

**Friedrich Nietzsche's Function in the Church  
and the Crisis of Theology and Philosophy**

**by**

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Pargellis May 18, 1943)

## **1. The unity of health and madness as a new historical phenomenon.**

Nietzsche is controversial. His significance has so many facets that Charles Andler dealt with five different aspects of his work in five separate volumes. A short paper on such a historical mountain can only have value when it proceeds by a severe discipline and method. Therefore, I shall not speak of Nietzsche's place in the history of German thinking, nor in the crisis of Humanism in the narrower sense of its worship of Greek and Roman antiquity, nor even of his place in the decline of Europe or in the evolution of biography.

My topic is Nietzsche's function in the Church and in the crisis of theology and philosophy.

I shall not deal with origins and developments of single notions or ideas. On the contrary, I shall credit him with his achievement in its most mature and final form.

In a first part, we shall set off his task against the success of the West during the last eight hundred years to master nature scientifically. In a second, we shall see him propose a new method to conquer man by a new method.

When by contrast we have sharpened our vision, we will be able to see to what extent he himself became the victim of the period, the end of which he anticipated. Having at his disposal the tools and instruments of an age to which he himself no longer belonged, led to the tragedy of his mind.

We'll not make the division: the healthy and the mad Nietzsche. To me both, health and insanity, are indissolubly one and the same historical phenomenon. Nietzsche's case made madness a category of history. Whether he contracted his insanity by contagion, or he went mad from social and intellectual influences, will never be decided. However, I hope to make clear that even an externally contracted illness still should be considered something put in the service of humanity by him.

The world may sneer at such an assumption; historians of the Church hardly can react in this manner. The gallows could become the foundation of the Church, so it would be more than pharisaic to put a bane on the transfiguration of madness. This too is a part of God's creation: the sacrifice of the mind would belong in the history of sacrifices. And is not, by and large, the history of the Church the history of sacrifices?

Of course, to introduce such an unheard-of form of sacrifice should sound scandalous to many ears – not so much of pious souls as of clever minds. And so, in a last part, we shall place Nietzsche face to face with the intellectual faculty of theologians and philosophers. We shall try to explain why both, theology and philosophy, have "changed rapiers in the scuffling" like Hamlet and Laertes, in a similar duel between on one side the monster, genius, child, decadent, imbecile, heroic Friedrich Nietzsche and on the other his environment, the period before the two World Wars. Recognizing themselves in the light of this duel, neither theology nor philosophy can carry on as they did before.

## II. The conquest of space from 1100 to 1900: Thomas, Cusanus, Paracelsus, Descartes.

Let me begin with the well known story of two English pilots who were seen in a New York Night Club furtively exchanging glances at two o'clock a.m. Asked which secret they had, blushing the younger man replied: "oh nothing, only 24 hours ago we were over Essen."

Under the slogan: *the annihilation* of space this story is circulating. The best manner to get Nietzsche into perspective, is to compare the annihilation of space with his great task: *the annihilation of time*. I propose to enlarge on this contrast until some simple contour lines can be seen. In preparing this comparison, of course my first obligation is to remind you of some fundamental historical events: the chain of events which made it possible to speak of the conquest or annihilation of space as we witness today.

How long did it take to conquer space? From the invention of wheel and barge the history of technical civilization may seem to be one continuum. For the sake of simplification, however, it is more adequate to focus attention on that moment from which downward the annihilation of space became the universal dream and therefore the common reality of Western Man.

Now, the dream, program, planning belong to this undertaking as much as the calculations of later physics and the application of the latest technology. And so it is fair to say that the task of conquering space was exalted into a task of religious, political and human significance in the eleventh century of our era. In 1048, to employ one example, the party of Reform in the Church declared that the Church could not be renovated unless the popes would be elected by all the bishops of the orb in one common conclave of election. This party vision conceived the whole earth as one constituency.

I prefer this example to the Crusades, to the organisation of the Curia Romana, etc. because the ideal of the whole earth as one constituency has not come true even today. The Italians still form one half of the conclave. All the more may we appreciate the immensity of the conception, at that time.

With such hopes for the salvation of mankind, the means of conquering space could no longer be left to accident or individual luck. The West began to make inquiries into the conditions for the conquest of matter. And whereas the technical steps came so much later – when the Crusader Christopher Columbus landed in America, yet was the conquest organised in the time of the Crusades.\*

The theologians and philosophers discovered the premises on which the world of space might be united. I shall restrict myself to a small number of attributes which we had to attribute to space if it should become conquerable.

I shall name four. They were contributed by Thomas Aquinas, Nicolaus von Cues, Theophrastus of Hohenheim (Paracelsus), and Descartes.

\* More material on this interest in the orbis, which befell the Churchmen, is gathered in "Out of Revolution" Autobiography of Western Man, New York 1938, p. 531ff.

Thomas showed that space had to be accepted as being **One**, and **Single**, if it should obey any organisation by sciences.

Nicolaus Cusanus saw that the exploration of space depended on a clear notion of the infinite, not just the indefinite.

This requires some explanation. As you may know, the modern model of the atom is a solar system in a nutshell. The infinitesimal small and the infinitesimal big have become interchangeable in our experiments and our thoughts – mathematics is an analogical science of smallness and bigness. Before Cusanus, the identity of big and small parts of space was not basic; typical was a reasoning which gave the pope a thousand fold more splendour than the emperor because the sun was many thousand times bigger than the moon.\* We are unfair if this way of thinking strikes us as naïve. The relative equality of all bodies, big and small, rests on the notion of an infinity of space, in the same manner as the equality between human beings, big and small, vanishes if man is not made in the image of God's infinity. The infinite created relative equality among the finite: this was its inestimable fruitfulness.\*\*

Two further "Attributes to space" were needed if space should yield its secrets. They were conditions on the side of the conquerors of space. They had to submerge any enmity or rivalry or subjectivity and change them into a solidarity of purpose all over the globe.

Formerly they did not speak, in their data, in the name of the whole earth. Then their data were still pre-scientific. In our days Einstein has formulated this solidarity of the observers for his special field. "The observer" is an abstraction in which distances on our earth are deliberately not noticed. It does not seem to be known that the solidarity of the observers in any part of the globe was the vital idea of Hohenheim and of the 16<sup>th</sup> century with its correspondents from all over the earth for the new academies.\*\*\*

The fourth step was the extrapolation of this "observer" from the space so observed.

This step was taken by Descartes. The observing mind has not any extension in this space. On the other hand, all objects which can be observed are treated as though they were extended and in space. The radical emancipation of the subject mind and object body was Descartes' feat. How unnatural this separation is, becomes clear when you will remember that the very word "body" had its origin in human beings and only later was attributed to the stars. And those were imagined as living souls with bodies. Only after 1600 the term has come to mean a physical body. So now "body" is a corpse first, and a living body, a Corpus, only in the second place.

These four notions were not in existence in 1048: 1. Oneness of the world of space, singleness of "Nature" or "World", 2. Infinity as a basis for the equality of all bodies, 3. Solidarity of all scientists all over the earth and 4. The extrapolation of these observing minds qua minds from the observed world of bodies. They came into existence in the history of the second thousand years of the Christian God. And they are, as you know, under attack today as wholly uncertain, ambiguous, and dubious. Bertrand Russell assures us that Nature is not One. Thomas Aquinas knew this as well as Lord Russell, and wrote: "A plurality of worlds can be supposed by those who do not posit some ordering wisdom as the cause of the world and assume it to be the result of an accident.\*\*\*\*"

\* Jean Bodin still used this method of reasoning, cf. *Out of Revolution* p. 545f.

\*\* Cusanus, *De Docta Ignorantia*, which was written from December 1439 to February 1440. The thought runs through all three books. Best edition by Klibansky (= Ernst Hoffmann und Raymond Klibansky, Leipzig 1932.)

\*\*\* Theophrastus von Hohenheim, Paracelsus, *Werke* (ed. Sudhoff 11, 1928. English translation of the main passage in my *A Classic and a Founder*, 1937, p. 24ff. Hohenheim wrote this in 1537.

\*\*\*\* Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, 47,3 Respondeo (Ottawa edition 302b)

Since scientists behave as emancipated from metaphysics, the plurality of worlds has become a correct assumption again: the unity of Nature had been a metaphysical postulate. Similarly, space must be admitted to be indefinite, and so its infinity is under great suspicion again.

Also the solidarity of all observing minds is under violent attack, from the side of the Bolsheviks for economics, and from the side of the Nazis for mathematics. And the separation of mind and body may still be believed by specialists or theologians. The general public has abolished the dualism as the nonsense which it is. The Body of Christ with its belief in incarnation always knew that.

This survey shows that unity and infinity of Nature or space collapse together with their theological basis, the faith in God. And together with our faith in the unity of Man solidarity and extramundane nature of the mind are collapsing before our eyes.

This is only to show that we live today in the afterglow of this creation of a natural science which originated with the people's faith in God and Man. The majority of scientists became ignorant of their own foundations, ignorant of the fact that the foundations of any science of nature, of bodies or space, can never be scientific themselves. Does the premise of anything ever belong to the nature of this thing? The baby is a complete being, yet one thing on which its own being depends it cannot do: mating. Similarly the one thing science cannot create for itself, is the creative love between God and the people in such a way that this people should believe in a lawful universe and should think it worthwhile to pay scientists for exploring its laws in particular, should believe in the minds of man as being capable of solidarity, should juggle with big and small in one mathematics of the infinite.....

And yet, these indemonstrable conditions are the premises for the continuous process of scientific research. Before this process could start, the people had to be filled with faith in the unity of all science, the unity of all scientists, the unity of all bodies, the unity of space.

It is true that these indemonstrable conditions became so very much our second nature that in the forgetful twenties of this century the notorious but important book by Lewis "Time and Western Man", could appear.(\*). It might have born the title "Time be Damned, Space suffices for us". It is a paean to Western Man as he inhabits his self-made space unshaken and unshakeably, and laughs at time.

When this vain self-glorification of Western Man was printed, Nietzsche's precedent had forced all the serious minds all over the West to take up a new line of thought, pointing at the conquest of time. *Time has become the topic of all serious thinking in our days.\*\**

(\*) (Percy Wyndham Lewis (18. 11. 1882 – 7. 8. 1957), Time and Western Man (1927) Ed. Paul Edwards, Black Sparrow Press, Sante Rosa, Cal.)

\*\* I only list three names: Bergson, Rosenzweig, Heidegger. Recommendable, Karl Loewith, Temporality and Eternity, Philosophy and Phenomenological Research III (1942), p. 23ff, who treats Heidegger and Rosenzweig. He does ignore and yet feign to understand the Christian position, its proceeding from eternity into time, and he does overlook that time cannot be known in the manner of space, but must be "existed": *Nisi esset anima, non esset tempus*". Loewith thinks that time can be an object or topic of discussion without doing something about it. Nietzsche, of course, holds this Christian position, without however defining it clearly since his components, the Jewish and the Pagan, first had to become existent, in Rosenzweig and Heidegger, Proust, before discussion is possible. Discussion, after all, presupposes view points.

### III. Nietzsche's program for the conquest of time.

Nietzsche began to become pregnant with the next great venture of humanity, the annihilation of time. No longer his opportunity is untimely. To prove this, I might call attention to a long list, beginning with Henry Adams who challenged the American historians to look out for a mastery of time, in the approaching catastrophe of speed, i.e. of progress overdone.

However, I shall rest my case after one more suggestion. Go and see Thornton Wilder's play "The Skin of Our Teeth". In Nietzsche's vein Wilder treats time as annihilated. The hero, Mr. Anthropus, lives in all ages at the same time. He is in the ice age and contemporary of Mr. Hitler, he is Chesterton's Man Everlasting, but has the power of knowing this too, and is disposing of all times.

You will think this crazy. And so it is. But is it as simple as that? We do not burn witches today as in the days when space was conquered. We do however pronounce the adventurer of a new idea a lunatic and force a nervous breakdown upon him. Then, he is discredited. The witches whom we burned take a terrible vengeance today: their offspring are our psychiatrists and psychologists who triumphantly declare insane anybody who still believes in God or Devil, in growth and miracles, in creation. Nietzsche invoked a new chapter in the deification of Man. He knew that he would be called a fool and a madman because he chose to blend eternity and time in ecstasy and to start from the Dionysian experience before he would coolly and scientifically analyse this very experience. Emotion made him inventive about the ways on which man may experience time.\* He simply applied the old Aristotelian rule: *Nisi esset anima, non esset tempus*. Therefore any expert on time would have to give the reins to the soul, anima. This should become first, before time could become real and analyzable at all. Nietzsche makes the ecstasies of Jesus scientifically respectable, and he calls this aspect of Christ the Dionysian experience.

That this aspect of Christ should become prominent in our times, has practical as well as theoretical reasons. If it doesn't, we cannot master the present catastrophe, which is provoked by the speed with which our own tools of living are racing away with us. Wilder's play is called "By the Skin of our Teeth" - from Job -, because it is crucial for us to become the masters of time. If we don't, we cannot escape the present catastrophe. So the necessity of Nietzsche becomes clear, when the Conquest of Time is understood to be meant as the only escape from the firetrap of the present conflagration. There is no frivolity or arbitrariness in his endeavour. He came in the nick of time.

Conquerors of time can do little or nothing with the four principles which Thomas, Cusanus, Paracelsus, Descartes had made the scientists believe. Let us take one after the other.

1. Nietzsche agrees with Thomas that the laws of Nature are the shadows of God in our thinking. \*\* The "God of nature", this space-phantom of Anselm: God the biggest thing which can be imagined \*\*\*, is ridiculous to Nietzsche. So it probably is to you as historians. Any explorer of times only knows of the God in man's bosom.

\* Beautifully said by Charles Andler (1866 – 1933) (Nietzsche, *Sa vie et sa Pensée*, Paris, Gallimard 1934) Vol. VI, p. II f.

\*\* George Morgan, *What Nietzsche Means*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts 1941, p. 282 (Reprint Greenwood Press. Inc., Westport, Connecticut, 1975)

\*\*\* "illud omnibus, quae cogitari possint, majus". Anselm, *liber pro insipiente caput 3 et passim*. It is noticeable that in his first statement Anselm alleviated the shock by speaking to God directly about this his grandeur: *Proslogion III passim*.

But God in our own bosom is God in his pre-logical state. He doesn't come as law but as legislator. As a result, new laws can be given any minute. Man is the one who abolishes the laws of nature.

And is this not simply true in all history? What else is history but that new laws are given, which later on become our second nature. Therefore is man divine because he abolishes the laws of nature.

He decided not to marry his mother, not to kill his father. If you give a moment of thought to the most unnatural character of our incest rules, you will see that a conqueror of time must press the points of the fleeting character of the good and evil at any one time.

2. Point two: infinity. A Jesuit, in a book published four years ago\*, emphasized that geology and prehistory may well make us dizzy with regard to time as Copernicus did with regard to space. These millions of years make the event in the little corner of Palestine in the midst of time look pretty shadowy. From 6000 years man's history has increased immeasurably. Personally I happen to be a complete unbeliever in the play with colossal figures which are recommended to us\*\* in regard to history. However, I do admit that these millions of years are the lunatic fringe around an indispensable new feeling for vast time spans, thousands of years. Not in objective figures but in our subjective feeling a change does take place. While we may have learned to keep our equilibrium in the vastness of spaces, we may not have learned what discipline "millions of years" may impose on us. Nietzsche scents that to think of those time spans will take a much more ascetic discipline. In Cotton Mather's phrase: The matters of Man must cease to be the matters of one age, "res unius aetatis". Space-thinking makes time at best a fourth dimension of space, and so time has only the one dimension of the immediate present, of this generation and it may be called "monochronic", of one time. Nietzsche invites us to think in "polychrons", through many generations. For this purpose we have to imagine time as infinite. Otherwise our little life, one man's biography, and the life of the ages can not be squared. If Jesus, a man who walked in the public eye for three years, and the endless history of mankind shall be commensurable, the infinitesimal small and the infinitesimal big chunks of time must behave identically. Biography of the individual and history of the race must reflect the same laws.

As a result of this new interest, space may become finite with Nietzsche and with modern science: time takes over the quality of infinity.

3. So, Thomas and the Cusanus being superseded, what about the solidarity of the observers all over the globe?

It is emphatically denied. In his lust for power, each man construes with a peculiar perspective the world from his own centre. No two pairs of eyes see alike.\*\*\* To measure is already to use our own power. If this denial of an identity of perspective shocks you, you have only to compare Paracelsus' starting point with the one of Nietzsche, and you will understand. Hohenheim certainly knew of the fight for survival far more from experience than Nietzsche.

\* Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Apokalypse der deutschen Seele* Band III (1939), S. 440f.

\*\* I have always held that the oldest date of history was not before 2778 (B.C.), and I am delighted to find that H. E. Winlock has proven the shorter era (2773 B.C.) in his magnificent study "The Origin of the Ancient Egyptian Calendar", *Proc. American Philos. Soc.* 83 (1940), p. 447 – 464. Simultaneously, Sidney Smith in 1940, following Thureau-Dangin's publication in the *Revue d' Assyriologie* 34 (1937), reduced the Mesopotamian chronology, thereby correcting the current as e.g. used in the *Cambridge History*. It is disappointing to see theologians now cater to the public by bowing before the endless dates of science. They certainly have forgotten to "see eternity within an hour".

\*\*\* George Morgan, *What Nietzsche Means*, p. 282 with ample references.

However, he defined research for doctors trying to help their patients all over the globe. The so-called objective standards of our natural sciences were developed in the refinement of the professions. Now professional service means that a man is renouncing deliberately his immediate own 'will to power' in the service of his patient, client, pupil, etc.

Our professional men made the attempt to rival in objectivity and serviceability with the clergy of medieval times. Natural science embodies the ethics of the professions and this means the ethics of the specialist who by a particular technique is helping someone in need.

Nietzsche is starting from the opposite end. He bewails the specialist's attitude. The better it is, it may save the idiot, the decadent, the weak, by their very services, and may lose sight of the norm, the strong, the healthy. All the professions make sense by having their members abdicate in the service of somebody else. Nietzsche is concerned with this somebody else. He protests against pushing this somebody else into a dark corner. The goal of creation is the right kind of man, the man whom the specialists serve, and who is at his best when he does not need them. Nietzsche's is an interest in man before any division of labour.\*

How can he have identity of perspective with anybody else since God moves him to new shores? Is not God eternally original? But Nietzsche makes up for his destruction by giving his hero solidarity through the ages. And he is not allowed to exploit the moment in excess, because we creatures must be equally vigorous at all times.

Nietzsche wishes us to possess the whole course of time in its total immeasurable extension. Not only shall the whole future be ours, the whole successive process in its plenitude shall be carried over into the new realm.

This solidarity with all times is abhorrent to the average product of our education. History writing, by its scientific turn, has estranged the young from the past. I quote: "I am a senior in College, in 1940; I think that the boys of the class of 1917 were fooled; and with this conviction that I am far beyond them. I shall concern myself with a man who died 428 A.D. (St. Augustine is meant)? Why?" Neatly put is this the wisdom of the century of progress, from a genuine student's paper. Ours is a mentality of contemporaries. We rely on simultaneity with the current events and the spirit of the times. At the same time all men try to think the same or at least to argue about the same even though they may split on its Yes or No. Against this immersion into one's own time, Nietzsche by proposing solidarity with men not of our time shows his violent regrets.

In all ages kings and rulers have solidarity. Those who come to power, can recognise each other in a realm of peace. This implies that human solidarity cannot be based on the concepts and thoughts of minds. Look at the mental process: it is proceeding and changing incessantly. Concepts are for contemporaries, and conceptual agreements between Plato and Platonists through the ages do not really connect Plato with the correspondingly powerful thinker of another age, do not link men of the same rank through the ages. Hence, Nietzsche rebukes his own disciples. He is asking for a relation with men of his rank.

You see Nietzsche apply here the principle of the "Love thine enemies" at a new degree of integration and of vitality by creating higher contradictions. The Church accepted the command of the love of the enemy. Later it founded the occidental universities on the principle of having two men teach in the same place on the same topic opposing opinions.

\* ὅστις βασιλευσεται, αναπαυσεται



Now it may simply take stock of this further application of her vitalizing principle, by Nietzsche.

If mentality can't serve as mortar in binding the men of all times together, some other tie must be developed. The legislator is connected with any other legislator because of sufferings which call for a change. This power to legislate Nietzsche calls superhuman. Nietzsche proclaims the superman who can legislate and abolish some allegedly cosmic law according to which people were divided into good and evil ones. By necessity the legislator is beyond the good and evil of the existing order. When Moses crushed the first two tables and for a new start was offered a better nation than Israel, he certainly was beyond his own good, the identity with Israel.

On this level of Moses' legislative choice you have to see Nietzsche's immoralism.. Man lives between two ethics. One minute before the promulgation of the new law, the legislator is outside the old good and evil and outside the new division as well.

This "outside" you find in Zarathustra, in the Dionysian ecstasy, in the tragedy of any hero of humanity.

If the feature of the man of value is the power to forfeit contemporaneity, it may be permitted to coin a special term for it. It is not a Nietzschean term. The term is "distemporal".

It may mark the progress made in our dealings with "time" on the basis of Nietzsche's pioneering. For Nietzsche this power meant divinity, and he hoped to see the time when anybody and everybody would confess with Theages in Plato (126A) that he wished to be a God.

4. Now we are prepared to face the Cartesian bifurcation of "mind" and "body". It is perfectly meaningless for legislators. They cannot be extrapolated from the world which they mould into their own body and mind. For those who have to incarnate a new order, the inspired soul enters their minds and bodies and the difference between mind and body becomes zero. In his books Nietzsche tries to speak of 'body' again in a holistic sense; in his letters and poems the term 'soul' is abounding.

The division between body and mind is left behind; but with it, the unity of the scientific mind, too.

#### **IV. Nietzsche's masks as the price for his program.**

Now we're able to compare the steps of natural science and of a future "time science". Thomas, Cusanus, Hohenheim, Descartes had said: unity and singleness of space; infinity; identity of all observers; opposition of subject mind and object body, or more precisely, one universal mind, in whom all minds share, analyzes all bodies in the universe.

Against every one of those stratagems to dominate space Nietzsche made his counter-plea: No two spaces are alike; space is finite; every observer has another perspective; man does not gain significance by ruling the bodies of space, by way of a mind without a body, but by incarnating his divine, everlasting power into mind and body.

This comparison may help to show the reasonableness of his program for something neither Thomas nor Descartes had dreamt of. On the other hand, we must hasten to stress that it's utterly unfair to make this comparison.

We have on one side nine hundred years, from Berengar of Tours, to whom for the first time the world of space broke away from the mental sphere, down to Dewey and Einstein, and on the other hand one man, and one man only, preparing a new start into an altogether new direction.

This does not make the comparison meaningless because the very principle of infinity allows to see in Nietzsche's ten years of new science the seed of a millennium as long and as fruitful as that which started with Berengar and Anselm's theism.

If not meaningless, our comparison reveals the inevitable tragedy. Long and well established forms of thought are merciless to embryonic beginnings. They will always declare that the embryo comes "too early". They made Nietzsche into a "posthumous" man. "May the living forgive me if at times they seem to me shadows", he exclaimed.

Of his distemporaneity he was acutely conscious. The decadence of the European nationalism, the catastrophe of a war between Germany and the rest of the world, the abolition of Christianity by Germany, the witches Sabbath of all free thinkers – merely free -, would have to precede his day, the day of Zarathustra. Anybody trying to line up with him earlier, was bound to misread him since he would not be steeped in the same dread of a complete catastrophe, before the world would come to its senses. The Foerster-Nietzsche's, the Oehlers, the Andlers and the Brintons fill this "in-between" time which does not believe in prophecy, neither in his prophecy nor in prophecy in general, least of all the Church. Nobody, except Nietzsche and Jehovah's Witnesses, believed in an immediate end of the world, during the last sixty years.

While Schweitzer and Dodd laboured to redefine the belief of early Christianity in an end of the world, and called the foundation of the Church by the technical term: "Eschatology Realized", Nietzsche simply lived this faith in the end of his world, and realized our eschatology. And like as much as a sober reasoning about the Church became possible only after the fall of Jerusalem, the Crisis of the West from 1905 to our days of 1942 was needed before we can talk business on Nietzsche.

There were no followers of Nietzsche in the mean time, only preparers of his proper function. This proper function is the establishment of distemporaneity within a society gone mad with contemporaneity. Nietzsche was the first medicine man for the Great Society of all mankind. Since he came seventy years before society was forced to become One, he had to prepare the new office of medicine man in an impractical, a mad manner. It seems however obvious to me that, if ever mankind should economize its forces for unity, she will need some such office as all old tribes retained: a form of inspired guardian, a carrier of all the spiritual germs as well as immunities, by which groups can survive. The medicine man, the man who forces distemporary elements into the fabric of current events, will have an indispensable though untimely function.

We were unfair to Nietzsche because of the time disparity between the work of one millennium and his one life. We shall not commit the greater unfairness of using his

nomenclature which was wholly dependent on his environment and his opponents. For instance, he keeps the singleness of the world, and of nature – I counted more than 370 places in which two terms are used, and in the singular always – although he has no right to this inheritance from theism; on the other hand, he nowhere is discussing the singular **MAN**, in his relation to the plural **MEN**. His term “Life” is the go-between, so to speak, between the space-singular “Nature” or World or Space itself, and the nowhere articulated Singular of **MAN** through the ages. All the time he has to make use of the terminology and language of the century which he attacks. “Life” was a singular like “World”, but vital like Men...: a very misleading compromise.

For our mental health, and our power to speak, we depend on collaboration and fellowship, and Nietzsche knew it. His mind died, so to speak, from blood poisoning, having to use all the time phrases which his contemporaries would understand in their own frame of reference. As George Morgan in his careful study *What Nietzsche Means* says: “Nietzsche uses “truth” like many of his terms, in two senses: an old one which he denies, and a new one which he affirms.”\*

Probably because of this constant ambiguity, I never was attracted by Nietzsche’s works. His trustworthiness comes from the fact that he placed himself between two eras. And, warned by his pyre, perhaps in time he is allowing us today to chart our course to escape from the fate of the European continent.

I shall only give two examples of his predicament because they are of practical importance for our own situation. The first one is the choice of his title: Thus Spoke Zarathustra. In one way, it was a stroke of genius. Before Plato and Socrates, here was a legislator, singer, seer, ignorant of the divisions we make between science, religion, law, politics, music, poetry. The choice was the best under the circumstances.\*\*

And yet, it was a mask and led to the first threatening split of personality as described by Nietzsche himself: *Um Mitternacht, Aus Eins da wurden zwei*  
*Und Zarathustra ging an mir vorbei.*

Here you have the mask, the mask which is followed by another and again another mask, the masks which haunt the primeval tribesmen whose dances Nietzsche invoked. It is the mask which makes man unable to become himself.

Theism believed and knew that the world is one only if God has created it. Nietzsche did not know, but he believed all his life that man is one only if God loves him. When he destroyed his intellectual access to his own belief, (that man becomes a person because he is loved,) he came under the curse of his own time which thought of man as divine because of having a mind. This curse, born by lesser souls, killed him since he was out to prove that the mind did not make the person or the man. He shouted that mind does not make for unity. The proof offered by him did not miscarry. I think he proved his point, but the many masks under which he tried to prove it, drove him into the abyss of madness.\*\*\*

\* Harvard University Press 1941, p. 50

\*\* The picture of Zarathustra cherished by Nietzsche and still by Soederblom, is very distorted. Johann Hertel is the best guide, now. Note especially that the Persians had no philosophy of history. What Soederblom and Nietzsche considered to be old, came into existence a thousand years later, under Christian influence. Nietzsche’s thesis is expressed in “Werke” XIV, 303 = Zarathustra, posthumous fragm. § 117.

\*\*\* E. O’Brien, “Son of the Morning”, 1923, has rightly shown that Nietzsche’s masks were as mad in 1872 as in 1888. Cosima’s husband Bülow calls himself Theseus, and spoke of her as Ariadne; Wagner being Dionysos. Poor Nietzsche is so impotent that he (...) form Bülow! and fancied himself as Dionysos, Wagner as Theseus; what a satire.

The second example is his attack on Platonism. He wished to eradicate the theistic aspect of God according to which he is a first cause, the prime mover, the biggest and best of all, and replace it by the eternal divinity of which men are the times. He might have said – but never did – that men are the times. He did, however, once say that the human soul was a harp, with a unique melody. And he also in one of his latest diaries jotted down: “Refutation of God: Refuted is only the moral God.” In other words, he knew at lucid intervals, that the God of Plato and Aristoteles was the adversary, not the living God of Job and Jesus.

However this may be, he lived at a time when Western Man screened themselves carefully off against the unity of Catholics and Protestants from 1100 to 1900, from the Crusades to Einstein, by playing up the conflicts of Aristotle and Plato as the origin of modern science. Our mental home is papered with Aristotle when we should say Thomas, and with Plato when we should say Descartes or Cusanus or Kant.

Nietzsche had to kill the Platonic aspect of Christianity, in its second millennium\* and he talked of Socrates with such a violence when in fact he wished to conduct the road from the second thousand years of our era forward to a possible third lease on life - for mankind, under the Cross. Seemingly pushing us backward from Socrates to Dionysos, he actually opened a door from the desolation of Grover Whalen’s World’s Fair into a new inspiration. Most of the time, - there are some other moments – he is convinced that The God of Christianity was the Platonic God. He never realized that the whole trinity campaign was a victory over Plato and Aristotle, and that Christianity can survive in a complete divorce from crude paganism, that this indeed is its eternal hope of survival.

But since the Occident had discovered the world of space with the help of Porphyrius, Seneca, Cicero, Aristotle, Plato, in this order (which means in an order opposite to the historical sequence), Nietzsche was leaning over the raft of Christianity above the flood of time. He saw the pre-platonic world of Dionysos. He found in him a better analogia entis, he found that Man wished not to be rational like Socrates, but to be deified.

#### **IVa. (Insert 1944) Nietzsche’s Masks**

Nietzsche said of himself that in himself the Christianity of his forbearers drew to its ultimate conclusion; that the incorruptible honesty drilled into him by Christianity, now took its turn against Christianity.

At the same time, he complained that he was to wear many masks, of the fool, the prophet, the philologist, the prophet, the Devil, the Saint, the child, the camel, the lion.

Is there a connection between the two statements?

I think, indeed, that there is an important relation between the histrionic features in Nietzsche and his inherited Christianity. And since all modern men, more or less, are exposed to this danger, it seems worthwhile to state this relation between the comedian and the Christian. It will be a detour, to attain a superficial judgement. As a figure in the history of the Church however, Nietzsche cannot be done justice in a different way.

Theatre and tragedy were the two central experiences of his soul. The tragic aspect of life was the Dionysian truth which he tried to impress on a world which ran away from tragedy into enlightenment and progress. And the old Church had compared Christ to the tragic hero.

\* “Résolu à défricher le sol à jamais de tout foisonnement de Platonisme, il en extirpe notamment la souche la plus souterraine et résistante, la croyance Chrétienne.” Charles Andler, Nietzsche I, p. 11.

In the Greek Churches the parts of the Sanctuary are named after the parts of the Athenian stage, even today.

The Easter ceremonies replaced the tragedy of the dying and rising God which had prevailed for more than two thousand years around the whole world. Before Christ, everybody knew that a God died, that men slew the God. Everybody before Christ had celebrated the rhythm of ecstasy and mania and fall and depression, which is marking our lives. Only the last two centuries of our era introduced a not rhythmical concept of time, a mathematical time, without highs and lows.

Our lunatic asylums bear witness to the fact that man cannot live without manias and depressions. When they are denied him in public, he will still try to create them over against the lack of rhythm of the machine age.

Of course, nobody can create the rhythm of society alone. Hence the modern individual frequently breaks down under his manias and depressions.

The dying and resuscitation of the God is an event of social history. There it has its place as the perpetual rhythm of revolutionary inspiration and evolutionary realization of new creation coming into old nature.

So Nietzsche was right when he stressed that the life of the soul in society has his ecstatic and depressive phases. He unearthed an undisputed feature of the original Church. A God who does not die and rise again, cannot become man. Because we have our ups and downs, we cannot ever live on the peaks of our own experience. Of the revolutionary ecstasy and the patient, indefatigable labour to unfold the germ, once sown into us, our inner life is composed.

The ancients enacted annual tragedies by wearing masks. The masks made allowance for rhythmical ecstasy, for being embraced by the divine in an unembarrassed way, in the high moments. To wear a mask, to play a role, was man's training for his heroic qualities.

Now, when the Church replaced the theatre by the Mass and Dionysos by Christ, the only thing that went away was the mythical character of the tragedy. The crucifixion was a real tragedy, no play. The martyrs were real, no actors. The play became brutal fact. In his experience of dying like the first Christian, every man found his role, his identity, his singleness. Whereas Osiris or Linos, or Adonis or Dionysos or Marduk invited the faithful to wear his, the God's mask, the Christian in as far as he died to the world, made his own face the true face for the divine. In his victory over the world it could shine through him.

The masks of wood and paint gave way to the human face itself as the mask of God. In this sense God appeared in Jesus. And it may be said without blasphemy that on the Cross Jesus was God's mask.

In the Byzantine Church it was forbidden to depict the Father or the Spirit. The Son alone was God's appearance on this earth. And for this reason art painted him, not the Father. Only in the Renaissance and with the greatest reluctance, the Russian Church broke this rule. She should never have given in.

It was a wise rule. Until the Renaissance Man carried his face as the only mask of God. As long as people believed in incarnation, in the embodiment of the Spirit, they preserved the power to become integrated into their own definite personality by one ray from God. A real person is God's mask on earth, one of Him.

That we should count the years of a new era with the coming of Christ, makes sense. Because ever since Jesus men received the power to deify themselves, to throw off the mask of their specific nation, cast, title, family name, religion, property, nobility. They pierced the legal, hereditary, conventional, normalized wooden or iron masks: the brass hats, red tape, lingos, group egotisms, their political masquerades, or however you like to call the hindrances between our face and the light of uniqueness shining upon it.

The time-worn phrase of the image of God becomes transparent when we remember that Christianity replaces the material masks of wood or linen by his power of letting the light shine through the human face itself: Image instead of mask.

And so, in our era disappeared the masks of tragedy, of red-painted warriors, of Bali dancers. Even the cothurn on the stage was abandoned, and in a play finally men no longer were required to act the parts of women.

On the other hand, the Church was not so insipid to deny the deep seated urge in all of us to be educated for this supreme liberty of becoming an image oneself. Before we can receive the full light ourselves, we must learn to discriminate between mask and image by looking upon others. The image is found in the faces of all those who under the pressure of danger showed the power to let the light through. They formed a row of windows upon eternity. The saints surrounded every newcomer as an assembly of deified men. To give a poignant example. When the sturdy Saxons finally became Christians, their princes built monasteries. It was only fifty years after the conversion that the young princess Hathumoda became an abbess. Her brother, an abbot he, ten miles away, comforted the nuns over her death by comparing Hathumoda with eleven saintly women in the Bible, in his distichon: "Sara, Rebecca, Rachel, Debora, Noemi, Ruth et Anna, Holda, Susanna, Judith, et simul Hester..."\*

The tribal gallery of ancestors was replaced by this host of souls. In Puritan England as well as in New England, this was repeated many centuries later. Martin Luther thought of himself as St. Paul redivivus. Pope Innocence III spoke to his ecumenic Council as though he were the dying Lord, in the words of Luke 22,15\*\* Francis of Assisi received the stigmata of Jesus in his body.

In a purely secular manner this habit was in full swing in Nietzsche's youth. In cafeterias, the literati would salute each other in deadly earnest ways as the new Cromwell, the new Mahomet, the new Alexander of Euripides. Ernst Rohmer, in the year of Nietzsche's birth posed as the new born founder of the Church himself. If this was madness, there was method in it. Men started their role in life by trying to play the role of somebody else.

True enough, these plays of imagination degenerated. But even they testify to the bold imagery which allowed the offspring of some sectional, narrow group, town, family, to choose among the infinite multitude of souls through the times for his own growth.

From the time between the Saxon religious discipleship of Biblical Saints and the cynicism of Nietzsche's own times of adopting any sponsor for one's own soul I would like to quote an intermediary voice from the dawn of the Renaissance. The heroes of the Renaissance were favorites with Nietzsche. One of them, the Roman Cola di Rienzo, is the hero of a Wagner

\* a.D. 874 : Agii Obitus Hathumodae Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Scriptores IV, 181

\*\* ("With desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer,") and applied this great sentence to himself.

opera. In his devotion to the restoration of Roman splendour this Rienzo confessed of himself: “I was drunk (ebrius) with the ardour of a burning heart to abolish the errors of partisanship and to lead back the peoples into unity. And so, for this purpose of Charity, I would enact histrionically the jester, the grave man or the simpleton: now play the astute, and again the passionate, or the timid; here the stimulator and there the simulator. And as I handled myself like David who danced before the ark, and acted the madman before the king, or like Judith who stood before Holofernes, cajoling, astute, and gardener. Or like Jacob who received the blessing by a cheat.\*

In this hero of the earliest Renaissance, the histrionic element – in Latin this term is used by Cola himself – is obvious, and it is excused by Biblical examples. The Saints are no longer models but excuses.

Nietzsche, as we said earlier, considered himself the last stepping stone out of Christianity into the future. He sang of himself that he “lest his blessedness oppress you, took upon himself the mask of the devil’s dress, fraud, and spite. But don’t be deceived; inside there shines the face of holiness.”

Nietzsche wore two masks before his own inner consciousness. Of course these both masks are central, to understand his real role. One mask was made necessary by his soul’s experience, the other by his mind’s fate.

A man’s soul is in his love. And he receives his true love from that which he loves, which, in other words, is his cosmic affinity. “It’s my soul which calls upon my name”, Romeo rightly says, in a verse worthy of the New Testament.

What was the name which came to Nietzsche from his soul’s love?

In 1869 he met Richard Wagner and Cosima Liszt. Cosima had left her husband Buelow and their common children, and had ran away with Wagner. She was Nietzsche’s age. He fell in love with her. Her free situation made this a not impossible impulse. On the other hand it’s obvious that Cosima was now with more than matrimonial chains bound to Wagner: her whole moral existence was at stake; he Wagner, had to be the God. (When Wagner died, she cut her hair and put it in his grave.) Nietzsche did not have a chance, either during Wagner’s life or afterwards since this would have disqualified Cosima’s sacrifice for the God.

But Nietzsche was in love. And Buelow visited him in Basel, and told him that he, Buelow, was the earthly king Theseus whose wife Ariadne was stolen by Dionysos-Wagner. However, Buelow added: “She ruined me; she will do the same to him.” From that day on, it seems, Nietzsche considered himself as the future Dionysos of Ariadne-Cosima. We know he prided himself for keeping the secret of this name, Ariadne. His first outburst from his masked life, his madness, was condensed in a telegram to Ariadne-Cosima, confessing his love. And as Cosima’s husband, he marched into the clinic.\*\*

So in his own mind his Ariadne secret marked him as Dionysos. Whereas Buelow-Theseus had admitted that the great magician Wagner came as the God Dionysos into Buelow’s

\* Konrad Burdach und Paul Piur, Briefwechsel des Cola di Rienzo, Berlin 1912, p. 245

\*\* (Here a footnote is indicated, but not realized. There is only a dot at the bottom of the page.)

terrestrial home, Dionysos was torn to pieces on this earth, had no foothold on this globe for Nietzsche. The tragic Dionysos is the Dionysos whom he had to impersonate. On earth Wagner-Theseus reigned.

The second inner identity and jealousy centred around Jesus. To the extent of his mental rivalry with the founder of the Church his *Ecce Homo* is but one hint. Often enough he would poke fun at any Messianic ambition, at any Christ-Complex. However, the more he attacked all fruits of Christianity, the more he did compare his own task to the millenarian attainment of its Lord. Again, his end – as in the case of Cosima – revealed the truth. In his last pronouncements he signed himself as the crucified. It's not in vain that he had chosen the title: *Ecce Homo*, and the Antichrist.

Here he was to start another epoch. We have it from his own pen that in September 1888 the new era began which was to put an end to the Christian era. His intellectual ambition came out in the open in this era-statement.

We have called the two masks of Dionysos and the Crucified the inner masks under which he posed to himself. Both had to be kept silent before the world. And Nietzsche did not appear to the world as completely mad as long as he kept enough self-control to know that he had to conceal these two equations from all and everybody. If these masks, in themselves, betray madness, he was mad during the whole period of his highest creativity. If on the other hand madness merely means the loss of such cleverness by which we keep our secrets to ourselves, he went mad only in 1889.

The obvious truth seems to me that Nietzsche represents the admixture of madness and sanity which holds up so many people. Most men are to themselves somebody quite different from that which the world attributes to them. Nietzsche, it is true, to the extreme represents this universal discrepancy between the inner and the external "mask". But he who wished to bring out the riddle of our human torn-to-pieces-hood, took of course the most extreme position. This does not mean that we all may not be enlightened by his flagrant example.

When you ask yourself in how many social forms you share in internecine wars of mankind, you will see how multifarious you are. A farmer, a catholic, a father of a future doctor and future daughter-secretary, a New-Englander, an American, a Republican... And this is a mild list of conflicting interests. Starting from this basis of a multitude of conflicting interests, we may ask for a road to integration. And here we may learn from Nietzsche.

### ***Nietzsche: The Annihilation of Time***

*The story of the two flyers in the New York Night Club: twenty four hours ago we bombed Essen.*

*Space, then, seems to be annihilated. Ubiquity of Man has something divine.*

*Nietzsche has not to do with the annihilation of space but of time. If man could be all times, he would become sempiternal which would seem divine. For by his nature, man belongs to one time. And he would redeem his nature if he could belong to all times. But to do that he must become conscious that even he himself is of more than one time. This the decadent knows because he is too little wedded to his own time or passion so that he can wink at the moment and say 'All is in vain'. The fact of decadency means that a man overlooks the mortality of his own season and thereby usually is paralyzed. The decadent does not act any longer except from boredom, in a half indifferent or snobbish fashion. This is the starting point for Nietzsche: How to heal the decadent. How to induce him to keep his refined consciousness of the manifoldness of times, and yet make him live, within the universe of all times and seasons, the duties of each season to the full? (\*)*

(\*) (There are two pages f in the manuscript which is numbering the pages from a to m. This is the first.)



In his writings *the external* masks of Nietzsche were many: critic, thinker, poet, jester, politico, theologian, historian, etc. etc. But substantially Dionysos wore three permanent masks, masks which he did not simply choose, but which were inherent to his existence. We may call these three his existential masks.

One was the professor emeritus, the physically weak and decadent Nietzsche. He acknowledged this decadence profusely. He added that, whereas the times in which he lived were decadent unknowingly, he recognised the evil, being more heavily visited by it than most of them.

As a decadent who knew that his time and he himself were degenerate times of the end, before a terrible catastrophe, he affirmed his fate which had made him a recluse at 34. He ceased to belong to his time. And indeed, for his most powerful book he did not find seven readers when it appeared. As he called it, he was a posthumous man.

It's a true fact that Nietzsche has come into his own long after his mental and physical death. This makes it necessary that we coin for it a new term. Nietzsche is the prototype of an important possibility in all of us who have been schooled by Christianity. We all are *distemporaries*. We do not exhaust our existence by being contemporary, by being a current event. Nietzsche abandoning currency and contemporaneity, coined as his medium the eternal re-currence. Without going into this special doctrine here, it's shedding light on the fact that he was the distemporary of the years 1870 to 1900, the decade in which "God died" from the hands of those who were satisfied to be purely contemporaries and to be found in the "Cavalcade" of the day, to be in the news, in a sense in which Jesus was the contemporary not of Cesar Augustus but, if at all, of perhaps the emperor Constantine or even the emperor Charles the Fifth..

The second mask was the brutal Nazi-Nietzsche. Withdrawing from his own era of progress, he foresaw the end of this era of mere exploitation, of the "last man", and foreseeing it, to some extent he had to identify himself with the generation of violent destroyers who would smash these decadent decades. He foresaw the terrors of an indescribable explosion. To him it was inevitable by the very fact that his "con-"*temporaries* had invested their all and everything in their own time, that the tragic element had disappeared from life. Nobody believed in an end of this world. Hence it could not survive.

Again, here he shared the source of all the strength ever found among Christians, that the end of this world was on hand, that this world had to pass away so that the kingdom might begin. Jesus anticipated the fall of Jerusalem, later the fall of Rome was anticipated. Eschatology realized was the heart and soul of all real faith, in the Church. But from 1800 on the Church, except for Millenarians, or Jehova's Witnesses, had throttled this belief. Right after Nietzsche broke down, Johannes Weiss rediscovered the eschatological element in Jesus. Today the work of the Englishman Dodd has made this rediscovery of "eschatology" common property. By this highfaluting term simply is meant the fact that Jesus and the apostles believed that they had to realize the end of their world. To the Liberal theologian this comes as a shock. One of them, Kirsop Lake, naively wrote that this fact was proof enough that no modern man could be a Christian since no modern man could believe in such bosh. All the worse for the modern man whose world, currency, prosperity, profits, laws, all are vanishing before our eyes. Not because these his orders are especially bad. But because man have given themselves over to their own time and state without any reserve, without any posthumous presence, any

reservation for a new and better kingdom to come. Longing for an other state of affairs is the condition for even preserving that state of civilisation already attained.

At a time when no theologian, no official Christianity showed any faith in an end of time, Nietzsche believed in it and acted accordingly. Here, the very fact that Ariadne could never become his in this world, must have helped him immeasurably, as Dante's Beatrice had to remain unattainable lest the *Divina Commedia* never be written.

However, back to his identity with the destroyers, the Fascists, the carriers of the hammer, the Nazis. Insight obliged Nietzsche to admit this type of man. The world was ripe to be buried. Could he dissociate himself from the craft of the gravediggers?

Intellectual honesty forced him to share with them the responsibility. He was too clean not to know that responsibility has as much to do with thoughts as with acts. If he thought the end of Europe, how could he deny that somebody had to bring it about, and that relatively they were as right as he in his mere thinking. The false intellectual of today may affirm that his writings are less dynamite, less murderous than the bombs of soldiers or revolutionaries. For such bookkeeping Nietzsche was too robust.

In this sense, then, his second mask was that of a contemporary to the wars of destruction which would shake Europe and lead to the abolition of Protestant Christianity in Germany.

However, he lived in a third tense. Before the catastrophe the decadent, in the catastrophe the preacher of the hammer, after the end – Zarathustra. Of course Zarathustra is Nietzsche's mask which is best known. He himself called it a duplication of his personality when he "met" Zarathustra. "Out of one two arose". Zarathustra is the third mask, the mask which enabled Nietzsche to set foot on the new soil, after the great flood. Zarathustra is the legislator of a new world order in which time will again be linked to eternity, in eternal recurrence.

It was a stroke of genius, this thrust beyond the catastrophe into the future after the World Wars, as of the medicine man of a united mankind, of a denationalized humanity which he foresaw. What could keep such a monster society of world size inside alive if not a medicine man who would represent to the rulers and chieftains of the day the eternal energies of all ages and all times, lest the present again overwhelmed the contemporaries as during the 19<sup>th</sup> century?

Nietzsche, as Zarathustra, is the first medicine man of a Great Society in which the recipes of all tribes of old are put to new and better use.

It was a masterstroke of Nietzsche to choose Zarathustra. Historically, we now know more of Zarathustra since Johannes Hertel has destroyed many myths current in Nietzsche's days. Zarathustra led nomadic tribes to their first settlements under the Persian protectorate. He lived before the division of prose and poetry happened, before speech and song separated. He lived outside the Platonic orb of Greece and Rome. He made modern man free from the prayer to Socrates and Plato to which Erasmus of Rotterdam had intoned and which all American Colleges implicitly prayed until this last war.

Nietzsche went back behind Greece in order to go forward.

I have shown elsewhere that mankind lives its historical future with a mask of reclaiming a more and more remote past before his eyes.

Christianity has given us the power to fulfil our lives by reaching out, at the same time, and for this very purpose, into deeper and deeper layers of our evolutionary past. Zarathustra links up with the modern passion for prehistory, anthropology, primitivism.

Zarathustra enabled Nietzsche to claim the next step by opening up a step back of Plato and Socrates and Aristotle, the deities of the academic mind.

However ingenious for his purpose this name was, it nevertheless was a mask, an external mask. Jesus did not have to play upon history or prehistory in the same manner. He simply was the second Adam, the final man, the man as God had had him in mind from the beginning of the world.

Nietzsche's rivalry to Christ would have been very childish indeed, if Zarathustra was all for which he stood. A literary figure, a learned rediscovery, a renaissance perhaps, but not a person himself.

It would not have meant more than a Plato redivivus meant in the Renaissance.

But Nietzsche was someone and Zarathustra was someone. And the Professor emeritus was a third reality. The tension between the three tenses of these three... that was Dionysos, that was the Crucified, that was Nietzsche's Ecce Homo. The decadent who knew that he and his time were the end, the destroyer who knew that his thought was as cruel as plough and hoe and hammer of material steel, the legislator after the destruction, - these three tenses make a man into a person, into a human being.

By the circumstances of a godless time this is the true gospel, lived again by one man alone since the others had abolished the death of civilisation, let alone the belief in resurrection.

Through his masks Nietzsche re-instated the triunity of human life, as the transition between past and future for which we are made. Man is not a thing, man is nothing. He is the change. At least only in this manner does he attain reality, personality, deity.

The three existential masks of Nietzsche make him have a life before, in and after a tremendous catastrophe, the end of Europe.

To some extent, every human being is required to think of himself as being in the same situation, *before* the end of the world which he has inherited, *in* the moment in which this world must be buried, and *after* the burial, as lawgiver of the future. Any girl who marries, could realize this tri-unity if she took her getting married seriously enough.

In a world crisis of the first order, the pressure proved to be too much for the carrier of masks, and one man alone cannot bear that which fellowship can carry. It is the proof, and not the refutation of Nietzsche that he broke down, lost his self-control and died mentally from his masks, from the gap between inner and outer masks, eleven years before his body passed away. If it had not proved to be superhuman, neither his distemporaneity, nor his tri-unity would have stood the test of being true.

So called failure in his case was success. Without ever integrating them to one human face before God's eyes, no man can carry his masks as Nietzsche did. But he did prove that man is not one by his nature. That only by good grace we can reduce our infinity of masks which society allows us to don, to the essential and existential tri-unity of our past, our future, our present. Man as long as he lives never carries only one.

On the other hand he cannot stand many. Man can neither be a joiner of all roles and social functions, nor pretend to be a hero. Psychology which thinks of the human person that unity is normal for man, and schizophrenia a disease, is quite mistaken. Man is not a unity by nature. He is one when he is a corpse. As long as he lives, he must distinguish between his dead and his future elements. Thereby he is made into three functionaries of his own life. He must be in part his own gravedigger, in part his own prophet. Triunity is the most we can achieve. It's as near to divinity as we ever may hope to come. Our indelible water mark as human beings is this cross of our distemporaneity, of our polychron existence..

This cross by which man is nailed to the tree of time, between the past and the future, with the inner man prophesying and longing for the new legislation, with the external man looked upon by the outside world as though they knew him completely already, this cross of the real man – or as I have named it: the cross of reality, is not one historical event in Palestine, but a scientific fact of general knowledge, since Nietzsche.

After having been a unique revelation for 2000 years, the Cross now is a matter of science, of the new science of man. Only because man is the carrier of space and time, in setting limits to past and future, in his inner and outer masks, the revelation of man's nature by Jesus is true.

I hear you cry out: but this is a sophistic abuse of the term "Cross". The execution of a rebel by the Romans, the action of one day, is by this your trick suddenly identified with man's whole situation between the cradle and the grave. You see any man suspended between past and future, in an inner space of his own terminology and in an external space where he is classified by the looker-on world. What has your "Cross of Reality" – supposed it is true – to do with the historical cross around which the Church is built?

For the modern mind who has been fed on an alleged "Life of Jesus", to which the Crucifixion became a regrettable thing, and the resurrection an unbelievable hieroglyph or an apocryphal word about which people shrug their shoulders, this objection is perfectly sound.

The four writers of the news about Jesus, however, are decidedly on my side and against you dear believer in a life of Jesus. They never intended their gospels to be biographies. Biographies are quite well known, in their days. Plutarch was their master. But the evangelists intended to write "thanatographies".

To them the crucifixion began in the manger, when no place could be found for the new born child in the hostel. And Herod continued immediately this crucifixion when he drove them into Egypt. Life was seen exclusively from the viewpoint of dying, and at the same time of fulfilling. Dying into a better future, created by this process, fulfilling the past of the law and thereby allowing it to come to an end.

And the old Church is on my side, against the modern philosophy of Christianity as a timeless sermon on the mount. They celebrated Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, as the three decisive forms of the Divine in this world. But these three central incisions simply constitute the three existential masks of every deified soul. As a child born into an old world of inheritance, inheriting its promises and defects, man is a Christmas present and an heir of all good things of old. In the same way as Nietzsche experienced himself the heir of the unfathomable honesty of two thousand years of Christianity..

As a man entering into the consequences of old defects, and forced into the destruction of the Temple as it stood for too long already, Easter happened. Jesus knew that his anticipation of the kingdom destroyed the Temple at Jerusalem in the spirit as definitely as the Roman soldiers of Vespasian did in the flesh, one generation later. Being no intellectual, he never doubted that thoughts were as real as arms. His cross was unavoidable because he anticipated the fall of the Temple.

As a creator and founder he began the new Jerusalem, a new order. In its purport after the year 70 that became fully clear, a whole generation after his crucifixion. Pentecost signifies that this is his creative power. It's for that time in which the "times" would have caught up with his spirit. In other words, he then would have ceased to be a posthumous man as Nietzsche called it, or to be a distemporary as we preferred to dub man as a victor over current events.

Nietzsche's decadence is synonymous with his miraculous career as a university teacher. He was made a full professor at 25. In this sense he seemed to fit into the old world to perfection.

His brutal attacks against this same world as doomed took him out of this same world, made living with him intolerable for every one of his friends, deprived him of participation in the outer world.

His anticipation of decay plus explosion threw him beyond into a kingdom of ends, of new ends, after this period from 1914 to 1944. General Smuts rightly called them a unity, these thirty years in which Europe gave up its leadership over the world.

It would be more than bad taste, it would be wrong to call this situation of Nietzsche between the times, between three times, with the old, venerable names of Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost.

It makes a great difference whether a man plays with his blood, or with his brain. And Nietzsche remains in the era of *mental* inheritance, *mental* rebellion, *mental* legislation. His adventure was confined to the fight against mental fallacies. In his first steps he did not reveal human nature as completely different from the nature of the world. But this revelation he proved scientifically by interposing himself as the living guinea-pig.

The equation between his new scientific proof of the Cross as water mark of **Man** and Christianity, is something like this.

Outside Christianity man had appeared as a "character", a coined entity, by birth, property, cast, nation.

Jesus revealed that no man was one, once he started on the road to deification. The divine in man was his triunity, his mastery of time by living in more than one time, and in more than the external world. He presented us with the insight into life's fullness: it is between two orders of society, the old and the new, and between two sets of values, the inner and the outer. In one single case Jesus made it clear that the real man was not a coined character but a suffering transformer.

Nietzsche abandoned all reverence to faith or revelation. He jumped out of the circle of theology as far as he could. And he rediscovered that even though he might forego all the

fellowship and all the traditions of the Church, he still would find himself suspended between cradle and grave, on the same cross.

Jesus showed how a man acquired the right of being called the image of God, the master of all times. Nietzsche showed what happened when a man did not acquire this mastery: he went to pieces.

Both, Jesus and Nietzsche stood against the fallacy of all paganism, all natural science, that man is as much “one” as a table or a fish or a rock. Both knew that man had to fight for his integration, not by pretending to be a unit – as most contemporaries do – but by organising the infinite number of impulses, talents, gifts, into the discipline of a sequence. Both discovered that the conflict between the One and the Many could not be healed, on the one hand by calling man either a bundle of nerves, a split personality, a cog on the wheel, a mass-man ruled by stimuli, or on the other hand by idealising him into a personality of unshakeable virtue, a hero of courage, and a genius of infallibility. Both these temptations of which our times are filled we have to reject: the mass-man temptation according to which man is that whatever the day requires and the ideal-temptation according to which man can attain perfection. Then we can regain our true freedom: to rule over times, to become a distemporary, to become a transformer, to become a legislator.

A man who cannot bear this suspense, is lacking personality. In the Christian era we say: he is lacking faith. After Nietzsche we are allowed to add that he is lacking knowledge.

Man, saved by Jesus from his slavery to time, acquires with Nietzsche an objective knowledge of the fact that man cannot become known through any science of space.

Man must be dealt with by a science of time. Man in his unnatural, human quality doesn't appear at all in the rationalisations of science. Because man creates sciences for his purpose of distinguishing between past and future. His natural sciences allow him to dispose of the encircling gloom, and to see clearly the things on the road. But the faith and courage to be more than a thing himself, is marking the MAN, among scientists as well as among other people.

Nietzsche's masks are everybody's masks. Nobody appears to himself exactly as he appears to his neighbour or to the statistician in Washington D.C. We all, however, are in a more advantageous position than he in his loneliness. His masks were the most desperate ones, the gap between his past and future, between his inner evaluation of his role and his outer appearance was wider than in any thinkable case after him.

The extreme case is necessary for any scientific proof. We rightly conclude that “if even X behaves in this manner, how much more will Y and Z behave similarly”. And so we conclude that since even Nietzsche reorganized his innumerable masks around the three tenses of Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, or of finding, fighting, founding, and since he, the weakest of all men, alone survives from all the thinkers before the World-War revolutions, the Cross of Reality must be the scientific truth about man. For it made him strong, it made him important, it made him last.

## V. The Deification of Man in the Church.

Is the Church attacked when Man is deified?

The deification of Man was the explicit purpose of the Church of the Saints.\*

Nietzsche nowhere comes to grips with the Historical Reality of this Church of the Redeemed. Those giants and sons of God are simply unknown to him. How unknown, shows his ignoble rage against Paul. Here he is trapped by the indescribable stupidity of his contemporaries, especially Overbeck. He never asked himself the simple question how it came that he, Nietzsche, was able to rival Jesus, to destroy Plato, to enthrone Dionysos. All three acts, he owed to Paul, and one might almost feel tempted to say, to Paul alone. The Areopagos and the Cross, he brought them together for Nietzsche.

Where is Nietzsche at grips with reality? It is inside Christendom in his fight with Scholasticism and Protestantism, against Aristotle and Plato.

Their influence in Church and College is still unbroken. Therefore Nietzsche rightly called "Christendom" the one thing which Protestantism and Romanism do share. It is their Greek theism, unbiblical as it is. He rightly accuses us, that both have been equivocal about the reality of God's world over against the world of space and science. They did leave this world to science, and retreated into another world which either was proclaimed to be "another" world or an "interior" World. And by doing so they abandoned their bold belief in incarnation: that this world was the one and only world which God ever created and ever will create; that the kingdom of God is in our hearts, that God is allowing the risen Christ to stand on his right now, for the last thousand years, and that heaven is open now and not hereafter.

Erasmus, Prince of Humanism had prayed: Ave Sancte Socrates, ora pro nobis.\*\* This had led in our schools and colleges to the constant equation Plato for Paul, Socrates for Jesus. Against this identification, Nietzsche placed the equation – and with him, it was a real equation – Dionysos = the Crucified. The "ora pro nobis", of course, had to go, as well as Socrates, and was replaced by an "enthuse us", "fill us, o Saviour". It is like a mosaic in which some stones are replaced. The correspondence between Erasmus and Nietzsche is complete. And our humanists certainly are the last people who should complain about Nietzsche. They forged history first when they exalted their Greeks over the Christians. Against their rationalism with its lack of precalculability the Dionysian mask displays the tragic character of life again. The remarkably exact relation of Erasmus, the prince of Humanism, to Nietzsche goes to suggest that Nietzsche did put an end to this whole era of Christianity, called Humanism.

If you find the Dionysian outcry exaggerated – Hoelderlin was the first to use the equation – be careful that you do not miss the one aspect under which the Crucified and the Cross can make progress at all in a repaganized world.

\* "The Godhead, the principle of deification by which those who shall become Gods, do become Gods..."

Pseudo-Dionysios, the Areopagite, *De Ecclesiastica Hierarchia* Cap. I., # 4, Migne, *Patrologia Graeca* III, 375

\*\* I well know the restrictions imposed on this quotation by Étienne Gilson in the appendix to his "Héloïse et Abélard", Paris 1938. However, the humanistic legend which he destroys, is nevertheless built around and on this equation. Gilson destroys it philologically fifty years after Nietzsche had destroyed it axiologically, Gilson dealing with facts, and Nietzsche with "fienda", with values.

In a society where most people lead meaningless lives, Nietzsche's strange outcry: "This is true Divinity that there are Gods but not a God"\* is not devoid of meaning, as it first may sound. Platonism, - and 95% of our college teachers are Platonists -, and Aristotelism - and 95% of our Catholic Priests are Aristotelians -, has degraded God into an idea (the Platonists) or a first cause (the Aristotelians).

Look at the abuse of the Old Testament where the very name of Jahve in Exodus 3 is translated by a philosophical formula "I am who I am" (against which Thomas Aquinas had certain doubts\*\*), whereas it actually means: I am with you, I am present. Against a God-prime mover and against a God-Idea nothing can help but: No. It is better to kill three letters: G, O, D, than the living God.

Certainly, with this shout Nietzsche is outside the Church and outside Christianity, but he is not outside humanity.

I often think that he simply is picking up a strand left untied by Augustine and later by Nicolaus Cusanus.

When Cusanus comes to speak of the vision of God, he is stressing "the succession without succession" in God's eternity.\*\*\* "Timelessness and succession may well coexist once the human reasoning is out of the way", says Nietzsche. \*\*\*\* One and the same problem.

## **VI. Blasphemy and Madness or Theology and Philosophy change moods.**

It is obvious that Nietzsche is completely irreconcilable with standardized theology and philosophy. "Theology has choked God", he exclaims. And philosophy has capitulated before the world. To both something irrevocable has happened which divides their existence into pre-Nietzschean and post-Nietzschean.

In a majority of cases theology today is the science of somebody else's God. It is Philosophy and History and Psychology of Religion. There was in the Divinity School at which I taught one single man who did not prefer his standing in the Department of either History or Philosophy or Literature to his rank in Divinity. The rest of these wise men wished to be scholars. But you can't be a scholar with an ordered route. The topic of the modern scholar may be circumscribed as New or Old Testament or History. His judgments on this material must be left free.

Practically this is what has happened. Theology is the logic of some "objective" concept of God, as found in Church or Bible or all the World Religions. Which means that God is absent, and the one quality of God which made theology in the last thousand years possible, his omnipresence, is incompatible with the new critical attitude.

\* (Also sprach Zarathustra Dritter Teil, Von den Abtrünnigen 2 (S. 431, Schlechta Hrsg., Werke II), Von alten und neuen Tafeln 11 (S. 449)) Compare the other: "Thou art a God, and never did I hear things more divine" in Fröhliche Wissenschaft, Viertes Buch, 341 (1882) (Ed. Schlechta Werke II, S. 476.)

\*\* Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae I, quaestio 13 Art. XI.

\*\*\* Nicholas of Cusa, The Vision of God, J. N. Dent 1928, p. 51

\*\*\*\* Werke XI, 186



Anselm of Canterbury knew that his theistic speculation was a makeshift for the time in which God was forsaking him. His dialectics were based on the theory of personal forsakenness of God. This means, it presupposed fuller moments in the life of the theologian where he was full to the brim of Divine Life.\* The relative emptiness of the theological state is forgotten: Prof. X or Y thinks that when he is speculating, he is nearer to God than in any other state. In our midst God now belongs to the world of things which can be discussed. To me this means blasphemy and madness. We may speak of God reasonably as long his name remains a power in our personal survival, and not one minute longer. The rest is philosophy. The theologians belong today to Philosophy and its departments, with the special connotation that their worldly material is Bible, Creed, Church etc. of the so called Christians and Jews. Christianity is the subject matter of theology, nothing more.

Now, in a parallel movement philosophy has outgrown the condition of its existence. Which is this condition? This one: being faced by Chaos, the philosopher suffered from the irrational character of the universe, and in this suffering he emerged with the pearl from the bottom of the sea which immersed most minds: he put sense into Chaos. The philosopher was important for the world. His was a special case of mind, unnaturally troubled by Chaos.

This effort has spent itself. The philosophy of common sense has seen to this. The world is seen by everybody alike. The Pragmatists tell us that the mind is a tool, an instrument to satisfy common man. Everybody can understand the world, nobody is driven crazy by its abnormality. The World is justified beforehand. It is believed in as divine and orderly. Philosophy has become a theology of the good, true, beautiful world. Common sense philosophy is theology.

Theologians ceased to follow the rules of their game when they began to speak of other people's Gods. Philosophers ceased to function when they began to speak of everybody's world. Without over the theologian's desk the "God, My God, why hath thou forsaken me", and without the parallel inscription over the philosopher's headquarters: "The World is out of joint", the two sciences as we have known them disappear.

"As if some lesser God had made the world and had no force to shape it as he would", now becomes the watchword for the theologian. And for the world we get the deistic blasphemy of Browning: "God's in his heaven – All's right with the world!"

Is it not strange that Tennyson and Robert Browning should have written the epitaph's for these once heroic twins, degraded to a philosophy of "religion" and a theology of the world "as it is"?

## **VII. Theology and Philosophy have changed rapiers.**

There can be no theology without the risk of blasphemy and there can be no philosophy without the risk of madness. Philosophers and theologians will not see this connection; Nietzsche took its burden upon himself.

Nobody ever achieved anything in theology or philosophy without this risk. What made Jonathan Edwards into a great theologian if not that by his revivals he had come more than near blasphemy?

\* Monologion, Caput I.

And William James: All his life insanity and madness tempted this greatest of American thinkers.

They were not so secure as the moderns who discuss finite Gods and finite spaces. And where do these same people go mad about? About their college team, and about railroad bonds and about themselves. Where a man sees red, you know his God. It's usually he himself. Without desecration, no consecration.\*

Fear of blasphemy because God is treated as absent, and fear of madness because the world is a labyrinth which offers no orientation, are the reasons for the existence of the special activities called theology and philosophy. In his time Nietzsche was the only man who knew both these truths, and as stars and judges he suspended them over his life as well as his thoughts.

If you wish to judge him, judge him in their light.

“God is not absent from my speech; and I am not unimportant for the orientation of the world”, he tried to say at a moment when people loved to assert: I am just a human being, that is when by this very expression they withdrew from God and World, when they gave up to be the dator legis.

“Nicht nur die Vernunft von Jahrtausenden, auch ihr Wahsinn bricht an uns aus.” “Not only the wisdom of millenniums, their madness too is bursting forth in us.”\*\*

In the face of these “human beings”, without Gods or Worlds, he spoke the truth, and identifying himself with these dying souls he brought their madness into the open, himself.

Again, let it be said that he had to live simultaneously in a number of ages, if he should found a new time-continuum: a. He was the victim of the conquest of space, and he called himself the decadent of this era, his own time. b. He foresaw that others would rebel, not in words as he, but in terrible convulsions, and he identified himself with the peoples now at war.

c. Finally as Zarathustra he threw his soul far ahead over the abyss of these wars, when a united mankind would be able to implant the virtues of war into its unity.

The man who said that madness broke out, is not simply the man who went mad. By saying it, he survives his and his time's lunacy, is a convalescent.

By this polychronic character of Nietzsche's thought, his “torn-to-pieces-hood”, the nature of man is revealed as crucified. In our old papermaker's product, the foolscap, you could see a fool's cap and bells engraved as watermark. And for our pre-Nietzschean eyes Nietzsche wore the fool's cap and bells. But in reality, behind the fool's cap for those who know what Eschatology Realized means, another watermark, indelibly engraved in the human heart, becomes legible: the cross. The Cross is not only a historical, it also is a worldly fact: it is the truth about man's nature.

Through Nietzsche the Cross has become from a revealed dogma which seemed inaccessible to natural reason a fact of nature and thereby the centre of the new science of time and man.\*\*\* Man has one feature which sets him apart from the World or Nature as much as from God. It is the Cross in his heart which makes him into a distemporal.

\* Nietzsche, Werke 16, 170

\*\* ( A not realized footnote. Cf. e.g. Nietzsche, Morgenröte Erstes Buch 18 (Schlechta, Werke I, S. 1027 = 27

\*\*\* This is the important result of the three volumes of Von Balthasar, S.J., Apokalyps der deutschen Seele, '39

The World of science is space; and if you object that after all time is mentioned in science, Nietzsche and all the modern time-thinkers will reply: No, not the genuine time; science is treating time as a poor fourth dimension, as an afterthought, and in a curtailed perspective as seen from the view point of space.

God is eternal.

Man is polychron. Men are monochron when they are blind and cowards. They are polychron, divine, if they are willing to pay the price, to suffer the Cross of being and of not being a member of their own time. Nobody can be forced to do this.\* Nobody is obliged to believe this. But the new situation is, that from now on everybody may know it as the simple truth about human nature.

All ideas about a human mind superior to the human body, about timeless reason, about an unshakeable self-reliance in man's character, in our natural reason, have come to nought.

The "carrier" of philosophy we presupposed in following the Greek standards of the sober man, is a fiction. Man has one nature! It is: to be incalculable, to be unstable, to be torn, to be suspended between past and future. His greatest triumph of integration is not to become whole like a little globe or monad but to get himself so much together as at least to avoid a complete disintegration, a mere confusion and split personality inside. The perfect man and the most normal reason would still have to be a cross bearer and a crucial reason, simply because we are times and suspended between past and future, between the beginnings of the stone-age man and the end of all times.

Thus maddened by the world and blaspheming God, Nietzsche transformed belief into fact. He secularized the teachings of revealed religion about man's nature into a universal matter of fact.

And this he did at a moment when by the critical approach the sources of revealed religion lost their hold over Western Man. In their majority our children do not read the Bible. But I do think that they are imbued with a Biblical notion of human nature.

Marked off by Nietzsche, this historical turning point is this transfer from the ecclesiastical reservation of the CHRISTIAN soul to the free hunting grounds of any human mind.

Doing this he wrote a new lease on life, since both theology and philosophy can now develop new standards: so to speak an unbelieving theology and a believing philosophy.

Beyond the changes in these two fields, the function of Nietzsche stands out clearly: He has opened a new era in which the atmosphere is purified from two heresies of the last thousand years: one that nature is divine, and the other that man is natural.

Man has his own nature: he is cruciform or crucivert, characterized by the cross which he shares with neither God nor World. Thus the reciprocal life of the three individualities, Man, God, World, is entering into a new phase of "perichoresis", of "circumincession" as the old doctrines call it. And the Morris dance of these three elementary components of reality, **God, Man, World**, is asking for the full orchestral score of the conquest of time. It has to happen

\* "Esse autem filios dei, non necessitatem esse, sed potestatem", Hilarius, De trinitate I, 11

all the more urgently, the more thoroughly the conquest of space may come to its orderly solution, in some form of economic organisation of the globe.

It is very difficult to conceive of a state of man in which wars and frontiers have disappeared. It is however for this very day that Nietzsche prepared. At that time the loose usage of speaking in arbitrary alternation of men and man, singular and plural, will have to cease. We will have to become much more precise in our handling the delicate question when **M A N** and when men are in the right element, and since their element is time, when they are used at the right moment and at the right time.

Whatever we may think of Nietzsche, let us grant him that he came at the right moment and at the right time.

Transcript Lise van der Molen, finished April 12, 2010

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