary components an individual work is composed (for example, essays vs. aphorisms); (3) how a remark is positioned within a work; (4) what relation a remark bears to the aim of the work as a whole; (5) how a remark is to be taken (for example, whether it is put forward in the voice of "the author"); and (6) what one needs to do with a remark before one can claim to have unpacked it (for example, whether what it asserts is to be taken at face value, or is only grasped once it is "deciphered," as Nietzsche puts it in GM P:8).
5. GM – to take the most famous case – bears the subtitle "A Polemic," immediately raising the question where, in its dialectical progression, one is to locate the moment(s) in which Nietzsche speaks in his own voice. It divides into three "essays," each of which subdivides into "sections," each of which consists of aphorisms. The work begins with a set of instructions concerning what we are to do with each of its aphorisms – for an aphorism "has not been 'deciphered' when it has simply been read" (GM P:8). Understanding the work thus requires grasping (1) the point of each aphorism and its position within the overall dialectical progression; (2) the degree of embeddedness of each remark in its dialectical context – and hence which remarks can or cannot be taken from context (for example, "the blond Aryan beast") or attributed to "Nietzsche" without serious misunderstanding; (3) the sense in which the work as a whole is intended as "a polemic" (as opposed to a straightforward enunciation of doctrine); (4) the relation between the claims put forward in the three distinct essays (which, as is commonly observed, appear to contradict one another); and (5) the overarching philosophical purpose(s) this elaborate arrangement of parts is meant to serve. Nietzsche begins the work by insisting that the work is likely to be incomprehensible to anyone who fails to read his work in the proper sequence: "If this book is incomprehensible to anyone and jars on his ears, the fault, it seems to me, is not necessarily mine. It is clear enough, assuming, as I do assume, that one has first read my earlier writings and has not spared some trouble in doing so: for they are, indeed, not easy to penetrate" (GM P:8).
6. In calling Nietzsche a perfectionist, I am relying on the characterization of perfectionism set forth by Stanley Cavell in his book *Conditions Handsome and Unhandsome* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990). All references to Cavell, unless otherwise indicated, are to this book.
7. In *Schopenhauer as Educator*, as we shall see, this results in an (only partially successful) attempt on Nietzsche's part to negotiate a tension between the (essay) form and the (perfectionist) aspiration of the work. My aim in the latter part of this essay is to prepare the way for a claim concerning the *Entstehungsgeschichte* of Nietzsche's work: namely, that reflection on this tension (between the form and the content of the *Untimely Meditations*) leads to the demise of the essay form in Nietzsche's work and to his subsequent incessant preoccupation with the form of his work – with the question, that is, of how philosophy should be written.
8. Friedrich Schlegel, *Athenaeum Fragments*, §275, trans. Peter Firchow, in *Philosophical Fragments* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), p. 56.

9. *Attorney for the Damned: Clarence Darrow in the Courtroom*, ed. Arthur Weinberg (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), pp. 70–2, 76. According to Darrow's defence, Nathan Leopold Jr. and Richard Loeb, acting under the influence of Nietzsche's philosophy, planned and executed "the cold-blooded and otherwise motiveless murder" of an adolescent acquaintance in order to prove themselves "beyond good and evil."
 10. Vinit Haksar, *Equality, Liberty, and Perfectionism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 2.
 11. *A History of Western Philosophy* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1945), p. 762.
 12. G. B. Shaw, "Nietzsche in English" (in *Nietzsche: A Collection of Critical Essays*, ed. Robert C. Solomon [New York: Anchor, 1973], p. 373). I do not mean to suggest that Shaw himself is to be read as a crass elitist. What Shaw applauds in Nietzsche is (what he calls) his "naughtiness," his ability to provoke the complacent reader. When Shaw gives voice to explicitly elitist views (ones that he imagines to be deliciously "Nietzschean") it is generally through the mouthpiece of a character in one of his plays – such as Henry Higgins – a character who eventually receives a fitting if gentle come-uppance. Russell admits that it remains unclear, if one just looks at Nietzsche's writings, whether Nietzsche regards "the superiority of the aristocrat as congenital," but Russell then goes on to "assume" that Nietzsche's argument must presuppose the claim that the aristocrat is in some way "biologically superior" (p. 736).
 14. Hence Russell concludes that Nietzsche "holds that the happiness of common people is no part of the good per se"; that he "regards compassion as a weakness to be combatted"; and that his theory rests on "a complete lack of sympathy" with anyone other than the extraordinary individual (pp. 731, 735, 738).
 15. Schlegel, *Athenaeum Fragments*, §214, p. 46, trans. amended.
 16. *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 25.
 17. Henry Higgins in George Bernard Shaw's play *Pygmalion* says to Eliza:

If you can't stand the coldness of my sort of life, and the strain of it, go back to the gutter. Work 'til you're more a brute than a human being; and then cuddle and squabble and drink 'til you fall asleep. Oh, it's a fine life, the life of the gutter. It's real: it's warm: it's violent: you can feel it through the thickest skin: you can taste it and smell it without any training or any work. Not like science and literature and classical music and philosophy and art. You find me cold, unfeeling, selfish, don't you? Very well: be off with you to the sort of people you like. (*Pygmalion* [London: Penguin, 1941], p. 130)
- This passage could serve as a crude summary of what many readers, including Shaw himself, seem to imagine the upshot of Nietzsche's message to be. Shaw's Higgins and Rawls's Nietzsche agree: Art, science, and culture is where "excellence" is to be found and pursued. The pursuit of it is the business of an aristocratic elite. Those of us who do not belong to that elite will be unable to stand the "coldness" of that sort of life. The members of such an elite, in their indifference to ordinary human priorities, will strike us (as Higgins strikes Eliza) as unfeeling and selfish.
18. *The Theory of Morality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977), pp. 26–7. Donagan explains in the endnote appended to the quotation that he "owes the reference to Rawls" (p. 247).

19. Thomas Hurka, *Perfectionism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 75–6.
20. Thomas Hurka, "Perfectionism," in *The Encyclopedia of Ethics*, ed. Lawrence C. Becker and Charlotte B. Becker (New York: Garland, 1992), p. 948.
21. This also fits with another detail offered by Rawls concerning what he takes the perfectionist's emphasis on matters of culture to amount to: The perfectionist will be concerned to advocate that a very strong priority be placed on public support and funding for the arts and sciences and will oppose competing proposals concerning how one might distribute communal goods.
22. Vladimir Jankélévitch, *L'Austérité et la Vie Morale* (Paris: Flammarion, 1956), pp. 189–90. I owe the passage and the translation to Arnold Davidson.
23. Nietzsche: *The Man and His Philosophy*. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965. The translation of *Exemplare* as "specimens" can be found on p. 127 of that book and is invoked on p. 325 of *A Theory of Justice*. (The fact that the same translator is involved is obscured by the fact that Rawls cites "J. R. Hollingdale"!.) The revised version of the Hollingdale book that is currently available, under the title *Nietzsche* (Boston: ARK Paperbacks, 1985), now omits this passage. (Further confusion is introduced by the fact that Hollingdale has a second, completely different book available with the same title: *Nietzsche* [London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973].)
24. *The Critique of Judgement*, trans. James Creed Meredith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1952), pp. 168–9, 181.
25. *Anthropology From a Pragmatic Point of View*, trans. Mary Gregor (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1974), p. 93. I have simply reproduced Gregor's translation. The English word "exemplary" here is used to translate the German *musterhaft*, example (*Beispiel*), and *Exemplar*.
26. Commentators, guided partly by Nietzsche's nasty cracks at the Schlegel brothers (and, especially, at their writings on Greek tragic drama), tend to minimize Nietzsche's indebtedness to German Romanticism. As a corrective to this tendency, the epigraphs that preface each section of this paper document some of the affinities between Nietzsche's and Friedrich Schlegel's versions of moral perfectionism.
27. *The Gay Science*, trans. Walter Kaufmann. New York: Random House, 1974.
28. The following remark (from a recent essay of Hollingdale's entitled "The Hero as Outsider") furnishes a bit of circumstantial evidence for the claim that, in retranslating the essay, Hollingdale came to appreciate the centrality of the term *Exemplar* in Nietzsche's essay: "Nietzsche's early essay *Schopenhauer as Educator* . . . contains next to nothing about Schopenhauer's philosophy. It is almost wholly concerned with Schopenhauer as an exemplary type of man" (*The Cambridge Companion to Nietzsche*, ed. Bernd Magnus and Kathleen Higgins [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996], pp. 77–8).
29. In the reprint of the book (*Nietzsche: The Man and His Philosophy*) from which Rawls quotes the focal passage, Hollingdale completely omits not only the focal passage and his discussion of it, but also the whole section of the book that contained it (and that presumably influenced Rawls's reading of Nietzsche). It appears that once Hollingdale turned to the task of carefully working through and translating the whole of SE his understanding of the

- essay underwent a significant evolution. Also available to Rawls was the first influential English translation of SE by James Hillesheim and Malcolm Simpson, which also rendered *Exemplare* as "specimens" (*Schopenhauer as Educator* [South Bend, Ind.: Regnery/Gateway, 1965]). Hollingdale's excellent (1983) translation mercifully replaced that very inadequate translation of the essay. But Hollingdale's translation has now allegedly been superseded by two (considerably inferior) translations – by William Arrowsmith (*Unmodern Observations* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990]) and Richard Gray (*Unfashionable Observations* [Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995]) – both of which render *Exemplare* once again as "specimens." So much for progress.
30. *Schopenhauer as Educator*, in *Unimely Meditations*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983). All references to SE and to any of the other three *Meditations* (*David Strauss, the Confessor and the Writer, On the Uses and Disadvantages of History for Life*, and *Richard Wagner in Bayreuth*), unless otherwise indicated, are to this edition.
31. My answer to this question is indebted to chapter 1 of Cavell's *Conditions*.
32. It would be an overstatement to say that nothing in the passage Rawls seizes upon encourages such a reading. Nietzsche sometimes attempts to forestall a predictable reaction on our part; but he also prefers at other times to encourage such a reaction precisely in order to be able to round on it and bring to our attention just how reactive we are. In SE he is concerned to expose our tendency to imagine that there is only one way to promote an aristocratic ideal, and our consequent hastiness to conclude that we already know that we are against such an ideal. Nietzsche believes he spies a bad conscience napping beneath our eagerness to rush so vociferously to the defense of our democratic ideals.
33. That Nietzsche thinks that we should derive our duties from the consideration of concrete exemplars of the moral life (rather than from, say, the application of a moral *theory*) touches on an important topic: Why Nietzsche's repudiation of a certain conception of morality – in which "morality" is articulated in terms of explicit principles or obligations – is not a repudiation of the moral life as such. To get clear on this topic would require exploring a claim common to Nietzsche, Kant's *Critique of Judgement*, and Wittgenstein's *Philosophical Investigations*: Namely, that there is a way of following a rule that is not a matter of adhering to an explicitly formulated prescription for action; and that there is thus a way of being genuinely *beholden* to a norm that is not a matter of acting on an articulate conception (let alone in accordance with a "theory") of what one "ought" to do.
34. Schlegel, *Critical Fragments*, §16, p. 2.
35. To say this is not yet to dissipate the (appearance of) paradox. Alexander Nehamas puts it nicely: "We are . . . faced with the problem of explaining how a self that truly must be created and that does not in any way appear to exist can be considered that which an individual is" (*Nietzsche: Life as Literature* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985], p. 175).
36. Zarathustra, we are told, "once counseled himself": "Become who you are!" (*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, in *The Portable Nietzsche*, ed. and trans. Walter Kaufmann [New York: Viking, 1954], IV:1, p. 351). Nietzsche says he takes these "solemn words" from Pindar's *Second Pythian Ode* (see his letter to Erwin Rhode, 3 November 1867). Cavell points out that a variant occurs in

the concluding paragraph of Emerson's essay "Considerations by the Way" (*Essays and Lectures*, ed. Richard Poirier [New York: Library of America, 1983], p. 1096).

37. See also GS 270: "What does your conscience say? – You must become who you are."
38. Nietzsche says of this essay: "My little essay *Schopenhauer as Educator* serves me as a touchstone: he to whom it does not speak *personally* will probably not be able to make anything of me in any other regard either" (letter to Georg Brandes, 10 April 1988, my translation).
39. The claim folded into the beginning of this remark (that "every youthful soul" hears this call – a call that Nietzsche identifies in this essay, as well as in GS 270 as the voice of our conscience) might appear to offer an alternative substantive criterion for delimiting Nietzsche's audience. It might lead one to believe that, if it is the case that *only* "youthful souls" hear this call, then perhaps Nietzsche is only addressing himself to certain readers: those readers who are sufficiently young. But then we have to ask: Who, for these purposes, counts as *young*? Nietzsche here echoes a mode of address that recurs throughout Emerson's essays. The references to youth recur throughout SE. In the sentence directly after the focal passage, for example, Nietzsche says that "the young human being" should be taught to regard his (present) self as a failed work of nature – as an unnatural outcome of the process that is his life. How are we to interpret this incessant emphasis on "youth"? Are we to understand Nietzsche and Emerson as only addressing themselves to people under thirty? Cavell is helpful here:

Emerson and Nietzsche notably and recurrently direct their words to "youth," as a word against despair, showing that they themselves have survived the incessant calls to give over their youthful aspirations. . . . The promise of Emerson and Nietzsche is that youth is not alone a phase of individual development but – like childhood for the early Romantics – a dimension of human existence as such. (*Conditions*, pp. 51–2)

- This is not to deny that these two kinds of youth – biological youth (measurable in terms of the quantity of time one has been on the planet) and Nietzschean youthfulness (measurable in terms of one's capacity for productive self-dissatisfaction and self-transformation) – often tend to be closely correlated. It is only to deny that they are necessarily correlated in the customary manner. (Nietzsche's remarks in BGE.31 on "youth" and on the transition to what we take to be "adulthood" are also pertinent in this connection.)
40. *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), p. 35.
41. The sense in which Nietzsche's philosophical ideal is an esoteric one is nicely captured by a formulation of Stanley Cavell's: "If philosophy is esoteric, that is not because a few men guard its knowledge, but because most men guard themselves against it" (*Must We Mean What We Say?* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976], p. xxvii).
42. Schlegel: "Every honest author writes for nobody or everybody" (*Critical Fragments*, §85, p. 10).
43. *Daybreak*, trans. R. J. Hollingdale (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), P.5.
44. I argue that the writings of both Kierkegaard and Wittgenstein have such a

structure in "Must We Show What We Cannot Say?" (in *The Senses of Stanley Cavell*, ed. R. Fleming and M. Payne [Lewisburg, Penn.: Bucknell University Press, 1989]), and in "On Putting Two and Two Together: Kierkegaard, Wittgenstein and the Point of View for Their Work as Authors" (in *The Grammar of Religious Belief*, ed. Timothy Tessin and Mario von der Ruhr [New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995]).

45. The "book" in question is *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.
46. The "book" in question here is *Human, All Too Human*.
47. A central concern of the essay is to trace the sources of attraction that a Schopenhauerian doctrine of pessimism exerts on so many of Nietzsche's contemporaries (including his own former self): "It is true that, as we usually are, we can contribute nothing to the production of the redemptive human being. That is why we *hate* ourselves as we usually are; and it is this hatred which is the root of that pessimism which Schopenhauer had again to teach our age, though it has existed for as long as the longing for culture has existed" (SE p. 161, trans. amended). The essay goes on to suggest that a Schopenhauerian feeling of pessimism is not the end of the philosophical line, but only a necessary way-station en route to a more productive feeling: "the truthful person feels that the meaning of his activity is . . . explicable through the laws of another and higher life which is in the profoundest sense affirmative" (SE p. 153, trans. amended).
48. Schlegel, *Athenaeum Fragments*, §54, p. 24.
49. The position of the concept of love here contrasts strikingly with Shaw's and Russell's picture of how contempt, pictured as a posture of cold indifference, figures in Nietzsche's thought.
50. I find myself here in agreement with something Nehamas emphasizes: "Nietzsche's positive thinking consists not so much in . . . specific ideas . . . as . . . in the presentation, or exemplification, of a specific character, recognizably literary, who makes of these philosophical ideas a way of life that is uniquely his" (*Nietzsche*, p. 4).
51. Hollingdale throughout translates *grosse Mensch* as "great man" (instead of "great human being"). This has two drawbacks: (1) it obscures the pervasive thematic contrast in the essay between humanity and animality, and (2) it obscures the way in which the essay is "for everyone" (including women!). This second point touches on a controversy I cannot enter into now, other than to remark that it suffices for my present purpose that one can find remarks such as the following in Nietzsche: "The perfect woman is a higher type of human being [*Mensch*] than the perfect man: though also something much rarer" (HH I:377).
52. Henceforth I will so indicate that I have amended the translation, for purposes of brevity.
53. This sets up an interesting topic: the question of the relation between the positive notion of the "bad conscience" that figures prominently in Nietzsche's early thought and the stigmatized notion of the "bad conscience" (that is the legacy of slave morality) that figures prominently in his later thought. Not only does one miss an important continuity in his thought, but one also drastically mistakes the import of his later "immoralism," if one thinks (à la Leopold and Loeb) that Nietzsche's critique of the latter notion turns on a claim to the effect that responsiveness to a bad conscience is itself a bad thing – that is, that in his view all forms of responsiveness to a con-

science are to be utterly unlearned. What needs to be arduously unlearned in Nietzsche's view is something far more particular: the specific species of bad conscience that slave morality sought to instill (so successfully that we late moderns are no longer able to distinguish the species from the genus). The (generic) notion of "conscience" in Nietzsche is coeval with that of "self-overcoming" (or becoming who you are). Nietzsche's quarrel with slave morality derives from its Platonic/Christian conception of "higher" things, *not* from its insistence on an obedience to a demand to realize one's "higher self."

54. "When your higher self . . . speaks it speaks imperiously" (HH I:624). This is a neighborhood of Nietzsche's thought that has been taken to anticipate the existentialist concept of *authenticity*. This has led to misunderstandings of Nietzsche's thought. But what is right in that idea is that it is a mistake to look in passages such as the above (having to do with the moral significance of exemplars) for the outlines of a substantive normative theory. To say this is not to claim that Nietzsche does not elsewhere have a great deal to say of a substantive nature concerning what one should – and especially what one should *not* – value.
56. Nietzsche writes: "I have myself lived in just the manner which I prescribed to myself (namely in *Schopenhauer as Educator*)" (letter to Franz Overbeck, beginning of August 1884). Even near the end of his (productive) life, Nietzsche is still willing to say of his early essay: "*Schopenhauer as Educator* basically contains the plan according to which I have hitherto lived: it is a strict promise [to myself]" (letter to Georg Brandes, 10 April 1888, my translation; see also letter to Brandes, 19 February 1888). In *Ecce Homo* he says, "[I]n *Schopenhauer as Educator* my innermost history, my *becoming*, is inscribed" (p. 281); and he tells Lou Salomé he gave her a copy of the essay because it sets forth "my most fundamental convictions" (letter to Lou von Salomé, December 1882). In his correspondence Nietzsche recurs to the description of SE as "containing promises to myself" a number of times. At one point he even says, "Believe me, I would have ceased living a long time ago if I had turned aside even a single step from these promises! Perhaps someone will yet discover that from *Human, All Too Human* on I have done nothing but fulfill my promises" (draft of a letter to an unidentified correspondent, August 1885).
57. In "Circles" (from which Nietzsche quotes at the end of SE) Emerson writes: "People wish to be settled: only as far as they are unsettled is there any hope for them" (*Essays and Lectures*, p. 413).
58. I am in agreement here with Nehamas's remark that the character Nietzsche presents us with "is produced in a way that prevents it from ever being a model for direct imitation" (*Nietzsche*, p. 4). However, I take the literary production of such a character not to represent for Nietzsche an end in itself (which is how I understand what Nehamas calls "Nietzsche's aestheticism") but rather a means to a further end (which I have been calling "Nietzsche's perfectionism").
59. Hence in *Ecce Homo* he says of SE: "[A]t bottom it is admittedly not 'Schopenhauer as Educator' that speaks here, but his opposite: 'Nietzsche as Educator'" (EH III:UM:3, p. 281). And: "*Schopenhauer as Educator* is not really about Schopenhauer, but solely about me" (letter to Franz Overbeck, August 1884).

60. Nietzsche says in *Ecce Homo* of his third *Meditation* (SE) that in it he employs Schopenhauer "in the fashion that Plato employed Socrates" (EH III:UM:3).
61. The rigor that informs such writing may remain invisible to philosophers raised on certain canons of rigor. The conviction such writing seeks to elicit does not turn, for example, exclusively on the quality of its arguments. It is a tempting misdescription of the sort of power that such writing (at its best) possesses to say that it must therefore turn on some nonrational means of persuasion (on, say, the style of the writing, as opposed to its content). The conception of rigor that informs an enterprise such as Nietzsche's is by no means as foreign to traditional canons of rigor as such a description is determined to make it appear. (Schlegel: "What is commonly called reason is only a subspecies of it: namely, the thin and watery sort" [*Ideas*, pp. 12–13]). Central to perfectionist authorship are numerous strategies undertaken in many a classical philosophical work – such as the accurate wording of a reader's intuitions, the proper identification and diagnosis of his philosophical fixations and resistances, the shifting of his sense of significance – but in a perfectionist work these strategies come to assume a central, rather than a peripheral, role. The primary virtue to which such writing aspires is a kind of responsiveness – a sensitivity to what a reader will and will not want to hear, and a knack for finding the words that will free her to hear what she otherwise could not hear. Such aspirations to responsiveness (as embodied in perfectionist writing) in no way compete with traditional canons of rigor; but authors who excel in one respect will often fall short in the other. Each of these sorts of author exemplifies a dimension of the aspiration to philosophy. The claim each makes on the other is as deep as their mutual implication in a tradition that traces back to Plato's dialogues.
62. Schlegel, *Ideas*, §36, p. 97.
63. Nietzsche, as we shall see, speaks of "the unborn genius" within us (SE, p. 142), and of someone having "evaded his genius" (SE p. 128). He here adopts Emerson's grammar for the term "genius." Genius, according to Emerson, appears to you to be the name of some rare commodity only because you shrink from an encounter with "your genius." Thus, he repeatedly enjoins his reader: "follow your genius."
64. Does Nietzsche mean here to be endorsing Schopenhauer's remark that "a happy life is impossible: the highest that the human being can attain to is a heroic one"? Nietzsche, at various junctures, associates an emphasis on the concept of happiness with all that is most shallow in "English moral philosophy" and often seems inclined to dismiss happiness as "an illusory end." As Zarathustra says, those who come closest to attaining it are those who cease to pursue it. In some passages, however, Nietzsche appears to look favorably on the pursuit of (a certain kind of) happiness. It would serve as a crude first approximation to say that the concept of happiness he scorns is a hedonistic (or utilitarian) one, whereas the one upon which he looks favorably is closer to one found in various strands of Hellenistic philosophy. While a life of suffering is inconsistent with a life that is happy in the former sense, it cannot simply be opposed to one that is happy in the latter sense. Indeed, a life of suffering is a prerequisite of attaining the condition in which Nietzsche says one will know "only the sadness of the most profound happiness, and no other sadness at all" (GS 183). To avoid terminological confusion,

Nietzsche tends to prefer to speak of the life to which one should aspire as one of "cheerfulness."

65. Note: Schopenhauer, too, insists here on "the benefit of *all*." Indeed, he singles out disinterestedness as a defining characteristic of greatness:

What makes him [that is, the great human being] *great* in all circumstances is the fact that *he does not seek himself and his own interest*. . . . [H]e who is great recognizes himself in all and thus in the whole. . . . [O]n account of this extension of his sphere, he is called great. Accordingly, that sublime predicate belongs by right only to the true hero in any sense and to the genius; it signifies that, contrary to human nature, they have not sought their own interest, and have lived not for themselves, but for all. (*The World as Will and Representation*, vol. 2, trans. E. F. J. Payne [New York: Dover, 1969], p. 385)

66. The promotion of this perversion of the heroic life constitutes the business of (what Nietzsche calls) "the hero-cult" (see, for example, D 298). Nietzsche identifies "the formula for this kind of prostration" above all with the work of Carlyle – and the author of *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History* – and seeks to distinguish his own views sharply from those of Carlyle (ibid.). Late in his life Nietzsche takes various "scholarly oxen" to task for continuing to "read into" his work "the hero-worship of Carlyle" – a reading that Nietzsche says he already "repudiated so maliciously" in his earlier writings (EH III:UM:3).
67. "Everyone has his good days, when he discovers his higher self. . . . Many live in awe and abasement before their ideal and would like to deny it: they are afraid of their higher self because when it speaks it speaks imperiously" (HH I:624).

68. This bears on whether – as a number of commentators have supposed – Nietzsche is concerned to *substitute* aesthetic for moral values.

69. That the sort of capacities Nietzsche calls upon his reader to exercise are not ones that require extraordinary intellectual powers – and that a failure to exercise them is not in general indicative of a deficiency in understanding – is the theme of §6 of *The Wanderer* (HH II:6).

70. Kierkegaard is perhaps the most vehement among such authors in his insistence that "there is nothing everyone is so afraid of as being told how vastly much he is capable of" (*The Diary of Soren Kierkegaard* [New York: Citadel, 1960], p. 110). His diagnosis of our tendency to resort to eulogy parallels the one Nietzsche offers:

[I]f an ethical man finds that people want to admire him . . . he must himself see that this holds a deception, an untruth. An ethical man must not let people admire him, but – through him – they must be urged toward the Ethical. As soon as people are permitted to admire an ethical man they elevate him into a genius, i.e. put him on a different plane, and, *ethically*, that very thing constitutes the most horrible fallacy, for the ethical shall and must be universally human. An ethical man must constantly maintain, and inculcate in others, that every human being is as capable as he. . . . They wanted to admire him in order to be rid of him (i.e., the gaudy-sting of his existence) but the human feeling in him that makes him say: "anybody can do it as well as I" calls forth hatred and makes people wish to have him at a distance.

And another result of this is that after he is dead they will honor him, as by then the sting inherent in his being their contemporary will have gone. The very objection to such an ethical man during his lifetime becomes a eulogy of him after his death. (ibid., pp. 113–14)

71. For the very reasons that Kierkegaard (in the passage quoted in the previous endnote) adduces.

72. Nietzsche in this passage argues not only that *we* should not conceive of the great human being as a "superman" (in the Webster's sense), but that it is equally important that the great human being not conceive of *himself* in this manner:

The belief in great, superior, fruitful spirits is not necessarily, yet nonetheless is very frequently associated with that religious or semi-religious superstition that these spirits are of supra-human origin and possess certain miraculous abilities by virtue of which they acquire their knowledge by quite other means than the rest of mankind. . . . It is at any rate certainly questionable whether this superstitious belief in genius, in the privileges and special abilities of genius, is of any benefit to the genius himself if it takes root in him. It is in any event a dangerous sign when a man is assailed by awe of himself. . . . when the sacrificial incense which is properly rendered only to a god penetrates the brain of the genius, so that his head begins to swim and he comes to regard himself as something supra-human. The consequences that slowly result are: the feeling of irresponsibility, of exceptional rights, the belief that he confers a favor by his mere presence, insane rage when anyone attempts even to compare him with others, let alone to rate him beneath them, or to draw attention to lapses in his work. Because he ceases to practice criticism of himself, at last one opinion after the other falls out of his plumage: that superstitious belief eats at the roots of his powers. . . . For the great spirits themselves it is therefore probably more beneficial if they acquire an insight into the nature and origin of their powers, if they grasp, that is to say, what purely human qualities have come together in them and what fortunate circumstances attended them. (HH I:164, trans. amended)

Notice that Nietzsche lists, among the unfortunate consequences of a superstitious belief in one's own genius, the feeling that one possesses "exceptional rights" – in effect, identifying the Leopold and Loeb syndrome as one of the possible consequences of such a misunderstanding of genius.

73. In SE Nietzsche again explicitly takes a moment to deny the suggestion that what is at issue for him is whether a historical process will eventually climax in some great man (or anything else): "He who regards his life as no more than a point in the evolution of a race or of a state or of a science, and thus regards himself as belonging only to the history of becoming, has not understood the lesson set him by existence, and will have to learn it over again" (SE p. 155).

74. This is a reference to chapter XXXI of WWR – which is entitled "On Genius." Warning the reader not to construe the subsequent discussion of genius in elitist terms, Schopenhauer begins the chapter by distinguishing between "the concept of genius," which is his concern, and the (ethically irrelevant) concept of "the person endowed with talent" (vol. 2, p. 376).

75. Schlegel, *Ideas*, §20, p. 96, trans. amended.

76. Nehamas, *Nietzsche*, pp. 165–77. J. P. Stern also raises a version of this worry. After quoting the line from SE that "Your true self . . . lies immeasurably above that which you usually take to be yourself," Stern asks: "But is it not possible that 'your true self' may lie immeasurably below 'your usual self'?" (*A Study of Nietzsche* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979], p. 116).

77. Emerson: "Whoso would be a man . . . must not be hindered by the name of goodness, but must explore if it be goodness" (*Essays and Lectures*, p. 261).

78. *Beyond Good and Evil*, trans. Walter Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1966). Later on in the same work, Nietzsche asks: "Isn't a moral philosopher the opposite of a Puritan? . . . Should moralizing not be – immoral?" (BGE 228). The remark is typical of Nietzsche in the complexity of its structure, inviting two distinct, mutually consistent interpretations: (1) the true moral thinker is the one whose moral thought is bound to strike us as immoral, (2) it is the Puritan in us who moralizes morality, who represents the greatest threat to the moral life. On the first way of taking the remark, it is the (in Nietzsche's eyes) genuine moral thinker who is charged (by us) with immorality; on the second, it is the moralism characteristic of the typical moral philosopher that is to be recognized as a debasement of morality. On both readings the remark turns on the thought that, as things stand, our access to a "higher" conception of the moral remains obstructed.
79. I take up this topic in more detail in my "Nietzsche, Kierkegaard, and Anscombe on Moral Unintelligibility," in *Morality and Religion*, ed. D. Z. Phillips (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996).
80. An author such as Kant is careful to head off such a charge. Kant does recognize duties that a person bears to himself, emphasizing in this regard both a person's duty to increase his "natural perfection" (his intellectual, imaginative, and physical abilities), and his duty to increase his "moral perfection" (to cultivate purity in his attitude to duty – his capacity to act not merely in conformity with, but from the motive of, duty). Kant will insist, however, that all such duties to oneself are only *imperfect* duties – duties that are subordinate to one's fundamental duties to humanity as a whole. A person's duty to perfect himself is a duty "regarding the end of humanity in one's own person" (*The Doctrine of Virtue*, part 1, book 2). One's duty to increase one's own natural and moral perfection, for Kant, is thus a function of one's duties to oneself as a representative of humanity. There is therefore a contrast to be drawn between the perfectionism of a thinker such as Kant and that of Nietzsche. For the latter, the pursuit of one's own perfection is prerequisite for – rather than derivative from – the recognition of one's (true) obligations to others.
81. What Nietzsche's "immoralism" would then combat is what the word says it negates: moralism. Moralism and (its aesthetic counterpart) philistinism figure in the *Meditations* as the two telltale symptoms of (what Nietzsche calls) "a lack of culture." They result, on his analysis, whenever one's attained self seeks to eclipse (rather than relate itself to) one's unattained but attainable self.
82. This, too, is an Emersonian thought: "Great men are a collyrium to clear our eyes from egotism, and enable us to see other people and their works" (*Essays and Lectures*, p. 626).
83. Wieland, for example, writes of Greek education:
- The goal . . . was to form or cultivate their young citizens into that which they termed *kulokagathia*. By this term they understood all of the excellences and perfections that distinguish a free and noble human being from a slave and from a human-like animal; it encompassed all of the qualities and talents that elevate and beautify a person and make one fit to fulfill a noble role in life. To this end, which alone is worthy of human nature, they inculcated in their youth as early as possible a taste for the beautiful and the good. (Christoph Martin Wieland, *Gesammelte Schriften* [Berlin: Weidemann, 1909], vol. 4, p. 183)

- According to Wieland, the topic of finding worthy role models derives its importance in classical ethics from the fact that such role models are deemed to be essential in enabling one to discover and realize one's own "inner beauty." (In his *Discourses*, Epictetus says: "We all carry the seeds of greatness within us, but we need an image as a point of focus in order that they may sprout.") The German neoclassical project of rehabilitating the notion of *kulokagathia* takes on a different (militantly anti-Christian) emphasis in Nietzsche's thought, however. Perhaps the most general way of characterizing the sense in which Nietzsche takes *his* project to involve a return to a Hellenistic and Roman ethic would be to say that he seeks to shift the focus of ethical assessment from the exercise of the free will to the formation of the noble *character* – that is, away from a characteristically Christian focus on moral *deliberation* (and on the *intentions* with which actions are performed, and hence only on those actions that can be taken as realizations of intentions) and toward a characteristically Greco-Roman focus on being a certain kind of *person* (and what naturally *flows* from the character of such a person). This shifts the focus of moral reflection away from a concern with those sorts of actions anyone is in principle *able* to perform insofar as their will is free (and away from a concern with how to formulate the unconditionally binding obligations that prescribe and prohibit such actions) and toward a concern with which sorts of actions one finds it *natural* to perform (and a concern with how one goes about shaping one's nature so that such actions become second nature and thus flow from one's character as a matter of course).
84. In puzzling over the sense, if any, in which Nietzsche could be said to be a moralist, Foot notes that he constantly asks us to attend to what it is that elicits our admiration when confronted with great individuals:
- We do find patterns of reaction to exceptional men that would allow us to see here a valuing on aesthetic grounds, even if it is one for which we have no special name. I am thinking of the interest and admiration which is the common attitude to remarkable men of exceptional independence of mind and strength of will. Such men hold our attention. . . . [Nietzsche] is appealing to our tendency to *admire* certain individuals.
- Foot concludes that Nietzsche's aim here is to draw our attention to what we value. Like Nehamas, she is inclined to see this sort of admiration as a product of something more akin to aesthetic than moral valuation. She herself, however, is not quite comfortable suggesting that the sort of valuation in question here is *merely* aesthetic (and thus prefers to employ the term "quasi-aesthetic"): "[T]he analogy with an aesthetic valuation should not be pressed too far. Perhaps what we should do is simply suggest a similarity between the way we attribute *value* (aesthetic value) to art objects and the *value* that Nietzsche attributes to a certain kind of man" ("Nietzsche: The Revaluation of Values," in *Virtues and Vices* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978], p. 89).
85. Foot goes on (in the essay quoted in the previous note) to observe that "Morality is necessarily connected with such things as justice and the common good, and it is a conceptual matter that this is so" (p. 92). Foot is able swiftly to conclude that the "criteria" elicited through our admiration of exemplary individuals must be for Nietzsche of a quasi-aesthetic (rather than of a moral) character because she takes it as evident that Nietzsche is

not much concerned with "justice and the common good." (Nietzsche himself, on the other hand, claims in SE that genuine culture – as opposed to that "misemployed and misappropriated species of culture" which is a purely aesthetic affair – can only be promoted out of "pure disinterestedness" (SE p. 164).

86. In particular, Nietzsche, again under the influence of German neoclassicism, claims that such considerations would not have struck the ancient Greeks as "merely aesthetic." Wieland, in the midst of one his eulogies to the Greek concept of *kalo-kagathia*, asks, "What is more beautiful than a *virtuous* human being?" (*Gesammelte Schriften*, pp. 71–2). Drawing on the language of Plato, we might say that the sort of beauty with which Nietzsche is concerned is the beauty of a good soul. Consider this excerpt from Plotinus's "On the Beautiful":

Shut your eyes, and change to and wake another way of seeing, which everyone has but few use. And what does this inner sight see? When it is just awakened it is not at all able to look at the brilliance before it. So the soul must be trained, first of all to look at beautiful ways of life: then at beautiful works, not those which the arts produce, but the works of men who have a name for goodness: then look at the souls of the people who produce the beautiful works. How then can you see the sort of beauty a good soul has? Go back into yourself and look; and if you do not yet see yourself beautiful, then, just as someone making a statue which has to be beautiful cuts away here and polishes there and makes one part smooth and clears another till he has given his statue a beautiful face, so you too must cut away excess and straighten the crooked and clear the dark and make it bright and never stop "working on your statue" [ref. to *Phaedrus* 252D7] till the divine glory of virtue shines out on you, till you see "self-mastery enthroned upon its holy seat" [ref. to *Phaedrus* 254B7]. . . . [W]hen you see that you have become this, then you have become sight; you can trust yourself then; you have already ascended and need no one to show you; concentrate your gaze and see. This alone is the eye that sees great beauty. (*Enneads*, I.6.9; trans. A. H. Armstrong, in *Loeb Classical Library: Plotinus* [Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966], vol. 1, pp. 259–61)

This passage is strikingly reminiscent of passages in SE. The aesthetic and the moral do not neatly divide into separate categories of valuation on such a conception of the (morally) beautiful soul. Plotinus's discussion is in this regard representative of a long-standing tradition of ethical thought (which, in recent centuries, includes, among others, Wieland and Goethe, Schiller and Schlegel, Emerson and Whitman, Arnold and Ruskin, and Santayana and Dewey). Although Romanticism is the most characteristic form such a conviction in the interdependence of aesthetic and moral value takes in the nineteenth century, it is only the most strident species of a pervasive genus of ethical thought. As sober an author as Jane Austen experiences no awkwardness in facing her ethical vocabulary with aesthetic terms. Not only do we often hear, in her novels, of "moral taste," "beauty of mind," "elegance of sensibility," moral and literary "refinement," "the beauty of truth and sincerity," "a delicacy of principle," and so on, but the progress of the narratives themselves testify to the indissoluble character of (genuine) moral and (genuine) aesthetic refinement. As Gilbert Ryle notes concerning her novels, "there is a prevailing correlation between sense of duty, sense of propriety, and aesthetic taste. Most of her people who lack any one of these three, lack

the other two as well." Ryle conjectures that "Jane Austen's specific moral ideas derived directly or indirectly . . . from Shaftesbury," who also "assimilated moral sense to artistic sense, aesthetic taste to moral taste" ("Jane Austen and the Moralists," in *Philosophical Papers*, vol. 1 [London: Hutchinson, 1971], p. 287). Thus, before we censure Nietzsche's discussions of the morally admirable individual on the grounds that they appeal to "morally irrelevant quasi-aesthetic criteria" (Foot, p. 92), we do well to notice that we are employing a very particular and parochial concept of the *moral*.

87. This represents a repudiation of the position taken in *The Birth of Tragedy*.
88. Despite the remarkable divergence in their first-order aesthetic judgments, in this respect Nietzsche's aesthetic theory is very close to that of Tolstoy.
89. The *Meditations* probably comes as close as any philosophical work ever has to defending the straight antithesis of an institutional theory of art. For what we today by and large call "culture" is for Nietzsche the celebration of the antithesis of culture: "The 'cultured' person has degenerated into the greatest enemy of culture, for he wants lyingly to deny the existence of the universal sickness and thus obstructs the physicians" (SE, pp. 148–9, trans. amended).
90. The negative half of this task (the critique of the philistine concept of culture) falls mainly to the first two "Meditations" and the positive half (the recovery of the concept of culture) to the last two. Thus Nietzsche writes in *Ecce Homo*: "[T]he third and fourth *Untimely Ones* are . . . pointers to a higher concept of culture, [their aim is] to restore the concept of culture" (EH III:UM:1).
91. Schlegel captures this thought in the following remark: "The need to raise itself above humanity is humanity's prime characteristic" (*Ideas*, p. 96). Nietzsche is often criticized for being too vague about his concept of the *Übermensch*. The following remark from Michael Tanner is representative: "Nietzsche failed to develop the concept of the *Übermensch* sufficiently for it to occupy the central position in his thought that is strongly suggested by *Zarathustra*" ("Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil," in *Philosophers Ancient and Modern*, ed. Godfrey Vesey [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986], p. 202). Yet Nietzsche is as precise as he can be. "Become who you are" is not an injunction one fulfills by attaining some determinate goal: Any given state of the self is always related to a further (higher) self – and each such higher self is only discoverable through its internal relation to an empirically given present self. This is also why Nietzsche's perfectionism is not a teleological doctrine in Rawls's sense – there is no *telos* that could count for him, once attained, as representing the fully realized human self.
92. All of them and many others tend to omit the figure of the saint.
93. Thus, we are said to live in "an era ruled, not by living human beings, but by pseudo-humans dominated by public opinion; for which reason our age may be to some distant posterity the darkest and the least known, because least human, portion of human history" (SE p. 128, trans. amended).
94. Nietzsche says that what we have come to call "Duty" is simply a means of underwriting what he calls our "laziness." We picture Duty as a set of obligations imposed on us from outside our self. Nietzsche retains and radicalizes a Kantian line of thought: only those duties are genuinely binding that we are able to legislate to ourselves.

95. To say that the goal is a "final and supreme becoming-human" is not to deny that the full "miracle of transformation" it entails is one "which the game of becoming may never hit upon" (SE p. 161).
96. It would not be much of an exaggeration to say that the central project of the third *Meditation* (SE) is the illumination of this concept of genius. It is remarkable how invisible this topic has remained to commentators on Nietzsche's work. Michael Tanner has even written an essay entitled "Nietzsche on Genius," which begins as follows: "'Genius' is not a crucial term in Nietzsche's vocabulary." The essay mentions the *Meditations* only in order to remark on the following irony: "There is no . . . illumination on the topic of genius to be found in the four *Untimely Meditations* which Nietzsche wrote in the succeeding four years, though two of them, Schopenhauer as Educator" and "Richard Wagner in Bayreuth," are ostensibly concerned to celebrate his two greatest cultural heroes" (In *Genius*, ed. Penelope Murray [Oxford: Blackwell, 1989], p. 131). Contrast this with Nietzsche's own summary of his essay: "genius itself is here summoned, so that one may hear whether genius, the highest fruit of life, can justify life as such" (SE p. 146). This point is argued by Cavell in *Conditions*.
97. Schlegel, *Athenaeum Fragments*, §371, p. 76, trans. amended.
98. Bertrand de Jouvenal – the other thinker who, along with Nietzsche, Rawls cites in this connection – is a much better example than Nietzsche of a someone who fits Rawls's, Donagan's, and Hurka's characterizations of a perfectionist.
100. I am here rehearsing a central theme of Cavell's *Conditions*.
101. Thomas Jefferson, letter to John Adams (28 October 1813) in *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, ed. Paul L. Ford (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1899), vol. 9, pp. 425–8.
102. *On Liberty* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1978), pp. 62–3. All references to Mill are to this work.
103. One of Nietzsche's posthumous notebooks from the fall of 1881 (which contains some remarks that are virtually transcriptions of passages from Emerson) bears the title *Emerson – Exemplar* (KSA, vol. 9, pp. 618–22).
104. "Each philosopher, each bard, each actor has only done for me, as by a delegate, what one day I can do for myself" (Emerson, *Essays and Lectures*, p. 67).
105. The opening chapter of Emerson's *Representative Men*, titled "Uses of Great Men," develops at length the theme that the significance of the great man lies in his capacity to serve as "a representative" of another's unrecognized possibilities: "We have never come at the true and best benefit of any genius, so long as we believe him an original force. . . [W]ithin the limits of human education and agency, we may say, great men exist that there may be greater men" (*Essays and Lectures*, pp. 631–2).
106. Judith Shklar, in her essay "Emerson and the Inhibitions of Democracy" (in *The Pursuits of Reason*, ed. T. Cohen, P. Guyer, and H. Putnam [Lubbock: Texas Tech University Press, 1993]) argues that Emerson's emphasis on the importance of great men is in tension with his fondness for democracy. Shklar interprets Emerson's employment of the democratic terminology of "representative" and "delegate" as an ingenious ploy to paper over the tensions in his view. Her essay revolves around an opposition between the great man (who is averse to conformity) and the ordinary man (who is impris-

- oned by conformity). She writes of "a vast gap between the two kinds of men" and pictures the greatness of "great men" as a function of their natural endowment. Her reading of Emerson thus recapitulates the problematic we have been examining in the elitist reading of Nietzsche. Shklar says great men "are delegated to us." But Emerson says they are delegated by us to do what each of us can one day do for himself (*Essays and Lectures*, p. 67). Shklar writes: "It is as absurd to speak of a hidden great man as of an ungifted genius." Yet this is precisely what Emerson teaches: There is a great man hidden inside each one of us, whispering to get out. Shklar cites the following remark as an instance of Emerson's irony: "great men: the word is injurious" (*Essays and Lectures*, p. 629). But Emerson's point here is that the word is injurious for the very reasons Nietzsche cites (when he similarly enjoins us: "Do not speak about being gifted or possessing innate talent!" HH I:163). Emerson continues: "Is there caste? Is there Fate? What becomes of the promise to Virtue?" (*Essays and Lectures*, p. 629). The opposition between great men and common men that Shklar presupposes is one that Emerson explicitly seeks to repudiate: "As to what we call the masses, and common men; – there are no common men" (ibid., p. 630).
107. "What is the face of your friend anyway? It is your own face in a rough and imperfect mirror?" (Z I:14, "On the Friend"). The role of the exemplar is an idealization of one aspect of (Nietzsche's concept of) friendship. Nietzsche presents Schopenhauer as someone who is in this respect a (potential) friend – someone who can mediate the conversation between me and my higher self. Zarathustra says that "the friend is always the third person," for "I and me" should be "deep in conversation."
108. Schlegel, *Ideas*, §5, p. 94, trans. amended.
109. J. P. Stern, in his introduction to the Hollingdale translation of the *Meditations*, furnishes a representative example of this attitude of condescension (see p. xxv).
110. In its entirety Nietzsche's citation from "Circles" reads: "Beware," says Emerson, "when the great God lets loose a thinker on this planet. Then all things are at a risk. It is as when a conflagration has broken out in a great city, and no man knows what is safe, or where it will end. There is not a piece of science but its flank may be turned tomorrow; there is not any literary reputation, not the so-called eternal names of fame, that may not be revised and condemned; the things which are dear to men at this hour are so on account of the ideas which have emerged on their mental horizon, and which cause the present order of things, as a tree bears its apples. A new degree of culture would instantly revolutionize the entire system of human pursuits." (SE p. 193; cf. Emerson, *Essays and Lectures*, pp. 407–8)
111. Cavell's way of putting this point, in *Conditions*, is to say that SE consists of "virtual transcriptions" of passages from Emerson. He gives some examples. Here are a few more:
- (1a) [E]verything bears witness to what we are, our friendships and enmities, our glance and the clasp of our hand, our memory and that which we do not remember, our books and our handwriting." (SE p. 129)
- (1b) Character teaches above our wills. Men imagine that they communicate their virtue or vice only by overt actions, and do not see that virtue or vice admit a breath every moment. ("Self-reliance," *Essays and Lectures*, p. 266)

- (2a) I profit from a philosopher only insofar as he can be an example. (SE, p. 136)
 (2b) Truly speaking, it is not instruction, but provocation, that I can receive from another soul. ("Divinity School Address," *Essays and Lectures*, p. 79)
 (3a) "[R]ead your own life and comprehend from it the hieroglyphics of universal life." (SE, p. 142)
 (3b) To believe your own thought, to believe that what is true for you in your private heart is true for all men – that is genius. Speak your latent conviction, and it shall be the universal sense. ("Self-reliance," p. 259)
 (4a) "[H]uman beings . . . are timid. They hide themselves behind customs and opinions." (SE, p. 127)
 (4b) Man is timid and apologetic. . . . He dares not say "I think," "I am," but quotes some saint or sage. ("Self-reliance," p. 270)

SE and "Self-Reliance" share numerous such pairs of twins. This is not something unprecedented in Nietzsche's work. Reformulations of Emersonian thoughts are to be found among Nietzsche's earliest writings. Two of Nietzsche's earliest essays are, in fact, transparent attempts to recast two Emerson essays, "History" and "Fate." Nietzsche's essays bear the titles "Fate and History" and "Free Will and Fate" (*Friedrich Nietzsche: Werke und Briefe* [Munich: C. H. Beck, 1934], vol. 2, *Jugendchriften*, pp. 54–63).

112. A parallel line of filiation also runs from Emerson's concept of the "Over-soul" to Nietzsche's concept of the *Übermensch*.
 113. Quoted by Walter Kaufmann in his "Translator's Introduction" to *The Gay Science*, p. 12. Kaufmann goes on to remark: "It is well known that Nietzsche always carried a copy of Emerson's *Essays* with him, and, for example, that he wrote of Emerson: 'The author who has been richest in ideas in this century so far has been an American'" (*ibid.*).
 114. The quotation is from "History" (Emerson, *Essays and Lectures*, p. 239). See the introduction to *Conditions* for a discussion of this region of Emerson's thought (especially p. 12). For Cavell's discussion of Emerson's remark that self-reliance is the "aversion" of conformity, see pp. 137–8, for the remark, see *Essays and Lectures*, p. 261.
 115. Nietzsche's essays in fact encode at one remove a parallel demonstration (concerning how one philosopher may appropriate the prose of another) exemplified in the relation Emerson's *Essays* bear to Kant's *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* and *Critique of Practical Reason*.
 116. "Quotation and Originality" is collected in Emerson's (seldom reprinted) *Letters and Social Aims*. It can be found in *The Complete Works of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, ed. Edward Waldo Emerson, 12 vols. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1903–4), vol. 8. The passage quoted is on p. 178.
 117. Zarathustra says, "This is my way; where is yours?" – thus I answered those who asked me 'the way.' For the way – that does not exist" (Z III:11:2).
 118. In WWR Schopenhauer says of the thought of eternal recurrence that if you were seriously to attempt to think it – fully to contemplate the prospect of living your life over again exactly as you have lived it – it would drive you insane (vol. 1, pp. 279–80). Beginning with SE, Nietzsche seeks to contest Schopenhauer's contention that one's attitude toward one's own existence, if one is honest with oneself, must be as follows: "[A]t the end of his life, no man, if he be sincere and at the same time in possession of his faculties, will ever wish to go through it again. Rather than this, he will much prefer to choose complete non-existence" (vol. 1, p. 324).

119. In this, as in other respects, it is the cousin of Kierkegaard's concept of "repetition."
 120. GS 299 starts by asking the question: "How can we make things beautiful, attractive and desirable for ourselves when they are not?" and traces our trouble to a tendency on our part to learn the wrong thing from the artists. We cultivate a talent for poetically misrepresenting and prettifying the details of our lives to ourselves, instead of learning from the artist how "to be the poets of our own lives – first of all in the smallest, most everyday matters" (trans. amended).
 121. To this extent, the purpose served by the thought-experiment of eternal recurrence parallels that served by the contemplation of an exemplar: In both cases one is enabled to attend to that which lies closest of all and yet is most difficult to heed.
 122. In the final part of *Zarathustra* our hero, after much struggle, is finally able to rise to the thought, and we are shown how it transforms him. He becomes capable of a "laughter that is no longer human" (Z III:2). Nietzsche in his later work (particularly in *Ecce Homo*) often refers to Zarathustra as "the thinker of the thought of eternal recurrence." One way of reading this is as a refusal to confer this title upon himself.
 123. This essay has been through many versions. It grew out of co-teaching successive versions of an undergraduate course at Harvard with Stanley Cavell on Moral Perfectionism and is greatly indebted to material presented in Cavell's lectures for that course, some of which has found its way into print in his *Conditions*. It is, in addition, indebted to conversations with Steve Affeldt, Bill Bristow, Greg Fayer, Arata Hamawaki, John McNees, Hilary Putnam, and Martin Stone. The final version of this paper owes a special debt to improvements suggested by David Finkelstein, Michael Lopez, and Robert Haraldsson. It would never have found its way into its present form but for the encouragement, perseverance, and *übermenschliche Geduld* of Richard Schacht.