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Zarathustra and George Grant: Two Teachers

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There is comedy in the very idea of comparing Zarathustra and George Grant as teachers—but I intend to ignore it. There would perhaps be less comedy in the comparison of Nietzsche and Grant, but there would be greater uncertainty and less insight as well for Nietzsche himself is even more complex than his creation, Zarathustra. Besides, Grant has written on Nietzsche with great clarity and illumination and there is no need to review that achievement here. What I will do is to make use of Grant's interpretation of Nietzsche in order to contrast Grant's position with that of Zarathustra. My hope is that this will serve to clarify both. I recognize the presumptuousness of this attempt, all the more since Grant has himself pointed out the presence of this quality in so much modern academic writing. Nevertheless, some worthwhile questions may be raised by this comparison—if you will permit to pass unremarked both the presumption and the comic incommensurability of the comparison.

In the interests of a sober contrast we must set aside the fact that Zarathustra is Nietzsche's poetic creation and that he lives in a cave and talks to his animals. We must also temporarily forget that Zarathustra once said of scholars, in order to distinguish himself from the lot of them: "If you seize them with your hands they raise a cloud of dust like flour bags and . . . the dust comes from grain, from the yellow delight of summer fields." (*Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, "On Scholars"). A part of Zarathustra wants only to delight in such fields, not grind them grey. But of all the stances and poses of Zarathustra the one *not* to be set aside, the one most useful for our comparison, is Zarathustra the "convalescent." "The Convalescent" is the title of one of the eighty sections of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and is perhaps the most revealing name that Zarathustra gives himself. In this section Zarathustra comes to the end

of what he calls his "going under"; the convalescent recovers from the sickness and poison that he sees infecting everything in Western culture and hence himself as well. Zarathustra is not afraid to say it: he is redeemed. But he is redeemed by a teaching so wild and so initially implausible that it seems he alone can find succor in it. Nevertheless, it is in this wild teaching that Grant finds the deepest resonances of our modern way of being—though not for all that our redemption.

In his first book, *Philosophy in the Mass Age*, Grant had characterized the modern as "the history making spirit" and had taken Marxism and "the American Way" to be the best exemplifications of that spirit. While in the later works the North American continues to be what Grant calls the "spearhead" of the modern in its works and ways, it is in Nietzsche that Grant discovers the deepest understanding of the modern spirit and that means that Zarathustra is its foremost spokesman.

I will discuss only two issues in contrasting the teaching of Zarathustra and Grant. They are: 1) What is the purpose of the teaching? and 2) What is the content of teaching?

I

At the very beginning of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, when Zarathustra first comes down the mountain with his new teaching, he fully expects the adulation and acclaim of the crowd. His expectation is not deterred by the warning of the old saint that the crowd will not listen to his message and is not worthy of it. The old saint knows *that*, even though he knows nothing of what the message is. Nevertheless, Zarathustra ignores him; the old saint can have no authority for one who has seen through the beliefs that ground the old saint's life.

The crowd is neither inspired by Zarathustra's vision of the superman nor shamed by his description of the last man. The crowd he came to win does have authority with Zarathustra, and his failure to move them causes Zarathustra to re-examine the optimistic expectations of his solitude. He learns gradually from the events that follow that he is "not the mouth for these ears."

After Zarathustra's speeches the entertainment continues with a tightrope walker and a jester. The jester, high above the crowd, admonishes and ridicules the tightrope walker, utters a devilish cry, and leaps over him, sending the tightrope walker falling to his death. Zarathustra, watching, takes the actions of the jester to be a parable of his own folly in expecting the impossible from the crowd. He sees in himself a jester whose words to the crowd necessarily fail to achieve the

desired result. It takes more than the truth dramatically told to persuade the crowd. His expectations were foolish.

In compassion, Zarathustra carries off the corpse of the fallen tightrope walker. He carries the corpse out of the town, past forests and swamps, stopping at last at a lonely house in the forest where he asks for food. The old hermit who lives there feeds all who come, man and animal, living and dead, and he insists on feeding both Zarathustra and the corpse. Zarathustra's surprise at this teaches him the need to discriminate; no more feeding corpses for him. The crowd is now the corpse he leaves behind. Not only is the crowd unable to hear his message, it is unworthy of hearing it. Thus Zarathustra learns both lessons that he might have learned from the old saint. Henceforth Zarathustra will seek companions in place of the herd. Never again will he turn to the people; never again will his hopes for them be dashed for he no longer has hopes for them. Zarathustra's subsequent speeches are addressed to his friends and to his soul. From now on he will be chary about speaking with anyone but himself and his friends.

Grant too has had second thoughts about his manner of speaking and while the leap here is especially great—no tightrope walker plunges to his death to inform Grant of his mistake in strategy—let us nevertheless make it. Grant has said that he expected too much of his early writings, for he had hoped that they might have led to some real changes, or at least that they could have served to recommend some alternative to the prevailing views. In a most instructive preface in *Technology and Empire* Grant identifies and renounces that hope. What matters there is not the confession that he had had ambitions for his writings, but the remarkable statement that what he still considers to be true simply cannot be heard or credited in the realm of public discourse. This is remarkable because of what it implies about Grant's subsequent writings. They become doubly reflected, the result not simply of an inquiry into the truth but also of an inquiry into whether the truth can or cannot be stated.

When Zarathustra is rebuffed by the crowd he turns to friends, or the making of friends, who will be attentive to his teachings. He dismisses the crowd and the things of the crowd, not forgetting to ridicule it or destroy what it cherishes. Zarathustra finds a way to continue to announce his truth. Grant's reaction is different. He comes to believe that what he recommends cannot be heard because the prevailing views are so inimical to it that it can carry no persuasiveness. Grant does not then, like Zarathustra, turn to a select group of listeners; instead he turns directly to a consideration of the prevailing views themselves and, more

specifically, to those features of the reigning views that make any alternative seem false or dangerous or wicked. There is no abandonment of what Grant takes to be the true teachings, only the abandonment of talk about them. Grant's later writings reflect his conclusions on what can be heard and his decision not to say a great deal that might be said because saying it could achieve no good purpose. Understanding *why* it could serve no good purpose, however, serves a very good purpose.

Now, Grant's strategy of analysis and silence introduces a considerable complication into the interpretation of his work. But let us first be clear on what the complication is *not*. Our methods of inquiry as well as our intellectual fashions train us to suppose that the opinions that Grant has chosen to be silent about are the hidden *cause* of his conclusions about the modern world. Grant seems to be withholding valuable evidence for understanding his perspective. And he would be if it were true that his view of what the ultimately true things are determines his account of the modern world. Many of Grant's critics have, not unnaturally, simply assumed this to be the case. Consequently, much of the secondary literature on Grant exhibits the fruits of this method: on the one hand, the search for the hidden cause, and on the other, the rejection of its supposed result.

The complication introduced by Grant's strategy lies elsewhere. It is certainly more than simply gearing one's public utterances to the capacity of the public, although that is a very important part of it. A comparison with Zarathustra will provide some assistance on this point.

In a most important section in Book 2, "On Redemption," Zarathustra shows how much more he has learned about careful speaking since his conclusion that he needs to speak to friends rather than to the crowd. As is fitting for the section where Zarathustra reveals what man must do to be saved, there are all manner of cripples gathered together to hear Zarathustra. After all the speeches of this section are completed, the all-important observation is made: Zarathustra speaks differently to the cripples than he does to his disciples, but more than that, he speaks differently to his disciples than he does to himself.

The spokesman for the cripples, the hunchback, reveals at the beginning of the section that the people *do* learn from Zarathustra's doctrine after all, but they need a sign before they will believe it entirely. Only miracles that heal their infirmities will persuade them. Zarathustra's speech to the cripples spurns the temptation to provide that sign—even a crowd that offers its adulation is not enough now. Zarathustra has learned from the people and has learned that they need their afflictions. Only Zarathustra is truly sickened by them. But when Zarathustra

speaks to cripples he offers no consolation. Instead he even tries to destroy what consolation they might have. He tells them there are other even worse cripples, they are the ones that the crowd of cripples calls geniuses and gifted, the ones they look to for hope and wisdom, the ones Zarathustra has attacked without reserve throughout Book 2.

When he turns to his disciples in dismay he utters to them the most important and revealing speech of Book 2. He reveals that he himself is still a cripple, on the way to redemption, but not yet redeemed by the only means of redemption there is: his own will, a will to power that demands absolute mastery and hence demands the eternal return of the same.

Realizing suddenly that he has said too much, Zarathustra falls silent. The hunchback asks why Zarathustra speaks differently to his disciples than he speaks to himself: apparently *this* is how Zarathustra speaks to himself, namely, to one as yet unredeemed. He needs to speak further to himself in this way and so must leave his friends as he had earlier left the crowd. He had appeared to his friends as the one who knows, the enlightener, but to himself he is as yet unfulfilled as knower. In the imagery of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, he who had been the sun, exclusively the giver of light, now sees himself as in need of light. Significantly, the next section is on the merits of human prudence, specifically the prudence of disguise. In the section following that, Zarathustra takes his leave from his disciples and in the next book, alone again, he speaks to himself of redemption, and in "The Convalescent" is redeemed by embracing the doctrine of eternal return.

Zarathustra's lack of caution in "On Redemption" reveals his customary manner of selective or cautious speaking. The crowd of cripples he disparages, his disciples he exhorts, himself he flagellates for his failure to understand or for his lack of courage to make and remake his understanding. When the necessary allowances for flamboyance and grandeur are made, Zarathustra's selective speaking is instructive for understanding Grant's strategy of analysis and silence. Their expectations for their teachings include strategic reflection on how best to present what needs to be presented. Because Grant's approach here is influenced by Leo Strauss it is necessary to consider Strauss's account of philosophy's legitimate expectations.

It was Strauss who discovered again the art of writing practiced by classical philosophers. That art required a cautious distinction between the public truths and the truth as such, or in Plato's terms, between opinion and knowledge, or in the language Strauss frequently uses, between one's own and the good. One grows up into a natural love of one's

own and with a natural attachment to it. But one's own, the public realm of opinion, cannot embody the good itself, hence any genuine pursuit of the good must be preceded by a recognition of the inadequacy of one's own. Strauss takes this situation to be a perennial one for philosophy. The classical philosophers, recognizing the necessity of this detachment from one's own, did not then denounce the public truths, for they recognized that the public order is essential and quite adequate for its own ends. However, the pursuit of the good is not one of those ends and he who would pursue the good must cease to be a partisan of one's own. As a consequence of this perennial situation, philosophy must always be cautious and moderate because it always takes place in the midst of respectable public opinions which it must point beyond without destroying. Philosophy in this sense is moderate in its expectations from politics and from the public realm because it recognizes the limitations of possible reform and respects the public order.

Zarathustra rejects this position. He has no respect for the public views; he wants to shock and horrify the people. When, at the beginning of Book 2, he decides to come down the mountain a second time he comes not to win the people but to terrify them. He wants to confirm their earlier suspicions of him, he wants to appear to them to be the evil one himself. "A new speech comes" to Zarathustra, a terrifying teaching that he says will frighten all who hear it, even his friends. Zarathustra has no more respect for the public views than he had for the true counsel of the old saint. He places no value in its beliefs; he sees no merit in its stability.

As important as this matter of respect for the public views is, it is only a derivative aspect of the central issue, namely the change or reform that the teacher expects his teachings to effect. While Zarathustra continually calls forth the courage to reform and remake himself, he disparages all who lack that courage as the crowd does and must. Where classical philosophy is moderate in its expectations of the crowd Zarathustra is most immoderate. Zarathustra's revolutionary hopes for the crowd are the basis of his disgust with it—just as his revolutionary hopes for himself are the basis for his disgust with himself when he fails. The crowd he cannot remake; himself he can and does. What he cannot remake, or what cannot remake itself, Zarathustra scorns.

In this matter of expectations for one's teachings I take Grant to be much closer to the classical position as presented by Strauss than he is to Zarathustra. To conclude the first Part of this paper then I want to contrast directly the views of Zarathustra and Grant on this matter. The question is this: What is the point of teaching? What is the aim of it? What can we hope to achieve by it?

In Zarathustra's always victorious exuberance there remains an optimism that through his teachings the world might be remade into a fitting home for man, superman. The emphasis throughout is on man's will to master himself and the world. It is the creative will that is the basis of Zarathustra's hope. Only those who can rouse themselves to creative self-making are worthy of the title superman, and it is to them that Zarathustra issues his challenge.

Grant opposes this immoderate urge to remake the whole in the name of the superman. In opposing Zarathustra on this matter, Grant understands himself to be opposing the intrinsic dynamic of modern existence. Zarathustra is the very embodiment of the modern. But Grant's opposition cannot take the form of the thing opposed; where the thing opposed is the urge to revolutionize the world the opposition must renounce such a drive and attempt to understand it. For Grant there are consequently the most severe restrictions on what can be taught and done in the midst of the modern tradition. In Grant's later writings there is no revolutionary hope (as there had been in flickering form in *Philosophy in the Mass Age*). In fact, revolutionary hope for the world is part of the problem. Though modern man seeks to be superman in dominating the world, the hope is a vain one. The modern age is the age of Promethean man and Zarathustra is the teacher of Promethean man. By opposing this Grant abandons the hope that his teachings, or teachings like them, can change the world.

Both Zarathustra and Grant regard the prevailing public views as delusions. Zarathustra departs from the prevailing modern hopes which had been persuasively presented in democratic and egalitarian rhetoric and action, and he abandons the Enlightenment optimism that the truth about things, and the good life that results from having it, can be ascertained and shared democratically. After his rejection by the crowd, Zarathustra does not seek to remake the public; he is that far beyond the Enlightenment model of revolution. With respect to the public views he is content with ridicule. It is enough that there be last men to despise and rise above. The poor in spirit you will always have with you. When, in response to Zarathustra's account of the humiliation of man in the last man, the crowd demands, "Give us the last man," Zarathustra in effect gives it to them by leaving them to themselves. He abandons the hope of saving them while retaining the delight in destroying what they treasure. His teachings disparage an impregnable public while urging the few to creative self-making.

Grant aims neither to remake nor destroy the public delusions. He attempts to understand them and in understanding them, point beyond

them. Public views can be distinguished with respect to their nobility or ignobility, though consistently they are delusions. Grant uses this classical distinction in defending *Lament for a Nation* in the "Preface" to the second edition. The classical distinction maintains that the character of public views as delusions is perpetual, endemic. The perennially true image for philosophy is Plato's story of the Cave in the *Republic*. The cave is not redeemable nor can it be depopulated. It is not even remakable in the light of the truth, however remakable it has proven to be in the light of its own fires. Still, when Socrates talks to Glaucon and Adeimantus, and when readers read that talk, the way out of the Cave to the good becomes a challenging possibility. That at least is what I take to be the gist of Grant's answer to the question of what his teaching can achieve. In the face of the extravagance of Enlightenment hopes for humanity or of Zarathustra's hopes for superman it is not very much. Yet, from the perspective of the *Republic*, it is the most important thing.

I must say that I am somewhat uncertain of the preceding paragraph because I am uncertain how far Grant agrees with Strauss on this matter of the public role of philosophy. What I have said takes Grant to be simply a follower of Strauss on the matter.

It is the cave of the modern world that Grant analyzes in his work and for this analysis—though not for his silences—Zarathustra is his mentor. Now, having spoken so frequently of the "public views" of the modern world it is time to try to identify them as Zarathustra and Grant do.

II

Grant uses the word "enucleate" to describe the method that he follows in his analyses of the modern world. To enucleate means literally "to extract the kernel of a nut," and figuratively it means "to bring out from disguise" to lay open, explain" (*O.E.D.*).

The method of enucleation is something Grant shares with Zarathustra. Characteristically, Zarathustra has numerous flamboyant images for this method but perhaps the most memorable occurs in the section entitled "On the Tarantulas." There Zarathustra speaks first in a parable: in order to see the tarantula one must touch its web; the tarantula comes forth to defend its delicate creation and reveals itself in all its poisonous ugliness. Zarathustra proceeds to touch the intricate webs of the prevailing teachings and what crawls forth as their creators he identifies with the tarantula: their essence is a poisonous drive for

revenge that infects every aspect of the teaching, though the beauty of the web makes the ugliness of its maker almost impossible to believe.

For Grant the method of enucleation lays open a uniform essence in the ostensibly pluralistic activities and commitments of modern existence. That essence has to be ascertained with careful analysis because it is hidden by layers of common-sense assumptions, and common sense naturally and necessarily objects to the results of enucleation. But it is not only common sense that objects to the enucleated conclusions; so too does modern scientific method in the social and human sciences which denies the presence of any hidden essence or, at least, the possibility of knowing what it is. There is great attraction, as Grant has noted, in a certifiable method, a method that stays within the strict limits of the quantifiable. For Grant the danger lies in the further claims that this method is competent for all subject matters or that this method is the only one that can yield dependable knowledge.

A method of thought that leaves the secure but narrow ground of the quantifiable necessarily opens itself to great risk. The results of such thinking invite easy repudiation as "the distortions of our social prejudices and our tortured instincts" (*Technology and Empire*, p. 45). No one has suffered worse than Nietzsche from this manner of repudiation. In part, of course, his misfortunes invite it, but also Nietzsche must be held partly responsible for the very method which dismisses him this way. But the real risk, as Grant again notes, is less that one will be accused of prejudice (that is so certain as not to be a risk) but that one will actually fall prey to prejudice or, having fallen prey to it, will not recognize its presence. Risks aside, what such thinking enucleates will unavoidably appear strange at first.

What is brought forth by the method of enucleation is similar in Zarathustra and Grant. That is, Grant takes Nietzsche to be the philosopher of the modern age which means that Zarathustra is the one who sees and states most clearly what the kernel of the modern age is. The doctrines of Zarathustra's solitude are for Grant the most profound revelations about the modern world. While these doctrines are not stated in such a way as to be recognizable as everybody's truths, for Grant they nevertheless name the basic commitments and propensities of modern existence.

Because of the oddness of these doctrines it is necessary to digress for a moment to consider a somewhat scholastic point in the interpretation of Nietzsche's work. The Nietzsche best known to English readers is not the Nietzsche of these doctrines, that is, not the Nietzsche of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, but the Nietzsche of the post-*Zarathustra* books. Scholars

of Nietzsche's work have characteristically turned to the somewhat more scholarly post-*Zarathustra* works for an understanding of Nietzsche's mature philosophy, ignoring Nietzsche's warning that these works serve a purpose other than the presentation of his positive views. Nietzsche himself described these books as the "no-saying, no-doing" part of his work; they are acts of destruction. These later works present the Nietzsche of the unmitigated and brilliant attack on Western philosophy, religion and morals. Certainly this attack is by no means foreign to *Zarathustra*. "What is falling, that I still want to push," *Zarathustra* confesses and many of his speeches make all-out war on what his listeners revere, or revered. Nevertheless, the attack is not the basic matter in *Zarathustra* (or in Nietzsche himself, of course). The "no-saying" is a consequence of the metaphysics of *Zarathustra*. It is implied by the profound doctrines dismissed as speculations uncharacteristic of Nietzsche by leading interpreters in English who admire most in Nietzsche the no-saying, no-doing part. The doctrines of will to power, eternal return, and the superman are metaphysical doctrines that are basic to Nietzsche's teachings. Grant's account of Nietzsche in *Time as History* as the philosopher of the modern age recognizes this and it is the Nietzsche of these doctrines that he discusses, not the better known Nietzsche of the later books. In this and in many other issues, large and small, of his interpretation of Nietzsche, Grant follows Heidegger's interpretation.

Zarathustra is the teacher of the superman, the will to power and the eternal return of the same things. These are the three central doctrines of the first three books respectively of *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* and they are the most profound achievements of *Zarathustra*'s teaching. The doctrine of will to power *Zarathustra* learns when life whispers in his ear that she is will to power. Before, he had mistakenly believed that life was unfathomable. The doctrine of will to power discloses the modern drive for mastery and control; to quote Heidegger, it names the age in which "man is about to assume dominion of the earth as a whole" (*What is Called Thinking?* p. 57). The doctrine of eternal return is gradually seen by *Zarathustra* to be the ultimate implication of will to power. He finally acknowledges it when his animals sing to him of it. Eternal return is the doctrine that paradoxically but truly discloses time as history and only history. Human existence is confined to historical time. Eternal return dramatically and exuberantly affirms the finality of death and the meaninglessness of progress: there is no beyond and no permanent future to certify any of it as worthwhile. The superman is the being of dominance and creativity who lives the truth of will to power and eternal return. Neither *Zarathustra* nor Grant is willing to call the superman "human being" without further qualification.

Zarathustra and Grant share these doctrines and they share as well a revulsion at what Zarathustra calls the "last man." In Zarathustra's speech to the crowd he describes the last man in order to appeal to the crowd's pride. If the crowd has any self-esteem its members will recoil from the "last man" and seek its contrary, the superman. But the crowd admires the last man; in fact, the last man *is* the man of the modern crowd.

The last man is therapeutic man, psychological man, the man who aims only at a comforting reinforcement of his worth from others seeking the same encouragement. Nietzsche's image here is of the earth as a hospital ward, a mental ward, with each nursing the other's anxieties lest he despair. For Zarathustra, these are the "last" men because they are the ultimate heirs of the western tradition. That is, —and for this I am dependent upon Grant's account (*Time as History*, pp. 31 - 35)—the last men are part of a tradition which upholds the conjunction of virtue and happiness and which sees happiness as the equal right of all. With the death of God occurs the egalitarian debasement of virtue and happiness and the end of aspiration to nobility or greatness. The last men are last because they are the final possible heirs of the Western tradition; there is no aspiration beyond them because they know themselves to be the final achievement of the historic western struggle for enlightenment and well-being. They know themselves to be that "Posterity" to which the Enlightenment thinkers sang hymns, the "Posterity" of final human fulfillment which gave purpose to their forebears' struggle and vilification. Only in the last man is that historic struggle justified. Unlike their forebears, last men will have no posterity different from themselves because better. They must believe that they themselves are the worthy culmination of the historic struggle. Their lives are the continuous effort to believe just that.

The other possibility of the modern age, short of the superman, is the nihilist. The nihilist is more honest than the last man, but he lacks the resources of the superman. He knows with Zarathustra that "Nothing is true, all is permitted" but that knowledge is a justification for mere willing, not the willing that loves eternal return or the willing that is true to the earth. It is the will of the desperate nihilist that Nietzsche foresees as the scourge of the twentieth century.

For Grant the doctrines of will to power, eternal return and the superman are true teachings. But there is an interesting irony in just what it means for these doctrines to be true for Zarathustra and Grant. In other respects Nietzsche's teaching tends in the direction of a radical historicism, yet for him the doctrines of will to power and eternal return

have been true for all time even though they are only now recognized as true. Grant is an opponent of historicism and the advocate of a view which holds that there is an unchanging human nature, yet for him these doctrines are the historic and true representation of the history-making spirit. Grant thinks these teachings are true, already true or on the way to becoming true.

Grant's conclusion about these doctrines must be contrasted with another more customary one: "It is still of the utmost importance to prevent anyone from falling under the spell of Nietzsche." This is the concluding judgement on Nietzsche in a recent study of Existentialism. (*Existentialism: For and Against*, Paul Roubiczek (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964), p. 37) Grant is no less opposed to Nietzsche than Roubiczek is, but he sees much more profoundly what "the spell of Nietzsche" is. Nietzsche's teachings are now—to use his lament about Christianity—"part of our blood" and they are that not because he taught them and we listened and were persuaded by them. They are part of our blood even though we have never heard of Nietzsche—perhaps even *mostly* where Nietzsche's name is never heard, for Nietzsche's "new philosophers" are hardly the kind of men who would read Nietzsche. Presumably this is why Grant states that he does not want to "inoculate" against Nietzsche: it would be pointless. What is needed is the recognition that we are unavoidably Nietzscheans under the skin and behind our pieties.

There is yet another major conviction shared by Zarathustra and Grant. In the face of the desperate reality of the last man and the shocking character of the true doctrines, Zarathustra and Grant are agreed: "Man is not fit for it." This is the decisive matter and while they agree that man is not fit for it, they stand opposed on the consequence of the unfitness.

Zarathustra maintains that we must fit ourselves for it as he himself has; this is the imperative of modern existence. Man is called to be higher, deeper, more honest, more courageous; he is called to become the superman. Zarathustra relentlessly asks the question (most often of himself): Who is honest enough? Who has courage enough? Who can convalesce? Only the superman and the last man can bear the growth of the wasteland, the last man by a retraction of all aspiration and enterprise but the therapeutic, the superman by risking everything in creative overcoming. As Zarathustra sees it, these are the demands of the age and we must remake ourselves to meet them. Zarathustra extends the monumental modern task of remaking the order of things to a remaking of ourselves.

Grant maintains that man is simply not fit for it; it is not a case of not *yet* being fit for it. The superman is as desperate a hope as the last man is a fear. We cannot remake our natures even if we want to. That man is not fit for it can only be known by confronting the depth of what it is that we are attempting to fit ourselves for. Grant holds that in this confrontation arises the possibility of "intimations of deprivation." Intimated in the confrontation is the possibility that we are not after all the products of our own making and re-making, here and now called upon for a new act of self-creation, this time a self-conscious one.

Hence Grant avoids the by now customary act of Nietzsche's opponents of "inoculating" against him even though he opposes him on the fundamental issue. Nietzsche must be confronted and the nature of that confrontation serves a most valuable purpose in understanding and evaluating the modern age. How can one oppose the public manifestations or ideologies of the modern spirit? Democracy, progress, technological mastery through modern science have long seemed virtually inviolate from criticism and no wonder, for their many benefits are no secret. But what of the grounds of these benefits? Do they hide something deeper and more questionable? If analysis enucleates a "tarantula" what happens to our judgement of the beauty of its webs? This is precisely the service that Nietzsche performs for Grant, because in Zarathustra's central doctrines he finds expressed the essential truth of the modern spirit. In committing ourselves to the fruits of the modern spirit we necessarily commit ourselves to the branches, trunk and soil that support and nurture them. And that means Zarathustra's doctrines. But, while these doctrines are true of the aspirations of the modern spirit, they are untrue to man as man; at least this seems to be what Grant believes a steady confrontation of the doctrines reveals.

We can return now, briefly, to the conclusions of the first Part of this paper and ask again about Grant: What is the point of this teaching with its analyses and its silences? There is little exhortation in it, but it certainly implies a consequent course of action. That course of action is a colossal repudiation of "one's own"—and this in spite of the evident and seemingly overwhelming appeal of democracy, progress, and all the good things that assail the mind of anyone tempted to repudiate it. Many of these are public but many are quite private and personal, extending to one's love of one's bearers and forebears and—I imagine—one's offspring.

Again, I am somewhat uncertain of this, but the following conclusion seems to me to be appropriate about Grant's method: To deny directly the merits of the fruits of the modern spirit may seem vicious and is

almost certainly useless; but to argue that those fruits are tied to a destructive and inhuman metaphysics is merely eccentric and may in the end prove to be useful.

To conclude this comparison and to restate the previous point in a different way, I will compare briefly the implicit views of Zarathustra and Grant on Socrates, that teacher *par excellence* of Western philosophy.

The only historical figure Zarathustra names in his speeches is Jesus. But the spirit of Socrates is frequently present as an object of attack. The decisive encounter occurs in Book Two where Zarathustra attacks the famous wise men. Like them, Zarathustra loves wisdom but in the three songs that form the centre of Book Two his love of life wins final supremacy over his love of wisdom. The famous wise men like Socrates, however, had chosen wisdom over life; they had in fact loved a wisdom which was revenge against life and its transience. Zarathustra's love of life leads Life herself to confide her secrets to him. And when she confides that she is will to power Zarathustra comes to know the wisdom of the wise better than they know it themselves. That is, he now knows their wisdom to be a vengeful will to power directed against life itself in a way that aims to falsify life into the moving image of eternal things. Socrates is one of those who seeks compensation in a false wisdom of permanent realities for the terrors of passage that life relentlessly holds. Against the life-denying optimism of Socrates, Zarathustra affirms will to power, eternal return and the willful self-creating of man. Zarathustra as teacher replaces the traditional wise man Socrates after having exposed Socrates as one who hates life and takes revenge against it. Zarathustra as teacher convalesces from the Socratic teachings only gradually, but in the end he is able to conquer all revenge against life and time with the affirmation of will to power and eternal return: "Thus I willed it."

Grant on the other hand affirms the superior wisdom of Socrates and practices a Socratic method of teaching. Grant echoes the *Republic* in his references to the "grace" or "chance" that kept him from immersion in the modern enterprise (see e.g. *Technology and Empire*, pp. 36, 131-2). For Socrates in the *Republic* it is grace or chance that saves the potential philosopher from the allurements of a public which promises to make good use of his abilities. Socrates' words are themselves the vehicle by which grace or chance may set Glaucon or Adeimantus on the philosophic path. It is not by willful self-making that one rises above the ways of the mass. So far is it from being self-creation that one must see in it grace or chance—which are, respectively, renounced and conquered in Zarathustra's willing.

Grant makes no direct reply to the charge that the Socratic teachings are teachings of revenge against life. Rather, he affirms as platitudes the view that the modern history-making spirit deprives man of his essential humanity by denying that man is bound by natural realities not of his own making and not subject to his modification. Again like the Socrates of the *Republic* who brings to light the partial and questionable nature of the political things that attract Glaucon and Adeimantus by confronting their essential features and presumptions, Grant aims to bring to light the intimations of deprivation in the modern enterprise by confronting its essential features and presumptions in the noble tragedy of Zarathustra.