CHAPTER - V

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Nietzsche's rejection of the doctrine of the equality of men is a part of his refusal to entertain the idea of an objective moral order with a transcendent creator. For him, the awareness of the cultural event of the death of God is a precondition of the awakening to the burden of being human. Nietzsche says through Zarathustra, "you higher men this god was your greatest danger. It is only since he lies in his tomb that you have been resurrected. Only now the great noon comes; only now the higher man becomes — lord." With the death of God, the Superman becomes the yearning of the earth. Nietzsche's concept of Superman emerges from his understanding of the predicament of modern man and his growing conviction "that man is something that must be overcome." While it may be futile to investigate whether there were Superman or Overman in the part, there can be no doubt that there will be superman in the future, nebulous though the future must seem from the vantage point of the present. One of the best known figures in Nietzsche's philosophy is the "Übermensch,"

1. F. Nietzsche, Thus spake Zarathustra, IV, 13, 2
2. Ibid, III, 12, 3
the overman" or, in the more ordinary translation, "the Superman", First of all, Nietzsche has not coined the word Übermensch. The hyperanthropos is to be found in the writings of Lucian, in the second century A.D. and Nietzsche as a classical philologist, has studied Lucian and made frequent reference to him in his philologica. In German, the word was used by Heinrich Huller, J. G. Herder and Jean Paul. Goethe also used the term in Faust, where a spirit scorns the frightened Faust who has conjured him and called him Übemenschen. Of course, Nietzsche gives the term a new meaning.

Nietzsche is an ambivalent follower of Darwin, who had published his great 'Origin of Species' in 1859 and 'Descent of Man' in 1871. On the one hand, there is a great deal in Darwin that Nietzsche clearly accepts with enthusiasm: his stark naturalistic thesis, the continuity of man and ape, the concept of "natural selection" and "fitness", at least in their general outline. But Nietzsche reads Darwin as teleologist who believed that man emerged as the highest creature. To this view Nietzsche provides an alternative: human beings are not the "end" of Nature; "the Superman" may follow the human species on the evolutionary ladder. But Nietzsche suggests that this is far from an inevitability.

Inspite of his attacks on Darwin and Darwinism, there can be no question that the notion of the Superman is in same sense derivative from the more general evolutionary currents of thought that were prevalent during the second half of the 19th century. Nietzsche is fond of saying that "natural selection has
gone in the diametrically opposite direction from that which would truly promote the maintenance of the species; that the weakest, not the strongest, are being bred, and that the human race is, consequently, bent on a headlong path toward its own destruction."³

Zarathustra contrasts the Superman with the Last man, the person who is too risk-averse to pursue any aim beyond comfort, and who consequently avoids starting a new generation. He is utterly unadventurous, incapable of self-criticism, wholly caught up in his own petty pleasures. The last Man is clearly presented as a dolt. Zarathustra presents the Übermensch and the last Man as two alternative possibilities or goals, asking modern individuals which mode of existence their own lives embody and promote. The Superman seems to be the ideal aim of spiritual development more than a biological goal. Nietzsche describes the Superman as devoid of human timidity, continually aspiring to greatness and living life as a creative adventure. A person who embodies these ideals would be an improvement on the contemporary human being, but Nietzsche does not think that natural selection will produce such a type. Instead, according to Nietzsche, one should reconsider one's own way of living, redesigning it to aim in the direction of the superman even if this ideal is too extreme to be fulfillable.

The idea of the Superman is used by Nietzsche as a foundation from which he attempts to challenge the ingrained values of society. These nature behind what is considered to be good and evil, he asserts, are founded on the Christian faith. They serve only to hamper human potential and have no basis in our everyday experience. "4 His aim is to show us that for society to be able to live up to its true potential one needs a new system of values. In rejecting the idea of God who gives us values changeless and transcendent of the everyday world he gives us Superman, a real individual who creates values which are firmly rooted in the everyday changing world. Mankind, in order to justify its existence, has always required some belief in a higher purpose in life. Without such a belief, life becomes impossible to bear as the question asked by nihilism is continually before one, "why live at all?" The christian idea of God is one successful solution to this problem. God the changeless omnipotent being outside of this world gives us transcendent values about what is good and what is evil which are the same for all men who are supposed to be equal. Christianity holds that this word is inherently evil and to abide by its practices is to be in direct conflict with God's will. So success in this world is not measured how well one survives or how much material wealth he accumulates but depends on how he has adhered to these values.

One of the key points about christianity that make it so successful is in the

4 Nietzsche, The Portable Nietzsche, PP. 486-487
way that it addresses the question of suffering. Ever since there has been man there has been suffering in man which is impossible to ignore. Through the idea of asceticism in this religion, suffering is "interpreted" Nietzsche claims, "in the perspective of guilt". Though not attempting to alleviate suffering, asceticism gives it a purpose. According to the ascetic belief, the more we suffer in this world the better our rewards will be in the next. Nietzsche dismisses this answer to nihilism, because it serves to make one feel ashamed of himself and the world. In doing so this belief extinguishes an individual's hope of fully realising his own powers and strength. Thus, things are viewed in a negative light as being worldly and evil. Nietzsche holds that such suppression tends to undermine an individual making him sickly and weak physically and psychologically. Such a thing imposed upon society would naturally lead to a sick and weak population. He proposes to give us a new system of beliefs which is not only said to be effective but also frees us of christianity's binds. With his doctrine of Superman Nietzsche seeks to give us values that at the same time create a medium where power is realised and strength flourishes, and define a purpose for life.

The Superman creates his own good and evil, based on that which helps him to succeed or fail. In this way good is something which helps one to realize his potential and evil is whatever stands in the way of this effort. To Nietzsche

5. F. Nietzsche, The Portable Nietzsche, P. 454
everything in the world, including good and evil, is transitory and everything is being continually re-invented. The Superman embraces this idea of change which is, to him, evident, he understands the fact that since there is nothing in the world which is permanent whatever exists must eventually be overcome. So in order to keep up with the times he continuously re-invents himself over and over always building something stronger, more powerful. The Superman therefore is the ideal of someone who has mastered the practice of overcoming himself.

The source of his strength lies in the cherishing of the same natural desires restricted in Christianity. He sees the natural desires as the best of all possible good since they act as the driving force behind his insatiable need to overcome.

It is from the example of the Superman that one is intended to see how much is attainable in the world. He creates values continually, always refining them to be better and better still. In this way they rise above the values of the masses (the weaker, the unwise) until they arrive at the top and being superior to any other they serve as the guidelines for the rest of society. They remain on top until another superior system of values comes along and usurps it. In this way a society is created which, by allowing the stronger to prevail, promotes strength. Nietzsche deems this a healthy society as it always strives to heighten its potential and is founded upon the attributes of the healthiest individual who
exists. In this system the question "why live?" asked by nihilists is answered in man's striving to overcome himself. The Superman sees mankind as a bridge which has no end which always stretches still further and further. Thus mankind is aware of no ultimate limits. Each life is valuable as it can serve mankind by helping to push its potential ever higher elevating it another out of the comparative wretchedness which existed, before this process was begun.

Suffering is also addressed here. It is said that not only can suffering be suppressed but the alleviation of it is also possible. Though suffering is at times necessary the Superman redeems himself from it in his constant creating. This creating allows him to overcome himself and thus leads to improvement. He calls this creative act "will's joy". So in order to overcome he must create and thus very little room is left for suffering. Nietzsche thus says, "Not mankind, but Superman is the goal." He hopes to destroy in 'Beyond Good and Evil (1886) and 'The Genealogy of Morals' (1887), the old morality, and prepare the way for the morality of the Superman. According to the old morality, which was brought to its peak by Jesus, every man was of equal worth, and had equal rights. "Out of this doctrine came democracy, utilitarianism, socialism, progress was now defined in terms of progressive equalization and vulgarization, in terms of decadence and descending life." And now, Nietzsche is determined that whether

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6. F. Nietzsche, The Will to Power, Para. 1001
7. F. Nietzsche, Beyond Good & Evil, PP. 121-123
man wishes to listen or not, at least he should be told of the ultimate disaster that awaits him, if he continues in his present direction. For, there is yet time! It is to higher man that Nietzsche really makes his appeal, the leaders and misleaders of the mob. He has no concern with the multitude and is against 'greatest number'. Thus it is said that he is throughout his life an 'Advocate of Higher man.' It is of the first importance to humanity that its higher individuals should be allowed to attain their full development. And by means of its heroes can the human race be led forward step by step to higher and ever higher levels.

The higher men of a society in which gradations of rank are recognised as a natural and desirable condition constitute the class in which the hopes of a real elevation of humanity may be placed. In Zarathustra Nietzsche launches an attack against the national state, 'the coldest of all cold monsters' and the new idol which sets itself up as an object of worship and endeavours to reduce all to a common state of mediocrity. But though he condemns the national state from this point of view, namely as preventing the development of outstanding individuals, he none the less insists that the mediocre masses are a necessary means to an end, the emergence of a higher type of man. It is not the mission of the new higher caste or type to lead the masses as a shepherd leads his flock. Rather it is the mission of the masses to form the foundation on which the new
so-called lords of the earth can lead their life and make possible the emergence of still higher types of man.

As a spur and goal to the potentially higher man Nietzsche offers the myth of Superman. "Man is something which must be surpassed; man is a bridge and not a goal." But this must not be taken to mean that man will evolve into Superman by an inevitable process. "Superman is the meaning of the earth. Let your will say — Superman is to be the meaning of the earth." "I conjure you, my brothers, remain true to the earth, and believe not those who speak to you of super-earthly hopes!"

Thus the Superman of Nietzsche is rendered the more chimerical by the fact that he must contradict not only the common man of the present but also the superior men, the half-superhuman men of the past. Thus, the task of framing solid ideals, which would, in fact, be better than actual things, is granted only to the master workman. To transcend humanity is no new ambition that has always been the effort of Indian and Christian religious discipline and of stoic philosophy. Nietzsche loves mere life with the pathetic intensity of the wounded beast; his Superman must not rise above our common condition by his purely spiritual resources, or by laying up his treasure in any sort of heaven. He must not be a superior man but a kind of physiological Superman, in Santayana's

8. F. Nietzsche, Thus Spake Zarathustra; Prologue, 3, 4
9. Ibid, Prologue 3
10. Ibid, Prologue 3
words, "griffin in soul, if not in body, who instead of labouring hands and reli-
gious faith should have eagle’s wings and the claws of a lion." 

Kaufmann interprets the concept of superman as synonymous with the
concept of the man who has overcome himself." and one who has transfig-
ured his *physis* and acquired self-mastery." Lowell Howey says that the Su-
perman should not be conceived of as a 'State' which man can achieve. One
never is a Superman except in a relative sense". As Nietzsche says, "Even in
the best there is still something that nauseates; and even the best is something
that must be overcome." The greatness of man lies in continuously overcom-
ing, never reaching an end. "what is great in man is that he is a bridge and not
an end..."

**NIHILISM AND SUPERMAN**

Nietzsche uses the word 'nihilism' to refer to life-negating world views. A
system of philosophy or religion that brings in a transcendent principle as the
source of meaning and values, relegating the world and human life to a lower
realm of appearance, is founded on life-denying premise. In 'The Will to Power'
Nietzsche uses the term 'nihilism' in a different sense. Nihilism in this sense is

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11. George Santayana, Egotism in German Philosophy, P. 120
12. Walter Kaufmann, Nietzsche, Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist, P. 309
13. Ibid. P. 312
14. Richard Lowell Howey, Heidegger and Jaspers on Nietzsche, P. 131
15. F. Nietzsche, Thus Spake Zarathustra, III, 12, 14
16. Ibid, Prologue, 4
based on the thesis that structure, meaning and values are not intrinsic to the world but are impositions, that the distinction between truth and falsity is not based on any correspondence with facts but rather on life's yearning to affirm itself. Nietzsche accepts nihilism in this form as his own philosophical position. By his insistence that there is no order or structure in the world and therefore no moral order, he is a metaphysical and axiological nihilist. In this form nihilism is a sign of the increased power of the spirit. He calls it 'active' as opposed to 'passive' nihilism born out of "decline and recession of the power of the spirit". Active nihilism necessarily involves rejection and destruction. It is a sign of the capacity to face and meet the challenge of creating meanings so that the will's power to assert itself may find a healthy manifestation. For the active nihilist the collapse of the old order of values engineered by his own destructive power, is a challenge to be met not by seeking values in a transcendent world but by the agonising process of conceiving and shaping them.

The Superman claims to reverse values, to convert reaction into action. But reaction will never become action without this deeper conversion -- negation must first become a power of affirming. Separated from the conditions which would make it viable, the enterprise of the Superman is abortive, not accidentally but in principle and essence. Instead of forming a becoming --

17. F. Nietzsche, The Will to Power, 13
18. Ibid, 25
19. Ibid, 22
20. Ibid, 32
active it nourishes the opposite becoming, becoming — reactive. Instead of reversing values, values are changed, made to exchange places while retaining the nihilistic perspective from which they derive. Instead of training forces and making them active they organise associations of reactive forces. Conversely the conditions which would make the enterprise of the Superman viable are conditions which would change its nature — Dionysian affirmation rather than man's species activity. Thus the element of affirmation is the Superhuman element. The element of affirmation is what man lacks — even and above all Superman. Therefore, as Nietzsche speaks of affirmation to be the essential element of the Superhuman. In the same way he discusses the kingdom of nihilism and how nihilism reaches its completion to the man who wants to perish and become Superman. According to Nietzsche, the kingdom of nihilism is powerful. It is expressed in values superior to life, but also in the reactive values which take their place and again in the world without values of the last man. It is always the element of depreciation that reigns, the negative as will to power, the will as will to nothingness. Even when reactive forces stand up against the principle of their triumph it is always the same element which appears in the principle in the consequence or in the effect. But no will at all remains the final avatar of the will to nothingness. Under the sway of the negative the whole of life is always depreciated and the reactive life in particular triumphs. Activity can do nothing despite its superiority over reactive forces. And, in fact, the becom-
ing-reactive of forces is also the negative as quality of the will to power. Thus, transmutation or transvaluation means for Nietzsche not a change of values, but a change in the elements from which the value of values derives. Appreciation instead of depreciation, affirmation as will to power, and will as affirmative will. But when the element is changed, then, and only then, it can be said that all values known or knowable up to the present have been reversed. "Up to the present" means upto the time of transmutation. New values derive from affirmation, values which were unknown upto the present. "Creation takes the place of knowledge itself and affirmation takes the place of all negations." Nihilism has been defeated and activity recovers its rights only in relation with the deeper instance from which these derive. Thus, for Nietzsche, all the previously analysed forms of nihilism constitute an unfinished, incomplete nihilism. Therefore, the transmutation which defeats nihilism is itself the only complete and finished form of nihilism. In fact "nihilism is defeated, but defeated by itself." Transmutation would therefore be a complete nihilism because it would give the critique of values a completed, "totalising" form.

Now, let us reconsider the history of nihilism and its successive stages -- negative, reactive and passive. Reactive forces owe their triumph to the will to nothingness and once this triumph is established they break off their alliance with it, they want to assert their own values on their own account. It inspires in

21. Gilles Deleuze, Nietzsche and philosophy, P. 173
man a new inclination -- for destroying himself, but destroying himself actively. Thus, what Nietzsche calls self-destruction, active destruction, must not, above all, be confused with the passive extinction of the "last man" and in Nietzsche's terms one should not confuse the "last man" and "the man who wants to perish." One is the final product of becoming reactive, the final way in which the reactive man who is tired of willing, preserves himself. The other is the product of a selection which undoubtedly passes through the last man but does not stop there. Zarathustra praises the man of active destruction, he wants to be overcome, he goes beyond the human, already on the path of overman, "crossing the bridge", father and ancestor of the overman. "I love him who wishes to know that one day the Superman may live. And thus he wills his own downfall."\(^{22}\) Zarathustra wants to say --"I love the one who makes use of nihilism as the ratio cognoscendi of the will to power, but who finds in the will to power a ratio essendi (essence) in which man is overcome and therefore nihilism is defeated."\(^{23}\) Thus active destruction means the point, the moment of transmutation in the will to nothingness. Destruction becomes active when the alliance between reactive forces and the will to nothingness is broken and is converted to the side of affirmation. Hence, destruction becomes active to the extent that the negative is transmuted and converted into affirmative power -- the "eternal joy of becoming" which is avowed in an instant, the "joy of annihilation and destruction."\(^{24}\)

\(^{22}\) F. Nietzsche, Thus Spake Zarathustra, Prologue 4
\(^{23}\) Giles Deleuze, Nietzsche and Philosophy, P. 174
\(^{24}\) F. Nietzsche, Ecce Homo, P. 51
This is the "decisive point" of Dionysian philosophy -- the point at which negation expresses an affirmation of life, destroys reactive forces and restores the rights of activity. The negative thus becomes the thunderbolt and lightning of a power of affirming. Thus Nietzsche defines the transcendent point not in terms of an equilibrium or a reconciliation of opposites, but in terms of conversion.

Thus, in transmutation, one is concerned with a conversion, but not with simple substitution. Nihilism reaches its completion by passing through the last man, but going beyond him to the man who wants to perish. In the man who wants to perish, to be overcome, negation has broken everything which still held it back. It has also defeated itself and become affirming, a power which is already Superhuman, a power which announces and prepares the Superman (Overman).

"You could transform yourself into forefathers and ancestors of the Overman and let that be your best creating."^25 Thus, Negation sacrifices all reactive forces, becoming "relentless destruction of everything that was degenerating and parasitical", passing into the service of an excess of life.^26 Therefore, reactive forces are denied and all forces become active. The reversal of values and the establishment of active values all operations which presuppose the transmutation of values, the conversion of the negative into affirmation. Conversely, affirmation is only manifested above man, outside man, in the Superman which it produces and in the unknown that it brings with it. But the Superman, the unknown.

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25. F Nietzsche, Thus Spake Zarathustra II, para. 24
26. F. Nietzsche, Ecce Homo, P. 51
is also the whole which drives out the negative. The Superman as species is in fact "the superior species of everything that is".

Nietzsche, an one occasion seems to compare the Superman to "the great blond beast." In another place, Nietzsche speaks of three metamorphoses of the race, under the allegorical names of the camel, the lion and the child. The camel, a hopeless beast of burden, is man. But when the camel goes into the solitary desert, it throws off its burden and becomes a lion. That is to say, the heavy and hampering load of artificial dead - weight called morality is cast aside and the instinct to live or the will to power -- is given free rein. Thus, the lion is the "higher man" -- the intermediate stage between man and Superman. The latter appears neither as camel nor lion, but as a little child. Thus the mission of the lion is to create for itself freedom for new creating.

In Gilles Deleuze's book "Nietzsche and Philosophy", Gilles observed that it might be thought that the ass, the animal which says "ye-a" was the Dionysian animal par excellence. But, this is not the case as its appearance is Dionysian but its reality is wholly Christian. It is only fit to be used as a God by the higher man. It does represent affirmation as the element which goes beyond the higher man but it disfigures it in this image and for their needs. It always says yes, but does not know how to say no. Thus, Nietzsche announces the Dionysian affirmation that no negation can defile. On the other hand he denounces the affirmation of the ass who does not know how to say no, that
contains no negation. In the one case affirmation does not let negation remain as an autonomous power but in the other case affirmation would never real or complete if it were not preceded and followed by the negative. Thus the meaning of the ass affirmation is nothing but bearing and taking reality as it is upon oneself. This is why Nietzsche can denounce the yes of the ass.

Therefore, to affirm is not to take responsibility for, to take on the burden of what is, but to release, to set free what live. Thus, to affirm is to unburden, not to load life with the weight of higher values, but to create new values which are those of life, which make life light and active. "And you yourselves should create what you have hitherto called the world: the world should be formed in your image by your reason, your will and your love!" 27 But this task is not completed in man. Going as far as he can man raises negation to a power of affirming. But affirming in its full power, affirming affirmation itself -- this is beyond man's strength. "To create new values -- even the lion is incapable of that; but to create itself freedom for new creation that the lion can do." 28 The sense of affirmation can only emerge if these three fundamental points in Nietzsche's philosophy are born the mind, not the true nor the real but evaluation, not affirmation as acceptance but as creation; not man but the Superman as a new form of life. Nietzsche attaches so much importance to art because art realises

27. F. Nietzsche, Thus Spake Zarathustra II, para. 24
28. Ibid, I, Para. I
the whole of this programme: the highest power of the false, Dionysian affirmation or the genius of the Superhuman.

Thus to affirm is to create, not to bear, put up with or accept. Nietzsche's conception of affirmation mean three things — evaluation, creation and Superman as a new form of life.

**SUPERMAN**

Nietzsche's primary concern is with greatness, comfort, satisfaction, sensual gratification are inimical to greatness. Now the question arises — In what way will the Superman be great? Nietzsche always has at least one eye on artistic achievement, so one might expect stupendous works of art from him. Thus, it is of course, fruitless to meditate on works of art that have not yet been created. Further more, the idea of a group of Superman all being artists does seem ridiculous. In Ecce Homo and in Zarathustra it is written — "Here man is overcome at every moment, the concept Superman here becomes the greatest reality."  

The "human Superhuman" then refers to our true self, and the "Superman" is the one who has transfigured his physis and acquired self mastery.

Nietzsche says that it is better to approach a contrast term between his

29. F. Nietzsche, Loc. Cit. P. 6
image of Superman with Jesus, then by looking now at the notion of the Superman, just as one concentrated on Jesus above. The standard construal of Nietzsche's Superman has a long, sometimes lurid, history. Only a few paradigm expressions of the "ideal type" see Nietzsche's Superman as a human ideal, as the image of human perfectibility. "The word 'Superman' as the designation of a type of supreme achievements, as opposed to 'modern' men, to 'good' men, to Christians and other nihilists --- a word that in the mouth of a Zarathustra, the destroyer of morality, becomes a very thoughtful word -- has been understood almost everywhere with perfect innocence in the sense of those very values whose opposite Zarathustra was meant to represent -- that is, as an 'idealistic' type of a higher kind of man, half 'saint', half 'genius'." 30

Yet despite Nietzsche's own cautions, the Superman has generally been construed as a heroic ideal, as a higher type who must be bred by all-too-human humankind. The Superman is described as the great man, the superior individual whose self-perfection - half genius, half saint places him at a far removed from the mediocrity and stagnation of the crowd, the rabble, "the herd". Nietzsche is not primarily intent upon erecting a new morality, a new set of values upon the ashes of the old tablets. Rather, his philosophising beyond good and evil means to deny not only morality but with it the basis for a contrast with immorality as well. In the second book of "The Dawn" Nietzsche writes ---

30. F. Nietzsche, Ecce Homo, Para. I
"Thus I deny morality just as I deny alchemy; that is, I deny their presupposition; however, not that alchemists have existed who believed these presuppositions and behaved in terms of them. I also deny immorality, not that countless men feel themselves to be immoral, but rather that there be a foundation in truth that one should feel this way. We must learn to transform our thoughts, in order at last, perhaps very far from now, even more to reach the point at which we transform our feelings."

Fortunately, by no means all "ideal type" readings have stressed the alleged political consequences of "Übermenschlichkeit" of what it is like to be a Superman. Perhaps the most popular interpretation of the Superman is the one articulated so successfully in the English-speaking word by the Walter kaufmann- "The unphilosophic and inartistic mass remains animalic, while the man who overcomes himself, sublimating his impulses, consecrating his passions, and giving style to his character becomes truly human or as Zarathustra would say, enraptured by the word Über - Superhuman."

Just as morality lies not in kindness but in strength, so the goal of human effort should be not the elevation of all but the development of finer and stronger individuals. Thus according to Nietzsche, "Not mankind, but Superman is the goal." Energy, intellect and pride -- these make the Superman. But they must

31. F. Nietzsche, Loc. Cit. Para. 103
32. C. O. Flaherty, Studies in Nietzsche and Judaeo - Christian Tradition, P. 312
be harmonized: the passions will become powers only when they are selected and unified by some great purpose. In the third Meditation Nietzsche has enquired as to how the individual might be able to give meaning to his life. Then Nietzsche answered ---"you should realize your own true self which does not lie deeply concealed within you but immeasurably high over you." 33 (Uberdir)

An aphorism in 'The Gay Science' suggest the connection between this ideal self over us and the Superman. The passage in "The Gay science" evidently does not represent Nietzsche's considered opinion of monotheism -- but its importance lies in the fact that he proceeds to applaud "the invention of gods, heroes, and Ubermenschen of all kinds, as well as Niben and Untermenschen, dwarfs, fairies and centaurs." The Untermenschen, according to Nietzsche, are presumably the Satyrs, demons and devils while the Ubermenschen (Superman) of this aphorism seem to be the gods, demigods and heroes of the ancient Greeks. To Nietzsche these Ubermenschen (Superman) appear as symbols of the repudiation of any conformity to a single norm - antithesis to mediocrity and stagnation. In Zarathustra Nietzsche says -- "Man is something that should be overcome" 34. -- and the man who has overcome himself has become Superman. Thus, "the man who has overcome his passions has entered into possession of the most fertile ground: like the colonist who has mastered the forest and swamps." 35

33. Walter Kaufmann, F. Nietzsche- Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist, P. 308
34. F. Nietzsche, Thus Spake Zarathustra, Prologue, 3
35. F. Nietzsche, The Wanderer and His Shadow Para. 53
Thus, to put it simply, the Superman's thesis will be this — that he has been put into the world without his consent, that he must live in the world, that he owes nothing to the other people there, and that he knows nothing whatever of existence beyond the grave. The Superman is the struggle for existence, asks and gives no quarter. Superman believes that it is the destiny of sentient beings to progress upward, and he is willing to sacrifice himself that his race may do so. But his sacrifice must benefit for the generations yet unborn. It is an inexorable law of nature which is raised to a higher power, that is embodied in Nietzsche's Superman. He is not mere nature, and he therefore transcends nature. The real Superman for whom nature cries aloud is he that will conquer nature and her slave-morality, and will overturn her whole table of values with its petty virtues and petty human vices. Thus, Nietzsche's Superman is to his will to live or will to power or perfect freedom.

Now, the question arises — how is the Superman the meaning of the earth, what steps might be taken to bring about his arrival, and will what he be like when he appears? Unfortunately there are crude understandings which can be quickly cleared up, such as that the Superman would be an evolutionary phenomenon. He seems to be defined in large part in terms of the second of Zarathustra's announcements, that of the Eternal Recurrence. The Superman is the being who can joyfully embrace that doctrine, for doctrine or dogma is what it is. And the third of Zarathustra's teaching is the will to power, the funda-
mental reality of existence. Once more, the Superman manifests it in its purest, most impressive way as self overcoming. The Superman would realize without being tempted that this is the ultimate seduction. The only joy it is heard about that is eternal is the joy of the next world, which no one can grasp it. Thus, the Superman is the being who is prepared to say yes to whatever comes along, because joy and sorrow are, as always for Nietzsche, from the primal oneness of Birth of Tragedy onwards, inseparable. So despite the horror of existence up to now, he is prepared to affirm it all. But there still remains the question that what the Superman does with his time. Something, very different from man, who is defined early on as a rope, tied between beast and Superman — "a rope over an abyss."\textsuperscript{36} "I teach you the Superman. Man is something that is to be surpassed."\textsuperscript{37} Thus, the Superman will be the final flower and ultimate expression of the earth.

\textbf{"SUPERMAN" MISUNDERSTOOD}

But the phrase "the rearing of the Superman has often been misunderstood. By the word "rearing", in this case, is meant the act of modifying by means of new and higher values — a new table of valuations must be placed over mankind, that of the strong, mighty, overflowing with life and elevated to his Zenith -- the Superman, who is now put before us with overpowering passion

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext{36.}{F. Nietzsche Thus Spake Zarathustra, Prologue 4}
\footnotetext{37.}{Ibid, Prologue 3}
\end{footnotes}
as the aim of our life, hope and will. Thus the leading principle of this new system of valuing would be — "All that proceeds from power is good, all that springs from weakness is bad". Therefore, this type must not be regarded as a fanciful figure ...................... it is meant to be a possibility which men of the present could realize with all their spiritual and physical energies, provided they adopted the new values. It might seem to give very little importance to these lines above, but it shows that such an interpretation of the Superman as a power monger who legislates new values to humankind is scarcely a thing of the past. For example, according to J.P. Stern, "Nietzsche seems unaware that he is giving us nothing to distinguish the fanaticism that goes with bad faith from his own belief in the unconditioned value of self — realization and self-becoming — that is from his own belief in the Superman. One is bound to look with doubt at this questionable doctrine. One can hardly forget that the solemn avowal of this reduplicated self-the pathos of personal authenticity was the chief tenet of fascism and National Socialism No. man came closer to the full realization of self-created 'values' than A. Hitler"38 Thus there is a strain in Nietzsche that invites such readings. Nietzsche's Superman does indeed appear danger, especially when taken out of cotext, a fact with which more scholarly and sensitive commentators have led to contend.

Thus the above passages are not cited to lend credibility to any right wing

38. J. P. Stern, Nietzsche, PP. 85-86
reading — as a rule, appropriate attention to the status and context of Nietzsche’s notes is sufficient to dispose of such interpretations. They are referred primarily to Nietzsche’s Superman called as the "ideal type." Thus if one were to insist upon construing the Superman as an ideal type and at the same time wished to rescue Nietzsche from the charge of having overdramatized then one could of course assimilate Übermenschlichkeit to the notion of authenticity. The main contrast is made between the "ideal type" reading and the diagnostic reading of the Superman. But this contrast is not as sharp, nor is it as clear, as one should like it to be. Thus, to refer to the diagnostic interpretation, it does not necessarily emphasize the Superman as an ideal of human perfectibility. Indeed, if the concept of the Superman can be read usefully at all as a diagnostic rather than a prescriptive concept, one would expect its embodiment to be radically undetermined. But this diagnostic reading has been defended in some detail, especially in --- "Nietzsche’s Existential Imperative"39.

FREEDOM

But despite these misunderstandings, the goal according to Nietzsche lies in the Superman, the complete realm of freedom and not general man. The complete unaccountability of man for his actions and his nature is the bitterest draught the man of knowledge has to swallow. To perceive all this can be very

painful, but then comes a consolation because such pains are said to be birth pangs. Men who are capable of that suffering will make the first attempt to see whether mankind could transform itself from a moral to a wise mankind. Thus, it is true that everything in the domain of morality has become and is changeable, unsteady, everything is in flux: but everything is also flooding forward, and towards one goal. And thus Nietzsche call this goal to be the Superman not general man. "The Superman lies close to my heart, he is my paramount and sole concern -- and not man."

Caesar came closer to Nietzsche's ideal --- but in him too, it was not the military or political successes that Nietzsche looked to. It is but the embodiment of the passionate man who controls his passions and the man who performs his unique deed of self-creation and self-mastery. Nietzsche looked to the fact that "Julius Caesar (who) defended himself against sickliness and headaches by tremendous marches, the most simplest form of living, uninterrupted sojourn in the open air and continuous exertion." Therefore, the highest type of 'free man' should be sought where the highest resistance is constantly overcome. The ideal is "the Roman Caesar with Christ's soul." Napoleon is often praised by Nietzsche. What Nietzsche admired in Napoleon, however, were not his military triumphs or his imperial crown. Rather he found in Napoleon the

40. Human All-too-Human, Para. 107
41. F. Nietzsche, Thus Spake Zarathustra IV, Para 3
42. F. Nietzsche, Twilight of Idols, Para. 31
antithesis of the German "Wars of Liberation", of the resurgence of German nationalism. Thus Nietzsche admired Napoleon not his progress on the battlefield, but what Napoleon had made of himself — "Courage before the enemy is one thing: having that, one can yet be a coward and an indecive muddle-head. Thus, Napoleon is judged with respect to the 'most courageous man' known to him." 43 But in the end, however, Nietzsche did not consider Napoleon as the Superman. So Caesar came closer to Nietzsche's ideal for his control over passions.

The Superman even if one considers Nietzsche's reverence for Napoleon and Caesar, rather than his admiration for Socrates and Goethe — does not introduce a new conception in Nietzsche's philosophy: he is the "Dionysian" man who is depicted under the name of Goethe. He has overcome his animal nature, organized the chaos of his passions, sublimated his impulses, and given style to his character — or, as Nietzsche said of Goethe — "he disciplined himself to wholeness, he created himself" and become "the man of tolerance, not from weakness but from strength", "a spirit who has become free."

Now, the question arises — what is Freedom? Freedom means that the manly instincts that delight in war and victory have gained mastery over the other instincts — for example, over the instinct for 'happiness'. The free man is

43. Walter Kaufmann, F. Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Antichrist, P. 315
a warrior — How is freedom measured, in individuals as in nations? By the resistance which has to be overcome, by the effort it costs to stay aloft. One would have to seek the highest type of free man where the greatest resistance is constantly being overcome. One must need strength otherwise one will never have it.44

In Zarathustra, it is said that once people had said about 'God', but now Zarathustra asked everyone to say 'Superman' instead of 'God'. "God is supposition; but I want your supposing to reach no further than your creating will. Could you create a god — so be silent about all gods! But you could surely create the Superman..... But you could transform yourselves into forefathers and ancestors of the Superman............. that is the true doctrine of will and freedom."45 Thus, the "free" man, the possessor of a protracted and unbreakable will, also possesses his measure of value. The awareness of the extraordinary privilege of responsibility, the consciousness of this rare freedom, this power over oneself, has penetrated to the profoundest depths and become the dominating instinct. The Sovereign man calls this dominating instinct his conscience which is said to be beyond doubt.

When the Superman is thus understood, the conception not only does not conflict with the doctrine of eternal recurrence but the essential connection between the two ideas becomes clear.

44. See F. Nietzsche, Twilight of Idols, Para 38
45. F. Nietzsche, Thus Spake Zarathustra II, Para. 24
ETERNAL RECURRENCE

The doctrine of the "eternal recurrence", i.e. of the unconditional and infinitely repeated circular course of all things is Nietzsche's "own version of eternity". In Gay Science Nietzsche writes about recurrence which is referred to thus: what if a demon crept after you one day or night in your loneliest solitude and said 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 all the unspeakably small and great in your life must return to you, all in the same succession and sequence -- and in the same way this spider and this moonlight among the trees, and even this moment and I myself. The eternal hourglass of existence is turned again and again and you with it, speck of dust!" -- Would you not throw yourself down and gnash your teeth and curse the demon who thus spoke? ............ "Do you desire this once more and innumerable times more?" would lie as the heaviest burden upon all your actions. 47

For Nietzsche, it is the joyful state that wants eternity. "Joy wants itself, wants eternity, wants recurrence, wants everything eternally the same." 48

This feeling of Joy, this "amor fati", is his formula for the greatness of a

46. Dave Robinson; Nietzsche and Post-Modernism, P. 32
47. F. Nietzsche, Gay Science, Para. 341
48. F. Nietzsche, Thus Spake Zarathustra, IV, 19:9
human being". Power is still the standard of value -- but this Joy is the conscious feeling that is inextricably connected with a man's possession of power. Conversely, the man who experiences this Joy is said by Nietzsche to be the powerful man. Thus, explaining the meaning of "all Joy wants eternity", Nietzsche brings out the relation between 'Joy' and 'eternal recurrence'. Negatively, the doctrine of eternal recurrence is the most extreme repudiation of any deprecation of the moment, the finite and the individual, the antithesis of any faith in infinite progress, whether it be evolution or the endless improvement of the human soul in Kant's conception of immortality. It is the antithesis, too, of any faith in another world; it is the creed of one whose message began: "I beseech you, my brothers, remain faithful to the earth and do not believe those who speak to you of other -- worldly hopes." 49

Actually the conception of the Superman is inseparable from that of the recurrence; and together they give expression to Nietzsche's fundamental anti-romanticism. Friedrich Schlegel, for example, actually contrasted "as a movement that returns upon itself in repeated cycles" with the modern, romantic system of infinite progress. Thus Nietzsche defines the doctrine of 'eternal recurrence' as "the unconditional and endlessly repeated circular course of all things." And this idea of eternal recurrence is said to be "the highest formula of

49. F. Nietzsche, Thus Spake Zarathustra I, Prologue 3
affirmation that can possibly be attained."\(^50\) Having assumed that the past stretches backward to infinity, Nietzsche reasons that every possible configuration of the matter in the universe must have already occurred an infinite number of times. Everything that is happening now has happened before and will one day happen again in precisely the same way. Nietzsche seems to offer it as a test of strength for would-be superpersons, a final examination in the school of self-overcoming. It is as if Nietzsche asks those who have cleansed themselves of all false consolations --- 'Can you now affirm the world inspite of its absurdity? Can you, for the sake of your eternity — thirsting joys utter an eternal yes to the world and thereby give your own meaning to a process that is devoid of one?'\(^51\) Redemption resides in this sacred yes and in amor fati (love of fate), a Nietzschean formula that is synonymous with affirmation of the recurrence. Thus the ethical imperative (say 'yes'!) lodged within the doctrine of the eternal recurrence presupposes the very freedom of choice that the recurrence itself denies. Nietzsche's hope for the future and his calls for the evolution of the Superman are rendered absurd by it. G. Deleuze in "Nietzsche and Philosophy" calls this interpretation "childish."

However Nietzsche offers an empirical argument for the claim that the world is without an end. The world has had enough time as it were to reach

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50. F. Nietzsche, Ecce Homo, III P. 69  
51. Philip Novak, The Vision of Nietzsche, P. 20
an end, if it were designed to reach any end at all. If there were for it some unintended final state, this also must have been reached\textsuperscript{52} Further, values are not written on the face of things but are created and imposed. So the doctrine of the final state for the world and human history negates the nature of the value creator as becoming. "The fact of 'Spirit' as a form of becoming proves that the world has no goal, no final state and is in capable of being."\textsuperscript{53}

According to Nietzsche, affirmation is being. Being is not the object of affirmation, any more than it is an element which would present itself, which would give itself over to affirmation. Affirmation on the contrary is not the power of being. But affirmation itself is said to be being. As primary affirmation, it is becoming. That is why affirmation in all its power is double - affirmation is affirmed. It is primary affirmation (becoming) which is being, but only as the object of the second affirmation. Thus the two affirmations constitute the power of affirming as a whole. Nietzsche expresses the fact that this power is necessarily double with important symbolic implications ———

(1) Zarathustra's two animals, the eagle and the serpent -- interpreted from the point of view of the eternal return the eagle is like the great cycle, the cosmic period, and the serpent is like the individual destiny inserted into this

\textsuperscript{52} F. Nietzsche, The Will to Power, 1062
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid, Para. 1062
great period. The eagle flies in wide circles, a serpent wound round its neck. "not like a prey but like a friend." 

(2) The Dionysian affirmation demands another affirmation which takes it as its object. Dionysian becoming is being, eternity, but only in so far as the corresponding affirmation is itself affirmed. The eternal return is the closest approximation of being and becoming, it affirms the one of the other. This is why the eternal return is itself a wedding ring.

The doctrine of eternal recurrence is an affirmation of Dionysian faith in the world as it is, not as it ought to be. Philosophers who offer transcendent world of permanence and eternity indulge in wish-fulfilment. For them, transience is the cause of suffering and hence is a disvalue. For Nietzsche, transience and suffering stand transfigured as values in his theory of eternal recurrence.

The lesson of the eternal return is that there is no return of the negative. The eternal return means that being is selection. Only that which affirms or is affirmed returns. The eternal return is the reproduction of becoming but the reproduction of becoming is also the production of becoming active. In the eternal return being ought to belong to becoming, but the being of becoming ought to belong to a single becoming — active. Thus, Nietzsche's speculative teach-

54. F. Nietzsche, Thus Spake Zarathustra, 10 P. 19
55. F. Nietzsche, Thus Spake Zarathustra III, Para 60
ing is as follows — becoming, multiplicity and chance do not contain any negation. Multiplicity, becoming and chance are the properly philosophical joy in which unity rejoices in itself and also in being and necessity. The reign of the negative is the reign of powerful beasts, churches and states, which fetter everyone to their own ends. The death of God needs time finally to find its essence and become a joyful event. Time to expel the negative, to exercise the reactive and the time of a becoming — active-this time is said to be the cycle of the eternal return. The negative expires at the gates of being. Nietzsche calls the point of conversion of the negative transmutation. The negative loses its power and quality. Negation ceases to be an autonomous power. Transmutation relates the negative to affirmation in the will to power, it is turned into a simple mode of being of the powers of affirming. Zarathustra stands for affirmation, the spirit of affirmation as the power which turns the negative into a mode and man into an active being who wants to be overcome.

In eliminating the idea of God and the values attached to it in his system Nietzsche is forced to give us a parallel substitute, that is, another god-like figure from whom we may receive our new values in order to fill the void which is created. Thus, we get an individual who derives his strength from that which is tangible (namely his own self) and dismisses that which cannot be plainly observed in the everyday world. Thus the doctrine of the Eternal Return, says Robinson, "envisages history working in vast repetitive cycles, so that the 'mean-
ing of life' is found within life itself. Nietzsche typically presents his idea sometimes as a literal scientific truth about the cosmos, and sometimes as a kind of moral and psychological metaphor. Once we know that our choices and actions are endlessly repeated, the presumably we will be very careful as to what they are. We will be more concerned with the future than dominated by the past, which means only we can ever have the responsibility for who we eventually become."56

56. Dave Robinson, Nietzsche and Post Modernism, P. 32